

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Celebrations and Reflections as *The Little Prince* Draws to A Close

Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestra's (EYSO) 43rd season draws to a close as students reflect on the final chapter of *The Little Prince*. All season long students have been following *The Little Prince* on his six-year journey pondering the lessons revealed in this generation-transcending tale as they learn and perform the season's repertoire. On May 5, students will give their final performances of the season as they say goodbye to *The Little Prince* as part of a concert day with performances at 2 p.m., 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m..

"The tears of saying goodbye—something the Fox warned the Little Prince about in the book—are part of loving, of forging ties, of investing in someone or something besides oneself," says Artistic Director Randal Swiggum. "Those, and many other memories, are what we celebrate at this season finale performance."

The Little Prince reminds us of the importance of retaining our youthful sense of wonder as we continue into adulthood. The 7:30 p.m. concert features Edward Elgar's, *Slumber Scene* and *Fairies and Giants* from *The Wand of Youth*. This concert also features *Cello Concerto No. 1, Op. 107* composed by Dmitri Shostakovich performed by Jay Reiter, a senior at Illinois Math and Science Academy and winner of the 2018-19 EYSO Young Artists Concerto Competition. Another highlight is the Maud Powell String Quartet's performance of Edvard Grieg's, *String Quartet No. 1 in G minor, Op. 27*. As the premier ensemble of the EYSO, the Maud Powell String Quartet is among five EYSO active and high-profile performing honors chamber ensembles. And the Youth Symphony will bid the season a poignant goodbye with its 20th anniversary performance of *The Turtle Dove*.

At the beginning of the concert day, the 2:00 p.m. performance features two *Only in Elgin* pieces. First, *Alleluia* was composed by Henry Purcell, adapted by Benjamin Britten and specially arranged for strings by Prelude conductor Andy Masters. Holding to Prelude tradition, the ensemble will end its season by performing the timeless, heart-warming classic by Harold Arlen, *Over the Rainbow*.

Attendees at the 4:30 p.m. concert will journey over the rainbow and into the stars with Philharmonia's performance of Gustav Holst's, *Uranus, the Magician* from *The Planets*. This concert also features *Concerto for Viola in D major*, Franz Anton Hoffmeister, performed by Harry Graham, a freshman at St. Charles East High School and winner of the 2018-19 Philharmonia Young Artists Concerto Competition.

Sunday's performances not only celebrate the close of another successful season, but the recognition of two very special people. EYSO will recognize Kathy Heikkinen as 2019 Outstanding Music Educator of the Year, and Anthony Riani, as EYSO Servant Leader. Heikkinen and Riani will be recognized on stage during each concert and will be celebrated at a 6:15 p.m. reception at before the 7:30 p.m. concert. Visit EYSO.org to learn more about these two outstanding individuals.

ABOUT THE EYSO

EYSO serves nearly 400 students from 70 communities and has a national reputation for providing students with an engaging musical experience and a comprehensive learning environment of curiosity, imagination, critical thinking, and collaboration. Students explore a thematic curriculum each season – one which helps students develop artistically and technically, and prepare them for a future of complex ideas, creative risk-taking, and leadership as global citizen. This approach has led hundreds of alumni to successful careers as professional musicians, educators, and strong leaders in every field.

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Biographies

Kathy Heikkinen, *EYSO Outstanding Music Educator of the Year*

Katherine (Duckworth) Heikkinen grew up in southeastern Wisconsin. She knew she wanted to be an orchestra teacher while still playing viola in junior high and joined her city's youth orchestra and the Racine Symphony while in high school. Kathy attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and did her student teaching with William Hofeldt. She and Dallas Heikkinen were married in 1981, and she began her teaching career in Oregon, Wisconsin in 1982. They moved to Illinois in 1985 where Kathy began teaching at Canton Middle School in District U-46. She was a member of the faculty that opened Kenyon Woods Middle School in 2004, where she will finish her 37-year career this May. During her time in Streamwood she completed her Masters of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from the National College of Education. She and Dallas welcomed Damon into their family in 1989, and are the proud parents of the cellist, EYSO alum, and music teacher he has become. Kathy spent her career as a supporter of students receiving a well-rounded education, including the fine arts. Her time as a union representative and official was grounded in helping the educational system understand the importance of the arts in child development, and supporting educators who teach the arts. Kathy has been blessed with many students who have gone on to be teachers, musicians, and lovers of music. The friends she has made with other educators are close to her heart. She plans to volunteer and continue her education, studying theology, during retirement.

Anthony Riani, *David Moller Servant Leader Awardee*

The David Moller Servant Leader Award is the highest honor given by the EYSO to a volunteer or alum for exceptional contributions to the EYSO. Established in 2013, the award was named in gratitude for one of the EYSO's most dedicated and loyal volunteers—parent and Board Member David Moller, known and loved by hundreds of EYSO students and parents for his enthusiasm for the EYSO, and the countless roles for which he cheerfully volunteered. This year's recipient, Anthony Riani, lives in Geneva and is the proud

father of two EYSO players. Anaka played trumpet in Sinfonia, Philharmonia, and Youth Symphony, and also was a member of the Sterling Brass Quintet 2016-17. Rebecca is now in her sixth season with the EYSO, playing violin. Anthony spent most of his career in the print industry, but has loved music since his own school days. He started the trombone in fifth grade (although his first choice would have been trumpet) and played in band, marching band, solo ensemble, and musical pit orchestras. After high school, he continued to play in the Addison Community Band.

It was during Anaka's second EYSO season that Anthony decided rather than just dropping off his girls at rehearsal, he would stay and watch. More and more fascinated with the EYSO approach—encouraging curiosity, imagination, critical thinking and collaboration (which he admits was different than his own musical experience as a kid)—he had an idea. Why not use his skills as a videographer to provide the conductors with a weekly video of their rehearsal, to review and use to plan the following week? For the last four years, Anthony has faithfully video-recorded not only every rehearsal, but every concert. EYSO conductors have appreciated this tremendous resource, but even more, they have appreciated Anthony's dependability, his flexibility and generosity of time, and his ever-cheerful "Yes, we can!" attitude.