



For immediate release  
September 10, 2024, at 12 p.m.

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## **Boston Symphony Orchestra Presents a Free *Concert for the City* on Saturday, September 21**

Mainstage concert begins at 3 p.m. with community guest artists including **Boston Children’s Chorus** and **Veronica Robles and her Mariachi Ensemble** followed by the **Boston Symphony Orchestra** and the **Tanglewood Festival Chorus, Andris Nelsons**, and **Thomas Wilkins**, conductors, with **Boston Mayor Michelle Wu** performing George Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* with the **Boston Pops** led by **Keith Lockhart** plus vocalist **Renese King** performing “America the Beautiful” with the Pops and the TFC

Community showcases by musical artists take place outside Symphony Hall from 12–1:30 p.m. and continue inside from 1:30–2:30 p.m.

- **Complimentary tickets may be reserved starting September 12, at 10 a.m.**

- Please visit [BSO.org](https://www.bso.org) for ticketing information and full program details.

- Symphony Hall's doors open at 1 p.m.

- All attending the performances inside Symphony Hall must have a ticket.

- Tickets are not necessary to attend the outdoor performances.

Click here for a [press kit](#) for this event



The **Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO)** will hold a free *Concert for the City* on Saturday, September 21, with performances by community groups beginning outdoors at 12 p.m., and culminating with a 3 p.m. concert in Symphony Hall with **Boston Mayor Michelle Wu**, vocalist **Renese King**, and the **Tanglewood Festival Chorus** as featured guest artists.

**Veronica Robles and her Mariachi Ensemble**, the **Boston Children's Chorus**, and musicians of the **Boston Festival Orchestra** also will perform on the Symphony Hall stage, and Boston Youth Poet Laureate **Parker-Vincent Alva** will offer an invocation.

This September's *Concert for the City* is part of the BSO's Opening Weekend events to kick off its 2024–25 season in Boston. On the preceding evenings, the BSO will hold a gala concert to celebrate the start of Music Director **Andris Nelsons'** tenth anniversary season (Thurs., Sept. 19) and a circus-themed Boston Pops concert with **Keith Lockhart** conducting film music while Cirque de la Symphonie acrobats, aerialists, dancers, and jugglers perform on stage (Fri., Sept. 20). Nelsons and Lockhart will conduct portions of the *Concert for the City* program (Sat., Sept. 21) and will be joined by **Thomas Wilkins**, who conducts the BSO's annual Youth and Family Concerts, and the **Tanglewood Festival Chorus**.

With three of the BSO's named conductors participating and a diverse array of guest artists from the community, this fall's *Concert for the City* offers a full afternoon of free music that celebrates and showcases the talent and traditions of Boston's multicultural communities alongside performances by the world-renowned musicians of the BSO and Boston Pops and the extraordinary voices of the all-volunteer Tanglewood Festival Chorus (TFC).

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## **Community Showcases Outside and Inside Symphony Hall, 12–2:30 p.m.**

The event will begin outdoors at 12 p.m. with performances by community groups in the bank parking lot on Saint Stephen St. opposite Symphony Hall. The outdoor performances will run until 1:30 p.m. and will include appearances by the **Juan Nieves Trio**, **OrigNation** dance troupe, the **Arnie Williams Steel Drum Band**, and **Taneshia Nash Laird** as MC. Tickets are not required for the outdoor portion of the event. In case of rain, outdoor performances will take place inside Symphony Hall.

The Symphony Hall doors will open at 1 p.m., and those holding free tickets can enjoy performances by community groups from 1:30–2:30 p.m. in two indoor spaces. The groups performing will include: **Project STEP**, the **Spiritual Ensemble of Boston Arts Academy**, **Community Music Center of Boston**,

**Four Strings Academy**, members of the **Boston Pops Gospel Choir**, and Fidelity Young Artists Competition winners, tabla player **Dilzafer Singh** and jazz duo **Su Yavuz** and **Brian Washington**.

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## Symphony Hall Concert Program, 3–5 p.m.

The mainstage concert will begin at 3 p.m. with an invocation by Boston Youth Poet Laureate **Parker-Vincent Alva** followed by performances by the **Boston Children's Chorus**, **Veronica Robles** and her all-female **Mariachi Ensemble**, and musicians of the **Boston Festival Orchestra**.

After an intermission, the **Boston Symphony Orchestra** will take the stage with Music Director **Andris Nelsons** conducting *Festive Overture and Fanfare*, a new work commissioned in his honor by BSO Composer Chair **Carlos Simon**, followed by the second movement of Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6. The **Tanglewood Festival Chorus** will join the BSO. The BSO's portion of the program will end with **Thomas Wilkins** conducting Adolphus Hailstork's *Fanfare on Amazing Grace* and Missy Mazzoli's *Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres)*.

Next, **Keith Lockhart** and the **Boston Pops** will perform George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* with the afternoon's featured guest soloist, **Boston Mayor Michelle Wu** at the piano. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the iconic Jazz Age work, which showcases the piano soloist's melodic interplay with the orchestra. Mayor Wu is making her second appearance as a guest soloist at Symphony Hall, having performed the second movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 21 in C with the BSO at the May 2023 *Concert for the City*. The afternoon's musical program will conclude with the Pops performing their exclusive arrangement of "America the Beautiful" with the TFC and guest vocalist **Renese King**.

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### Statement from BSO President and CEO Chad Smith:

"We're excited to welcome our friends and neighbors back to Symphony Hall for what will be our fifth *Concert for the City* since the first event in February 2020. This fall's concert is the most ambitious and inclusive program yet, with more than a dozen community groups participating in pre-concert and mainstage

performances. We are thrilled to welcome Mayor Wu back to the stage for her performance of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, and we are grateful to our event host committee for connecting us with community organizations across the city. Symphony Hall was built as a space where community ties could be strengthened through music. This concert continues that tradition, offering an inspiring experience that reflects the spirit of our city."

**Statement from Boston Mayor Michelle Wu:**

"We are blessed in Boston to be home to world-class artists and musicians who are also deeply embedded in community. The BSO's annual *Concert for the City* is a beautiful tradition that connects communities across our neighborhoods with the joy and beauty of making music together. I am so grateful for the Boston Symphony Orchestra and partners for investing in our community and bringing generations together year after year."

**Statement from Boston Pops Conductor Keith Lockhart:**

"I am thrilled to be part of this year's *Concert for the City*—it's a rare treat to share the podium with Andris, and Thomas, and I am especially excited to lead our multi-talented Mayor in one of my all-time favorite pieces, Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. And I'm delighted that the superb and soulful vocalist Renese King will join the Pops and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus to close out the show with 'America the Beautiful.' Making the day even more special, Dilzafer Singh, Su Yavuz, and Brian Washington, three winners of last season's Fidelity Young Artists Competition, will return as part of the pre-concert performances."

**Statement from BSO Music Director Andris Nelsons:**

"We are so pleased that our Opening Weekend events include a free concert program that brings together our Boston community through the BSO, the Boston Pops and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus. I am honored to share this afternoon of music-making with talented local artists and my colleagues Keith Lockhart and Thomas Wilkins. It was an honor to conduct Mayor Wu in 2023, and we look forward to her return to our stage this month. I am also excited to conduct a newly commissioned work by our Composer Chair Carlos Simon and a movement from Tchaikovsky's beloved Symphony No. 6."

## How to Reserve Free Tickets

Tickets are available at no charge and can be reserved starting Thursday, September 12, at 10 a.m. through [BSO.org](https://www.bso.org), by calling 888-266-1200, or by

visiting the Symphony Hall Box Office ([see hours](#)). Some tickets may remain available at the door on the day of the show. Please note: A ticket will be required to enter Symphony Hall when the doors open at 1 p.m. The outdoor performances do not require a ticket.

## Accessibility

Accessible seating will be available. Other accommodations including ASL Interpretation and Braille programs will be available for this performance. Please call 617-638-9341 or email [access@bso.org](mailto:access@bso.org) for any help with accommodations. For more information, [visit our website](#).

## Other Free Programs Offered by the BSO

The BSO last offered a *Concert for the City* in May 2024, featuring guest violinist Nathan Amaral and Boston Arts Academy's Tina Turner Tribute. On September 29, the Boston Symphony Chamber Players will perform a free concert at the Union United Methodist Church in Boston featuring an all-American repertoire curated by Composer Chair Carlos Simon ([reserve tickets](#)). Other free events offered in Boston each season include the [Community Chamber Concert series](#) (2024-25 dates TBA), [Youth Concerts](#) and [High School Open Rehearsals](#) (both of these are free for Boston Public School students), and the annual Boston Pops *Fourth of July Fireworks Spectacular* on the Charles River Esplanade. During the summer season at Tanglewood, a number of programs are offered at no charge through the Tanglewood Music Center and the Tanglewood Learning Institute.

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## Titles for BSO Artistic and Executive Leadership

**Andris Nelsons**, Ray and Maria Stata BSO Music Director and Head of Conducting at Tanglewood

**Chad Smith**, Eunice and Julian Cohen BSO President and CEO

**Keith Lockhart**, Julian and Eunice Cohen Boston Pops Conductor

**Thomas Wilkins**, Artistic Advisor for Education and Community Engagement / Germeshausen Youth and Family Concerts Conductor

**James Burton**, Alan J. and Suzanne W. Dworsky BSO Choral Director and Conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus

**Carlos Simon**, Deborah and Philip Edmundson Composer Chair

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## More BSO News

For more news about the BSO and Boston Pops, [read our recent press releases](#) or follow us on social media.



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Tanglewood | 297 West Street | Lenox, MA 01240 | [Box Office Hours](#)

Symphony Hall | 301 Massachusetts Avenue | Boston, MA 02115 | [Box Office Hours](#)

Ticketing & Customer Service | 617.266.1200 (M-F: 10-4pm & Sat: 12:30pm-4:30pm) Service & Tickets | Subscriptions 888.266.7575

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