

Schwab 2025
ACADEMY OF MUSIC

SATURDAY, JULY 5 / 4:00 PM

**HENRY SCHWAB
VIOLIN & VIOLA COMPETITION**

SCHWAB SUMMER ORCHESTRA



PHOTO: BRANDON T. KING / THEOTUS MEDIA

PROGRAM

Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major (1775).....W.A. Mozart
K. 219, "Turkish" (1756–1791)

I. Allegro aperto – Adagio – Allegro aperto

II. Adagio

III. Rondeau: Tempo di Menuetto – Allegro – Tempo di Menuetto

Carlos Ozuna, violin

Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 1 (1898)..... Julius Conus
(1869–1942)

I. Allegro molto

II. Andante

III. Allegro

Leonora Vukovitz, violin

(INTERMISSION)

Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26 (1866)..... Max Bruch
(1838–1920)

I. Vorspiel: Allegro moderato

II. Adagio

III. Finale: Allegro energico

Isabella Zhou, violin



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15TH ANNUAL
HENRY SCHWAB VIOLIN & VIOLA COMPETITION
ACCOMPANIED BY THE SCHWAB SUMMER ORCHESTRA
ASHLEY WALTERS, CONDUCTOR

SATURDAY–SUNDAY, JULY 5 & 6, 2025

WELCOME to the 15th Annual Henry Schwab Violin & Viola Competition! We are so thrilled to present our incredibly talented soloists: Carlos Ozuna, Leonora Vukovitz, and Isabella Zhou (Category A) and Nicole Alexander, Yiyi Chang, Maya Kim, and Leo McDonnell (Category B).

These soloists have impressed us with their high level of musicality and professionalism, and we are thrilled to present them in two beautiful programs this weekend, accompanied by our incredible Schwab Summer Orchestra. We would like to thank this weekend's judges, Tomasz Golka, Mark Menzies – as well as our judges for the competition's preliminary rounds, Lorenz Gamma and Sharon Cooper – for their time, their constructive feedback, and their support and kindness to our soloists. We are excited to see what lies ahead for all of our promising finalists.

As always, we thank you for your support and look forward to seeing you again soon!

~ Ashley Walters

CATEGORY A SOLOISTS (JULY 5)

Carlos Ozuna, Leonora Vukovitz, Isabella Zhou

CATEGORY B SOLOISTS (JULY 6)

Nicole Alexander, Yiyi Chang, Maya Kim, Leo McDonnell

PRELIMINARY JUDGES

Sharon Cooper, Lorenz Gamma

FINAL ROUND JUDGES

Tomasz Golka, Mark Menzies

2025 FINAL ROUND JUDGES

(Scan the QR code for full artist bios.)



Mark Menzies is a violinist, violist, conductor, composer, and educator known internationally for his work in contemporary music. He has collaborated with leading composers including Sofia Gubaidulina, Brian Ferneyhough, Elliott Carter, and Liza Lim, and has appeared at major festivals such as Ojai, June in Buffalo, and Dartington. He began his professional career performing Bruch's Violin Concerto with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra under Maxim Shostakovich and has since appeared as soloist with orchestras in the U.S., New Zealand, and Europe. His performances span the complete Beethoven sonatas, Bach's solo works, as well as Ferneyhough's *Terrain*. Menzies was a founding member of The Salomon Ensemble in London and first violinist of Ensemble Sospeso in New York, presenting premieres at Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall. A dedicated educator, he taught at CalArts for 17 years and is now Professor of Music at the University of Canterbury. He was named an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in 2014.



Tomasz Golka is a conductor and composer who gained international recognition after winning First Prize at the 2003 Eduardo Mata International Conducting Competition. He has led major orchestras across North and South America and Europe, including the Seattle Symphony, Fort Worth Symphony, Warsaw Philharmonic, Sinfonia Varsovia, and OFUNAM in Mexico City. He has collaborated with renowned soloists such as Susan Graham, Alisa Weilerstein, and Inon Barnatan. Formerly Chief Conductor of the National Symphony of Colombia and Music Director of the Lubbock Symphony, he currently serves as Music Director of the Riverside Philharmonic. A dedicated composer, his works have been performed by several U.S. orchestras, and he was Composer-in-Residence for the 2018 Boulder International Chamber Music Competition. At Tanglewood, he conducted a historic performance of *The Soldier's Tale* with narrators Milton Babbitt, Elliott Carter, and John Harbison. Born in Warsaw, Golka studied violin at Rice University and conducting with David Effron and Gustav Meier. He also holds a Certificate in Film Scoring from UCLA Extension.

2025 FINALISTS - CATEGORY A



Carlos Ozuna has been surrounded by music his entire life—his mother works in the performing arts and his father is a professional musician. He began playing violin at Balboa Middle School in 2017, where he received the “Director’s Award for Orchestra” in 2019 and was accepted into the honors string orchestra his freshman year. At Buena High School, he earned multiple “Outstanding Performer” awards and the “National School Orchestra” award as a senior in 2023. Carlos studied under Dr. Andrew Tholl and Dr. Ashley Walters at Ventura College, where he completed his AA for Transfer in music and served as concertmaster of the Symphony and Chamber Orchestra for three years. He will attend Cal State Northridge in the fall to pursue a Bachelor’s in Violin Performance.



Isabella Zhou, age 11, is a fifth grader at Lang Ranch Elementary School in Thousand Oaks. She began studies at the Colburn School at age five under ShihLan Lavner and has performed in masterclasses with Kerson Leong, Martin Beaver, and Alexander Tregler. She received First Place in the 2024 Henry Schwab Violin Competition (B Category) and in the Glendale MTAC Concerto Competitions (2022; 2023). She was a Silver Medalist at the 2024 Junior Bach Festival Finals and a prizewinner at the SCJBF All-Strings Regionals, MTAC Contemporary Festival and VOCE competitions. She won 2nd Place in the Junior Division of the 2025 Culver City Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition. She enjoys ballet, painting, and making Chinese pasta and dumplings.



Leonora Vukovitz, age 14, is a violin student of her mother, Deborah Vukovitz, and began playing as a toddler by imitating her. She is the Second Prize winner of the 2024 Henry Schwab Violin & Viola Competition. She also premiered her mother’s “American Legends” Violin Concerto with Jennifer Walton’s Instrumental Casting Orchestra. Leonora has received honors from the American Virtuoso International Music Competition, SYMF, SCJBF, and the Topanga Fiddle Festival, and performed at Carnegie Hall. In 2024, Leonora appeared on CBS’s Family Film and TV Awards, playing violin with country artist Walker Hayes. Outside of music, she enjoys fashion design, writing, and acting.

2025 FINALISTS - CATEGORY B

(Scan the QR code for full artist bios.)



Nicole Alexander started violin at age 11 and studies with Elise Goodman. She has performed with Conejo Valley Youth Orchestra and Agoura High School Orchestra, including a 2019 trip to New Orleans for clinics and the Scholastic Music Festival. Nicole earned multiple gold medals in MTAC Contemporary Music Festival and Festimantic competitions and soloed with the Thousand Oaks Philharmonic in Opus 58 (2022). She has also performed at the MTAC state convention and participated in masterclasses through the Appassionata program.



Yiyi Chang, 15, studies with Elise Goodman and is a member of the Viewpoint School Orchestra. She won the Thousand Oaks Philharmonic Appassionata Competition, performing as soloist in two Opus 69 concerts. Yiyi completed Certificate of Merit Level 8 and attended the Montecito International Music Festival. She has performed Spanish folk songs in Junior Chamber Music and studied Spanish culture in Spain to deepen her musical interpretation. Yiyi also teaches violin to younger students and has participated in multiple masterclasses.



Maya Kim began violin in 3rd grade and studies with Shuwei Liu. She was principal second violinist with Conejo Valley Preparatory Youth Orchestra and performed with a quartet for the Thousand Oaks Philharmonic Opus 67. Maya was principal second violinist in chamber orchestra at Sequoia Middle School and will join Newbury Park High School's chamber orchestra as a freshman in fall 2025. She also performed en pointe in Pacific Festival Ballet's Nutcracker in 2024. Maya has participated in numerous regional festivals and earned superior ratings in solo and ensemble competitions.



Leo McDonnell, 15, studies violin with Dr. Keum Hwa Cha and Viktória Várkonyi. He completed the Advanced Certificate of Merit level and is principal violinist of the Laurel Springs Chamber Orchestra and assistant principal of the Conejo Valley Youth Orchestra. Leo has participated in Junior Chamber Music, the Colburn Summer Chamber Intensive, and earned scholarships to the Montecito International Music Festival and Nelli Shkolnikova Academy in France. His compositions for various ensembles have been performed by Colburn guest groups.

FLUTE

Ronan Friedl
Dylan Gruber
Sabrina Henderson
Carol Lockart^{∞^}
Dori Riggs §

OBOE

Kimaree Gilad^{∞^}
Owen Zgliniec

CLARINET

Brian Walsh ^
James Gilmore
Peyton Holladay
Nolan Hrdina-Rivera
Andy Huang

BASSOON

Nick Akdag^{∞^}
Maciej Flis ^

HORN

Joseph Fong
Melanie Link
Beau Lockhart
Joaquin Martinez
Jon Titmus^{∞^}

TRUMPET

Marla Ascencion
Nate Hunnicutt-Evans
Mario Lopez
David Pittel^{∞^}
Israel Ruiz

TROMBONE

Jared Geronimo
EUPHONIUM
Gwang Kim^{∞^}
Carlos Vargas

VIOLIN I

Eric Clark ^
Alex Fager
Clara Friedl
Liah Kraft
Isaac Lopez
Carlos Ozuna
Diego Salas
Maia Zander^{∞^}

VIOLIN II

Julissa Bozman ^
Melanie Festa
Mara Ysobel Garcia
Angela Gonzalez
Hannah Kelley
Ann Lam
Susan Philbrick
Hannah Murray
Emi Rangel
Isabella Vogelaar

VIOLA

Margot Aldcroft
Natasha Helmering
Connie Hood
Diane Gilbert ^
Jay Goodrich
Mark Gygas
Cynthia Lee
Rebecca Lee
Karen Long §

CELLO

Nancy Clarin
Charlotte Coates
Erika Duke-Kirkpatrick ^
Nathan Gallardo
Alanm Magana Gonzalez
Ian Lam
Skyla O'Connor
Anna Rowlands
Oval Wolf

BASS

Nathan Cardenas
Tony Colonna
Barry Newton^{∞^}
Mattie Rowlands
Gail Turner-Graham
David Wolfe

HARP

Emmy Pearson

PERCUSSION

Jordan Curcuruto^{∞^}
Mariella Koelln
Jack Sturgeon

^ Schwab Mentor

∞ VCPA Faculty

§ Guest Artist

ABOUT THE ACADEMY

The Ventura College **Miriam & Henry Schwab Academy of Music** provides opportunities in chamber music and orchestra to student instrumentalists through three main components.

The Schwab Summer Academy is an intensive program held each July. Participants study and perform a series of concerts alongside notable **professional mentors**. The **Extension Program** extends this mentorship throughout the year.

The Summer Academy dovetails with the **Henry Schwab Violin & Viola Competition**, a concerto competition that highlights talented young soloists accompanied by the Academy Orchestra.

“The Schwab Academy teaches more than just music,” says music director **Ashley Walters**. “It teaches students to develop a strong work ethic, how to work as a team player to meet goals, and provides students of all ages with an incredible community that can offer support and guidance as they pursue their dreams.”

STAFF

Ashley Walters
DIRECTOR

Brian Hotchkin
MARKETING / PR

John Hester
PROGRAM
COORDINATOR

Laura Solis-Teteris
ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT

SUPPORT

Miriam Schwab’s passion for music and her generous support of student musicians made the The Schwab Academy of Music possible. If you would like to help us strengthen and grow Miriam’s vision for the Academy, please consider making a donation through the **Ventura College Foundation**. For more information, contact Director of Planned Giving, Gerry Pantoja.

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SPECIAL THANKS

Claudia Lourido-Habib
Anthony Mansueto
Brent Wilson
Gabriel Aragon
Jamie Birkett
Grace Douglas
David Howarth
Anne King
Brandon King
Tyson Southoff
Laura Solis
Jeanne Tanner
Ventura Music Festival
Lalé Welsh

STILL TO COME

VENTURA MUSIC FESTIVAL
July 24 – 27 at the Ventura College Performing Arts Center