



# High School Open Rehearsals



## BSO High School Open Rehearsal

*Beethoven and Francisco Coll*

Oct. 8, 2026

## Educator's Guide

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## Introduction

### Welcome to the BSO!

We are so glad you are here. The Boston Symphony Orchestra gave its inaugural concert in 1881, and the rest is [history](#). Led by Music Director Andris Nelsons since 2014, today the BSO reaches millions of listeners through not only its concert performances in Boston and at Tanglewood, but also via educational and community programs, radio, television, recordings, and tours.

The Boston Symphony Orchestra's mission is to foster and maintain an organization dedicated to the making of music consonant with the highest aspirations of the musical art, creating performance, and providing educational and training programs at the highest level of excellence.

### High School Open Rehearsals: An overview

High School Open Rehearsals invite students in grades eight through 12 to sit in on a BSO rehearsal, offering a unique glimpse into the inner workings of a world-class orchestra.

- Groups may participate in an interactive pre-concert interview from 9:30-10:00am.
- The rehearsal starts at 10:30am, when students will get an intimate look at the rehearsal process assisted by the Conductor Cam, a live recording that lets the audience see the conductor from the orchestra's point of view.
- High School Open Rehearsals are scheduled from 10:30am-1:00pm, but they may end before 1:00pm. The orchestra typically takes a short break about midway through the rehearsal.

## High School Open Rehearsals



## High School Open Rehearsal program

The conductor typically rehearses in program order, but this order is subject to change on the rehearsal day without advance notice.

### 9:30-10:00am Pre-rehearsal interview

- Interview with BSO Program Manager Zoe Murphy and a special guest.

### 10:30am Rehearsal

- Andris Nelsons, conductor
- Kirill Gerstein, piano
  - BEETHOVEN *Coriolan* Overture
  - Francisco COLL Piano Concerto (U.S. premiere; BSO co-commission)
  - BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 7

### Featuring

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Boston Symphony Orchestra



Andris Nelsons  
conductor



Kirill Gerstein  
piano

## High School Open Rehearsals



### Symphony Hall code of conduct

- Please enter quietly, keeping noise to a minimum as you enter the hall and find your seats.
- If entering during the pre-rehearsal musician interview or after the rehearsal has started, enter silently so as not to disrupt the program or distract other audience members.
- Remain seated at all times during rehearsal while musicians are performing.
- Guests may not interfere with performers or events in any way.
- If you must leave before the orchestra's break or the rehearsal's end, please follow the instructions of the BSO usher staff to minimize disruption.
- Mobile phones should be silent and put away during the musician interview and rehearsal.
- Photography and video are not permitted during the musician interview or rehearsal but are allowed during breaks and after the rehearsal.
- If possible, please wait for a piece to finish before leaving your seats.
- Symphony Hall has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying or harassment of any kind, including but not limited to harassment based on race, national origin, gender identity, gender presentation, sexual orientation, age, ability, religion, and citizenship. Harassment includes but is not limited to stalking, verbal or physical intimidation, offensive verbal comments, physical assault and/or battery, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome physical attention.
- If you are made to feel uncomfortable or unsafe, please immediately report any concerns to Symphony Hall staff or security personnel so appropriate action can be taken. Such acts of harassment or discrimination may lead to ejection from the premises.
- Please remember that this is a functional rehearsal for professional musicians. We appreciate you honoring these guidelines to respect the musicians and your fellow audience members.

For more information about the Symphony Hall code of conduct, check out [bso.org](https://www.bso.org).

## High School Open Rehearsals



### Prohibited items

- Outside food and beverages (except bottled water), including leftovers and restaurant to-go bags. If food is required due to a medical condition, please see security or another staff member for accommodations.
- Interchangeable lens camera, video, and/or audio recording equipment
- Flashlights and laser pointers
- Illegal substances
- Demonstration signs
- Noise-making devices and fireworks
- All weapons, including firearms, ammunition, knives, swords, scissors, pepper spray, and any dangerous items

All guests will be screened prior to entering Symphony Hall. Items that are confiscated may not be returned. If you are unsure about an item, please do not bring it with you.

SIGN





## Audience etiquette

Here are some key points on **symphony etiquette** to keep in mind when attending a BSO performance.

**Arrival:** Arrive on time. Latecomers may have to wait until a suitable break in the program to be seated.

**Clapping:** Wait until the conductor lowers their hands to clap and avoid clapping between movements of a piece.

**Dress code:** Adhere to your school's dress code policy when attending with your school group.

**Silence your devices:** Ensure that your phone and other electronic devices are silenced or turned off before the performance begins.

**Respectful behavior:** Remain seated and maintain silence during the performance. Avoid talking, reaching over the balconies, or making noise that could disturb others.

*These guidelines will help ensure a pleasant experience for you and your fellow concertgoers.*





## Teaching Resources

Grades eight-12



**Boston Symphony  
Orchestra**

***Aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks***



## Teaching resources

Please use these resources to prepare students and chaperones for their experience at Symphony Hall.

### Get to know Symphony Hall

- [Social narrative](#): available on the BSO website
- [Virtual video tour](#): Explore Symphony Hall before you visit!

### Lesson plans and slideshow presentations

- BEETHOVEN *Coriolan* Overture: [Lesson plan](#) / [slide deck](#)
- Francisco COLL Piano Concerto: [Lesson plan](#) / [slide deck](#)
- BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 7: [Lesson plan](#) / [slide deck](#)

### Activities (download and print)

- Word search / answer key
- Crossword / answer key
- Scan the QR code to learn about the [history of the BSO](#).



### Listen and watch

- [Boston Philharmonic Orchestra performs Beethoven's Coriolan Overture](#) (Benjamin Zander, conductor)
- [BSO performs Beethoven's Symphony No. 7](#) (Herbert Blomstedt, conductor)

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### About the conductor, **Andris Nelsons**



Recognized as one of the world's finest conductors, Andris Nelsons began his tenure in Boston at the start of the 2014-15 season and was appointed Gewandhauskapellmeister in Leipzig in February 2018. Shortly thereafter, he established the innovative BSO/GHO Alliance, which has resulted in joint programming, commissions, recordings, touring projects, a musician exchange, and educational initiatives. As part of the BSO/GHO Alliance, in 2022 Deutsche Grammophon released a celebrated seven-CD album of Richard Strauss's major symphonic works featuring both orchestras.

Born in Riga in 1978 into a family of musicians, Andris Nelsons began his career as a trumpeter in the Latvian National Opera Orchestra while studying conducting. Outside music, Nelsons is a keen collector of perfumes and holds a second-degree black belt in Taekwondo. His deeply held commitment to musical excellence is reflected in numerous accolades throughout his career, including an OBE (Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, for services to music.

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### About Kirill Gerstein, piano



Kirill Gerstein is one of today's most compelling and versatile pianists, renowned for his curiosity, imagination, virtuosity, and wide-ranging musical vision. A searching artist, he is equally active as a performer, curator, educator, musical leader, and collaborator, exploring repertoire from Baroque and Classical masterworks to contemporary music, jazz, and cabaret. Recent highlights include his Carnegie Hall solo recital debut; performances of Busoni's Piano Concerto with leading international orchestras; performing Messiaen with Sir Simon Rattle; performing Rachmaninov with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra; engagements with major orchestras across the United States, Europe, Asia, and beyond; and acclaimed collaborations with artists including Gary Burton, Christian Tetzlaff, and HK Gruber.

A champion of new music, Gerstein has commissioned and premiered works by composers including Thomas Adès, Chick Corea, Brad Mehldau, and Francisco Coll. His recordings and innovative media projects have earned major international recognition, including Grammy nominations, a Gramophone Award, and a 2025 Opus Klassik Award for exceptional curation.

Gerstein is also deeply committed to education and artistic discovery. He is professor of piano at Berlin's Hanns Eisler Hochschule and serves on the faculty of Kronberg Academy, where his free online seminars featuring conversations with leading artists and thinkers have reached more than 150,000 viewers. Born in Voronezh, Russia, he demonstrated extraordinary musical talent from an early age, becoming the youngest student at Berklee College of Music before completing undergraduate and graduate degrees at the Manhattan School of Music and

## High School Open Rehearsals



pursuing further studies in Madrid and Budapest. A first-prize winner of the Arthur Rubinstein Competition and recipient of the Gilmore Artist Award and Avery Fisher Career Grant, Gerstein continues to shape the international musical landscape through his performances, recordings, teaching, and fearless exploration of music across genres and generations.<sup>1</sup>

## Ludwig van Beethoven, composer



Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) was a German composer and pianist whose extraordinary talent and artistic vision transformed the course of Western classical music. Born in Bonn, he spent his early years developing as a virtuoso pianist and composer before moving to Vienna in 1792, where he established himself as one of Europe's most celebrated musicians. Building upon the Classical traditions of Haydn and Mozart, Beethoven expanded the emotional, structural, and expressive possibilities of music, creating works that would help usher in the Romantic era.

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<sup>1</sup> "Kirill Gerstein." BSO, Oct. 8, 1970. <https://www.bso.org/profiles/kirill-gerstein>.

## High School Open Rehearsals



Around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Beethoven began to experience the gradual loss of his hearing, a devastating prospect for a musician whose career depended upon sound. By 1802, he recognized that his deafness was permanent and progressive, prompting a period of

profound despair reflected in his deeply personal Heiligenstadt Testament. Yet Beethoven ultimately chose to continue creating, and his struggle became intertwined with some of the most powerful music of his career. Despite increasing isolation and eventual complete deafness, he continued to compose groundbreaking works, leaving a legacy that established him as one of the most influential composers in the history of Western music.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Knapp, Raymond. "Ludwig van Beethoven - Composer, Deafness, Symphony | Britannica." Ludwig van Beethoven. Accessed Aug. 28, 2026. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ludwig-van-Beethoven/Approaching-deafness>.



## Francisco Coll, composer



Francisco Coll (b. 1985, Valencia) is a Spanish composer and conductor whose music has gained international recognition for its distinctive dramatic character and highly individual voice. He studied at the Valencia and Madrid conservatories before moving to London, where he studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with Richard Baker and worked privately with composer Thomas Adès, who remains a major influence and advocate.

Coll's music has been performed by major orchestras and ensembles including the London Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Lucerne Symphony Orchestra, and Ensemble Modern, as well as at festivals such as the BBC Proms, Aldeburgh, Aix-en-Provence, Aspen, Verbier, and Tanglewood. Major works include the chamber opera *Café Kafka*, the double concerto *Les Plaisirs Illuminés*, a violin concerto, cello concerto, *Ciudad sin sueño*, and the opera *Enemigo del pueblo*, based on Ibsen. His work has been championed by prominent performers including Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Sol Gabetta, Kirill Gerstein, Javier Perianes, and Gustavo Gimeno.

Coll has also established himself as a conductor, frequently leading performances of his own music. He has held composer –in residence or artistic positions with Camerata Bern, the Orquesta de València, and the Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias. His



achievements include multiple International Classical Music awards and the 2022 BBC Music Magazine Concerto Award for *Les Plaisirs Illuminés*. More recently, his 2025 opera *Enemigo del pueblo* and 2026 Piano Concerto have further expanded his profile as a major contemporary composer and an increasingly prominent figure in the opera and orchestral worlds. ([Faber Music](#))<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Francisco Coll. Accessed Aug. 28, 2026. <https://www.fabermusic.com/we-represent/francisco-coll>.