



2025-26 Season

Amy Wilson, Music Director

www.atlantaphilharmonic.org

FRIENDSHIP

Featuring
Elgar's Enigma Variations
Mendelssohn's Hebrides

Saturday
October 18, 2025
7:30 pm

North Decatur Presbyterian Church
611 Medlock Rd, Decatur, GA 30033

FRIENDSHIP

Amy Wilson, Music Director
Whittaker Locke, Associate Conductor

The Hebrides Overture - Fingal's Cave (1830), Op. 26 Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Three Pieces for Orchestra, (2016) Jeremy Beck (1960-present)

Intermission

Enigma Variations, (1899) Edward Elgar (1837-1934)

The Atlanta Philharmonic Orchestra is a non-profit, volunteer, LGBTQIA+ inclusive symphony orchestra organized to serve the musical needs of its community and its members.



The Atlanta Philharmonic Orchestra would like to thank North Decatur Presbyterian Church for the use of their facilities as part of our Artist in Residency partnership.

ATLANTA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA ARTISTIC TEAM



Amy Wilson, Music Director, is known for her passionate artistry, joyful energy, and charismatic stage presence. She is celebrated for compelling interpretations, refined musicianship, and innovative programming that amplifies underrepresented composers, conductors, and performers.

In addition to her work with the APO, Amy serves as conductor and coordinator of the Atlanta Contemporary Ensemble, a position she has held for six seasons. She has also appeared as a guest conductor with organizations including Diversit  Opera Arts in Dallas, the Atlanta Musicians Orchestra, the Yakima Symphony Chamber Orchestra, the Macon Symphony Orchestra, and the Ocmulgee Symphony Orchestra.

Amy has studied with such distinguished conductors as Robert Spano, Adrian Gnam, Gustav Meier, Jes s L pez-Cobos, Anshel Brusilow, and Wayne Wyman. She holds a degree from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and advanced degrees from the University of North Texas, and Mercer University. Beyond the podium, Amy is an advocate for inclusivity in classical music and enjoys volunteering, traveling, hiking, and writing.



Whittaker Locke, Associate Conductor, holds a B.A. in Music Education and an M.A. in Orchestral Conducting from Georgia Southern University, where they also founded the Rio Chamber Project, a touring ensemble dedicated to premiering new works for Pierrot Ensemble.

In addition to APO, they also serve as Associate Conductor of the Columbus Community Orchestra, earning recognition for engaging performances and thoughtful leadership. They are also an experienced music educator, having directed orchestras at G.W. Carver High School and Baker Middle School in Columbus, Georgia.

An accomplished pianist, Whittaker completed the Artist's Diploma in Piano Performance at Columbus State University in 2023, studying with Dr. Henry Kramer and Dr. Esther Park. They currently serve as Music Director and Pianist for the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus and as a Collaborative Pianist at the Schwob School of Music, with a private studio of over a dozen piano students.



Earl Hough, Concertmaster, has been with APO since 2016. He has also performed with the Fort Worth Symphony, Manhattan Chamber Orchestra, Greenwich Symphony, Erie Philharmonic, and the Wichita Falls Symphony, where he debuted as a soloist at age ten. Since then, he has appeared with the Oklahoma City Symphony, Corpus Christi Symphony, and Richardson Symphony, among others.

A dedicated chamber musician, Earl has participated in festivals including Aspen, Blossom, Norfolk, and Music Mountain, and was a founding member of the Allendale String Quartet. He studied with Robert Davidovici, trained at the Juilliard School with Dorothy DeLay, earned his B.Mus. at the Manhattan School of Music, and his M.Mus. at the Cleveland Institute of Music. He currently coaches with Kenn Wagner.

Outside music, Earl is a Senior Network Engineer specializing in voice and video technologies. He is also Concertmaster of the Georgia Philharmonic and member of the Alpharetta Symphony Orchestra.

ATLANTA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

Amy Wilson, Artistic Director

Whittaker Locke, Associate Conductor

Violin I

Earl Hough, Concertmaster
Troy Cotton
Thomas Collins
Briana Faulkenberry
Marius McNeil
Dan Salzinger

Violin II

Earlisha Curney
Jordan Helms*
Scott Marler
Marlina McKay
Marilyn Pipkin
Seth Reinhart
JoAnn Wu Short

Viola

Forrest Carson
Joshua Cowan
Laura Kuechenmeister*

Cello

Theo Enzo Aalto
Tim Feverston*
Faith Hoover

Bass

Ian Brown*
Maxmillan Simmons

Flute/Piccolo

April Houston
Derrick Jones*
Lynnette Kenith

Oboe

Laurie Harris
Thomas Underwood*

Clarinet

Bethany Petri
Jonathan Seletyn*

Bassoon

Charlie Jaret
Jason Jones
Joe Sarra*

Contrabassoon

William Buckner

Horn

Matthew Manley
Greta Massetti*
Michael McFarlin
Amy Trotz

Trumpet

Evan Atwell
Brandon Hall
Seth Phillips

Trombone

Fred Land*
Bob Lurie
Alexander Winkles

Tuba

Michael Faire

Organ

Whittaker Locke

Timpani

Justin Iadonisi

Percussion

Mollie Beavers
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*Indicates Principal



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CALLING ALL COMPOSERS!!!

2026 Composition Contest

Your music. Our Stage. One unforgettable performance.

The Atlanta Philharmonic Orchestra's 2026 Composition Competition is now open for submissions. We're looking for original works by emerging composers-especially from underrepresented communities-for the chance to be performed live during our 2026 season.



Submissions due January 15, 2026

Email your score + MP3/MIDI to

submissions@atlantaphilharmonic.org

\$50 application fee | One entry per composer

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PROGRAM NOTES

The Hebrides Overture (Fingal's Cave), Op. 26 (1830)

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

A great letter writer, Felix Mendelssohn sent his family regular reports of his impressions and activities, embellished with charming and skillful drawings. Thus, while visiting Scotland, he wrote of the impression made on him of a visit to Fingal's Cave, a celebrated sea cave in the basalt lava on the southwestern shore of Staffa, in the island group known as the Inner Hebrides. The roar of the waves, the clear air, the cries of sea birds, and the impressive rock formations were a powerful stimulant. "In order to make you understand how extraordinarily the Hebrides affected me," he wrote on August 7, 1829, "the following came into my mind there," and he wrote out twenty-one measures of music that correspond to the beginning of his overture. Though it took another sixteen months to complete, he perfectly captured the uncanny effect of the Hebridean landscape.

Once he had finished the work, Mendelssohn had to decide what to call it. The term "tone poem," which we might find most appropriate, had not yet been invented, and it was certainly not a symphony. So instead, he called it an overture, because it was a single movement for orchestra cast in sonata form, like the overtures of Mozart or Beethoven, though it does not actually precede and introduce a larger work, as the term "overture" implies. It was thus the very first example of the "concert overture," a genre that became quite popular in the romantic era.

The wonder of Mendelssohn's score is the constant freshness and flexibility of his invention. The opening figure of his first theme recurs many times—but almost every time its appearance differs after a single measure. The freedom that he takes in the working out of this idea and its sequels is not the freedom that comes with "rule-breaking" for its own sake, but freedom derived from a firm vision of the end, from attention concentrated on the goal of a specific kind of expression, here of landscape painting via music. And it is thus that the young composer (just twenty-one when he finished the score in Rome) created one of his most original and compelling works.

Source: Steven Ledbetter – Aspen Music Festival

Three Pieces for Orchestra, (2016)

Jeremy Beck (1960-present)

Jeremy Beck is one of the APO's Composition Contest winners. He was also first-prize winner in the 2021 The King's Singers New Music Prize, Beck's music has been presented by the American Composers Orchestra, New York City Opera, ETHEL, the Apollo Chorus of Chicago, San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, Center for Contemporary Opera, Yale Opera, and the Louisville Orchestra, among others. A graduate of the Mannes College of Music, Duke University, and the Yale School of Music, recordings of Beck's orchestral, chamber, and vocal music are available on the Acis, neuma, innova, and Ablaze labels.

Three Pieces for Orchestra is a contemporary orchestral work that consists of three distinct movements: and showcases Beck's orchestration skills and his ability to create engaging sound textures that resonate with both modern and classical sensibilities.

By Moonlight: is marked “graceful, flowing” and opens with a lyrical melody in the oboe that is quietly accompanied in the strings. This melody then moves through the various wind instruments before it is developed within the entire ensemble. A contrasting section follows, featuring neighbor figures. This music finds its way back to the opening material, again highlighted by the oboe. By Moonlight closes with a varied contrasting section and a short coda.

Tempest: comes from the Prelude to one of my operas, *The Biddle Boys* and Mrs. Soffel (2000). Based on a tragic love story from the early twentieth century, Ed and John Biddle were condemned prisoners who escaped from the Allegheny County Jail in Pittsburgh with help from the warden’s wife, Kate Soffel, who fled with them. The Boys were tracked down by a posse and killed in a shootout. Mrs. Soffel was arrested at the scene and convicted for assisting them in their escape. Commissioned and premiered by the Tuesday Music Club of Pittsburgh, this opera was named by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette as one of the Top Ten Cultural Events in Pittsburgh for the year 2001.

Serenade: was composed in 2011 in Louisville. It is a re-imagining of the second movement of my fifth string quartet. The music begins with a brief introduction, providing glimpses of the work’s main theme. This lyrical theme fully unfolds in the first violins as a flowing melody supported by a rising figure in the cellos. Over the course of the piece this theme develops, expands, becomes more aggressive, and the partially returns to its original flowing spirit. A brief exultation in a solo violin, points towards the close of the piece, which winds down with fragments of the theme, reflecting its origin.

Source: beckmusic.org

Enigma Variations, Op. 36 (1899)

Edward Elgar (1837-1934)

Elgar wrote the Enigma Variations during a period of personal and professional growth. The work premiered on June 19, 1899, in London and received immediate acclaim. The term “Enigma” refers to the hidden theme that underlies the variations. Elgar hinted that there is a second theme that is never revealed, adding an element of intrigue to the work.

The piece consists of 14 variations (including the original theme), each dedicated to a different friend of Elgar. The variations vary in mood, tempo, and instrumentation, reflecting the diverse personalities of the individuals they represent.

- i. (C.A.E.) *L’istesso tempo*. Caroline Alice Elgar, the composer’s wife.
- ii. (H.D.S.-P.) *Allegro*. Hew David Steuart-Powell, who played piano in a trio with Elgar and Basil Nevinston (the subject of Variation XII).
- iii. (R.B.T.) *Allegretto*. Richard Baxter Townshend, author of a series of *Tenderfoot* books (*A Tenderfoot in Colorado* and *A Tenderfoot in New Mexico*), as well as a classical scholar and a lovable eccentric.
- iv. (W.M.B.) *Allegro di molto*. William Meath Baker, a country squire with a blustery way about him. Elgar depicts his forcible delivery.
- v. (R.P.A.) *Moderato*. Richard Penrose Arnold, a son of Matthew Arnold, a self-taught pianist.

- vi. (Ysobel) Andantino. Isabel Fitton, an amateur viola player, whom Elgar draws into the music by writing a leading part for her instrument.
- vii. (Troyte) Presto. One of Elgar's closest friends, Arthur Troyte Griffith, an architect.
- viii. (W.N.) Allegretto. Winifred Norbury, a competent pianist, though Elgar commented that the variation was "really suggested by an eighteenth-century house and the gracious personalities of the ladies."
- ix. (Nimrod) Adagio. August Jaeger ("Jaeger" is German for "hunter," and Nimrod is the "mighty hunter" of the Old Testament), who worked for Elgar's publisher, Novello, and often provided enthusiasm and moral support for the composer. This Adagio is the best-known single excerpt from the Variations, noble, poignant, and deeply felt. In England it has become a traditional piece to commemorate the dead.
- x. (Dorabella) Intermezzo Allegretto. Dora Penny, later Mrs. Richard Powell, who first heard the variations even before Elgar had orchestrated them.
- xi. (G.R.S.) Allegro di molto. Dr. George R. Sinclair, organist of Hereford Cathedral, though the variation has more to do with his bulldog Dan. Elgar explained that the opening had to do with Dan "falling down the steep bank into the river...paddling upstream to find a landing place...and his rejoicing bark on landing."
- xii. (B.G.N.) Andante. Basil G. Nevinson, a fine amateur cellist who performed with Elgar and Steuart-Powell (Var. II) in a trio.
- xiii. Romanza. Moderato. This variation's subject has never been identified.
- xiv. Finale. (E.D.U.) Allegro. Elgar himself.

Source: Boston Symphony Orchestra

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