



Crescendo  
Masterclasses

January 21st, 2024

MASTERCLASS WITH

# Raúl Gómez-Rojas

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PROJECT PRELUDE

MONDAY MUSICAL CLUB OF PORTLAND

# Crescendo Masterclasses

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## Welcome

Thank you for attending the first ever Crescendo Masterclass made possible by Monday Musical Club and Project Prelude with the support of Raúl Gómez-Rojas, Music Director of the Metropolitan Youth Symphony.

## About

The Crescendo Masterclasses are designed to prepare students who are auditioning for Monday Musical Club's 2024 Awards program taking place on April 21st at the Community Music Center in Southeast Portland. Today's string class is the first in a three-part series held at Portland State University. Two additional classes for piano and voice will be led by Portland Opera artists in LH 175 on Sunday, January 28th at 1 and 3 pm.

Our distinguished artists will review each student's performance with consideration given for the scoring factors used by adjudicators in the April 21st competition: interpretation of the composer's intent, rhythmical integrity, technical mastery, musical artistry as well as stage presence.

## Support

You can help support future masterclasses by making a donation on our website or becoming a member of Monday Musical Club for as little as \$12 a year. See online brochure for details at our website: [www.pdxmmc.org](http://www.pdxmmc.org).



Cover: Raúl Gómez-Rojas, photo by Christine Dong

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# Masterclass with Raúl Gómez-Rojas

Sunday, January 21, 2024 at 1:00 PM

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY (LINCOLN HALL, ROOM 326)

## Raúl Gómez-Rojas, violin

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**BACH**

Cello Suite No. 6 in D Major, BMV 1012  
I. Prelude

**Andy Shin**, cello

**WIENIAWSKI**

*Polonaise de Concert*, Op. 4

**Kaylee Nah**, violin; **Grace Ko**, piano

**TCHAIKOVSKY**

Variations on a Roccoco Theme  
VI. Andante  
VII. Andante Sostenuto

**Kristen Kim**, cello; **Grace Ko**, piano

**ELGAR**

Cello Concerto in E minor, Op. 85  
II. Lento, Allegro Molto

**Annie Rhew**, cello; **Grace Ko**, piano

**WIENIAWSKI**

Etude-Caprices, Op. 18

**Noah Carr**, **Amir Avsker**, violins

This event is part of **Crescendo Masterclasses**. Tonight's program is sponsored by the **Monday Musical Club of Portland**.

# The Artist

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Photo by Christine Dong

Member of the 2018 class of the prestigious *Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview* (League of American Orchestras), **Raúl Gómez-Rojas** inspires audiences and artists of all ages and backgrounds to use music as a vehicle to connect, pursue excellence, and spread joy. Lauded as a “visionary conductor” (*Oregon ArtsWatch*), Raúl has built a reputation as an insightful leader that “captivates both performing musicians and audiences alike,” and whose “positive attitude and enthusiasm make him a joy to be with” (C. Mumm, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, NY). Under Raúl’s leadership, the Oregon Ballet Theatre Orchestra’s “precise, yet effortless playing and beautiful cohesion were both breathtaking and steadfast through the show’s final note.” (Amy Leona Havin for *Oregon ArtsWatch*).

In high demand as a guest conductor, Raúl is equally at home on stage and in the pit, leading professional orchestras in the USA and Latin America, new music ensembles, youth, and community groups, and collaborating with a vast array of guest

artists across many genres and disciplines. Recent highlights include performances with the Oregon Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, Nashville Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic, Oregon Ballet Theatre, Portland Chamber Orchestra, 45th Parallel Universe, Fear No Music, Third Angle New Music, Beaverton Symphony, Tilikum Chamber Orchestra, the Oregon International Ballet Academy, jazz violinist Regina Carter, Steward Copeland, Boyz 2 Men, Lyle Lovett, The Tenors, Kermit Ruffins, Rick Springfield and more. After a performance together in Portland in 2023, hip-hop artist Common immediately engaged Raúl to join his band on violin for their next performance in Seattle.

As Music Director of the Metropolitan Youth Symphony in Portland, Oregon, Raúl leads a team of 12 conductors serving over 500 students in 14 ensembles. He has led the organization to new artistic heights while creating “concert programs that any forward-looking orchestra should envy.” (*Willamette Week*). Raúl’s skills to “inspire children and young adults to make music to the best of their ability are astonishing” (D. Seldis, The Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra). Raúl also currently serves as Music Director of YMA: Young Musicians and Artists and Resident Music Director with Oregon Ballet Theatre.

A native of Costa Rica, Raúl received full scholarships for graduate studies at Louisiana State University in violin/viola (MM) and conducting (DMA), and was a Conducting Fellow in the American Academy of Conducting at the Aspen Music Festival (2011). In 2021, Raúl was a recipient of the

Carlos Miguel Prieto Conducting Fellowship. Beyond the podium, his work extends to frequent engagements as a violinist/violist,

clinician, public speaker and, since 2020, as a Contributing Host and Producer for *On Deck with Young Musicians* on *All Classical Radio*.

## The Performers

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Israeli-born pianist, violinist, violist, composer, and conductor **Amir Avsker** performs internationally as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral player. He was the 2023 Young Artist in Residence of All Classical Radio and a much sought-after accompanist, performer, composer, and arranger. His compositions have been performed by the Metropolitan Youth Symphony in Portland and faculty members of Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music.

Avsker's awards include the 2019 Oregon Music Education Association Composition Competition Middle School Division, the 2023 Metropolitan Youth Symphony Concerto Competition, and the 2023 Cognizart Young Artists Debut! Competition. He has held several leadership positions in the Metropolitan Youth Symphony and is a participant in Fear No Music's Young Composers Project.

Avsker is a co-founder of the Pacific Rose Ensemble, a string quartet made up of young musicians, which performs music from the standard repertoire as well as works by young composers with limited outreach. An avid linguist, Avsker speaks eight languages (Hebrew, English, German, Italian, Spanish, French, Russian, and Portuguese). He enjoys opera and has developed an extensive knowledge of the genre and its history.



**Noah Carr** is a seventeen year old violinist and high school senior from Portland, Oregon. He studies with Tomas Cotik, Professor of Violin at Portland State University, and Vali Phillips, Oregon Symphony violinist. He performs with the Metropolitan Youth Symphony's Symphony Orchestra and the MYSfits String Ensemble, a self-directed ensemble with an emphasis on exploring repertoire across genres. In 2022 and 2023, Noah was selected as a Semi-

Finalist in the 26th and 27th annual Sphinx Competitions. Recent awards include 1st place in the senior division of the Oregon Mozart Players Young Soloist Competition, 1st place in the MYS Concerto Competition, 1st place in the senior division of the Oregon ASTA Competition, and a scholarship awarded by the Monday Musical Club of Portland. In 2022, Noah served as a Young Artist Ambassador for the All Classical Portland radio station. He has performed solo with the Oregon Symphony, Oregon Mozart Players chamber orchestra, and MYS Symphony Orchestra.

Noah has participated in summer intensives including Meadowmount, the Sphinx Performance Academy, and, most recently, Center Stage Strings with a full-tuition scholarship. He has performed in masterclasses with violinists Areta Zhulla, Simone Lamsma, and Rachel Barton Pine.

Noah performs on a 1900 Paul Bailley violin generously loaned to him by the Virtu Foundation.



**Kristen Kim** is a 14-year-old cellist in Portland, Oregon. She started playing cello at the age of six, and is currently studying with cellist Hyun-Jin Kim.

Kristen was the winner in the 2021 Oregon

MTNA Junior String Competition, and alternate winner in the Northwest MTNA Junior Performance String Competition. Along with this, she also won 1st place in the 2022 Oregon Mozart Player Young Artist Competition Junior Division. She was chosen as a winner of 2022 Cognizart MetroArts Young Artist Competition, 1st place in the 2021 American Protégé international string competition, 1st place in Rising Star of the 2020 Canadian International Music Competition, 1st place in 2022 Best Bach Competition, and 2nd place in the Oregon ASTA competition. In 2023, she won 2nd place in the young artist competition of the Amadeus Chamber Orchestra and was chosen as a winner of the Oregon Sinfonietta Competition. Through these competitions, Kristen was given the opportunity to solo with professional musicians such as the Oregon Mozart Players, the Amadeus Chamber Orchestra, the Oregon Sinfonietta, and members of the Oregon Symphony.

As Kristen enjoys playing with other musicians and peers, she is a part of the Portland Youth Philharmonic Orchestra and a PYP Quartet. She also plays in the Camerata PYP chamber orchestra and volunteers as a mentor for the Portland Youth String Ensemble. Outside of her musical life, she loves volunteering for her church and at nursing homes.



**Kaylee Nah**, 14, is a freshman at Sunset High School in Portland, Oregon. She has studied the violin under Hae-Jin Kim since the age of five. Kaylee won 1st prize in the Grand Metropolitan International Music Competition in 2021. She was also the state winner in 2022 of the Music Teachers National Association Junior String Competition, and the alternate winner for its Northwest Division. She also won 1st place in the Jeannette Scott Briggs Scholarship Competition in 2022. Kaylee was the first winning alternate for the Cognizart MetroArts Young Artist Competition in 2023. In the same year she performed in the Oregon American String Teachers Association (OR-ASTA) honors recital. She has played for artists Benjamin Beilman, Carol Sindell, and the Modigliani Quartet for masterclasses.

Kaylee has been in the Portland Youth Philharmonic Association (PYP) since 2018. She served as the concertmaster of the Young String Ensemble of PYP and as the principal second violin of the Portland Youth Conservatory Orchestra of PYP. Kaylee is now playing in the Portland Youth Philharmonic orchestra for her third year, and also plays in a PYP sextet, and the Camerata PYP chamber orchestra. She also attended the Heifetz International Music Institute in

the Heifetz International Music Institute in the summer of 2023.

Kaylee has also been studying the piano for 9 years and has won a number of prizes at classical and romantic festivals of the Oregon Music Teachers Association.

Besides music, Kaylee enjoys painting, baking, and hanging out with friends.



**Annie Rhew** is a sophomore at Westview High School in NW Portland. Annie began playing cello at age 8 with Hyun-Jin Kim. In 2023, Annie was the Young Artist winner with the Jewish Community Orchestra and has performed as a soloist, was the principal cellist with the OMEA All-State Honors Orchestra, and has been accepted into the All-Northwest NAFME Orchestra. She also won second place in OMEA District Competition, third place in the OSAA State Solo Competition, and first place in the American Protégé International Piano and Strings Competition. She was a finalist in the Oregon Mozart Players Competition and the Oregon ASTA Solo Competition. Annie attended the Heifetz International Music Institute's summer program and was taught by Professor Andrew Mark from the New England Conservatory.

Previously, Annie won the Prodigy

International Music Competition, the New York Laureate International Competition, and the NFMC Mary Cox Award, where she earned \$1000 in scholarship. Annie was selected to play in master classes taught by Ben Hong, Natasha Brofsky, Steve Doane, Rosemary Elliot, Hannah Roberts, Astrid Schween, Zachary Preucil, and Jeffrey Butler. Annie is currently in the seventh year with the Portland Youth Philharmonic Association and has been in the top Philharmonic Orchestra for the last four years.



**Andy Shin**, age 14, is a ninth-grader at BASE (Beaverton Academy of Science and Engineering) high school in Portland, Oregon. He started cello at age nine and has been playing for four years. Since then, he has been involved in a variety of ensemble platforms such as PYP (Portland Youth Philharmonic Orchestra), Camerata PYP, and

Portland Summer Ensembles. Andy has participated in several competitions; he is a winner of the 2023 MetroArts Young Artist Debut! Competition and performed a solo with members of the Oregon Symphony Orchestra. Andy is the second place winner of the Eugene Symphony Young Artists Competition in the junior division and has played a solo with the Eugene Symphony Orchestra as well. He is a second place winner in the 2023 American Protégé International Competition, winner at the 2022 Baroque Festival, finalist for the 2022 Oregon Mozart Player soloist competition, and was selected to perform at the 2022 ASTA National Conference master class. He also performed at masterclasses with guest artists such as Peter Prosser from the Mannes School of Music (NYC), Ben Hong, Joshua Roman, Seth Biagini, and Ted Nelson. As a winner of the MetroArts YAD, he has been interviewed by the All Classical Portland radio station's On Deck With Young Musicians program. Andy was selected for the 2023 OrpheusPDX pathways program and participated in the performance of Mozart's *The Royal Shepherd (Il Re Pastore)* this summer. Currently, he is studying with Maria Shim. Outside of music, Andy enjoys many hobbies. He loves to cook, bake, and hang out with friends.





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