



International Conductors Guild
Arkansas Symphony Orchestra

Conductor Training Workshop

October 27 - 31, 2025

Arkansas Symphony Orchestra
Little Rock, AR

Maestro Geoffrey Robson, Music Director and Conductor
with
Dr. John Farrer
Dr. Julius P. Williams

[Apply now](#) for the **International Conductors Guild - Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Conductor Workshop with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra**, Geoffrey Robson, Music Director & Conductor, held Monday, October 27, 2025 through Friday, October 31, 2025

with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, Little Rock, Arkansas. This workshop will be held in the ASO's beautiful, newly built Stella Bolye Smith Music Center and will include a comprehensive week of technique, repertoire discussions, in-depth score study, and career advice and discussions. You will not find a more comprehensive conducting workshop anywhere!



MAESTRO GEOFFREY ROBSON

Named winner of the 2017 Respighi Prize in Conducting by the Chamber Orchestra of New York, Geoffrey Robson has emerged as a force of artistic leadership throughout the United States and the state of Arkansas.

The Arkansas Symphony Orchestra has named Maestro Robson as its sixth Music Director after a four-year nationwide search. Prior to his recent appointment, his tenure as the Arkansas Symphony's Artistic Director and Principal Conductor was a significant success. His dynamic leadership during the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in national and state-wide visibility for the organization. The orchestra's Bedtime with Bach online concert series received nationwide acclaim and was featured by the Washington Post and the Kelly Clarkson Show.

Over the past three years, he has played an integral role in the planning, development, and design of the new ASO Stella Boyle Smith Music Center, which officially opened in September 2024. His influential leadership helped secure funding and community support for the orchestra's \$11.7 million dollar project.

During his tenure with the ASO, Robson has conducted critically acclaimed and sold-out masterworks, pops, chamber, and educational concerts throughout the state. His innovative programming has brought new audiences into the hall and made all feel welcome, and has inspired and energized the orchestra. Robson envisions his role in the community as a connector, bringing the community closer together and making it more inclusive.

In 2021, he conducted and served as executive producer for the recording of Florence Price's Concerto in One Movement with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, featuring pianist Karen Walwyn. This was the orchestra's first commercial release in over 20 years. He has conducted numerous ballet and opera productions including The Nutcracker, La Bohème, and Madama Butterfly with the Plano (Texas) and Waterbury (Connecticut) symphonies and Opera in the Rock (Little Rock). As a founding member of The Chelsea Symphony (New York), he conducted numerous sold-out performances and served as artistic advisor, ensuring the growth and success of the organization.

A champion of new music, he collaborates with and explores the music of renowned living composers. In 2016, he conducted the San Juan (Colorado) Symphony in the world-premiere of James Stephenson's Concerto for Hope with celebrated trumpeter Ryan Anthony. He served as arranger, conductor, and violinist for the world-premiere of Billy Blythe, a one-act opera based on the life of the young Bill Clinton, by Bonnie Montgomery. He conducted the premiere of Into the Beautiful North by Joe Brent, performed by the 9 Horses trio, as well as the premiere of Richard III, A Crown of Roses, A Crown of Thorns, an opera by Karen Griebing. In 2021 and 2022, he secured co-commissions of new works by Tania León and James Lee III, which were performed by the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra.

An active violinist, Robson is an avid chamber musician and regularly collaborates with musicians across the country. He also serves as Artistic Director of the Faulkner Chamber Music Festival. In this role, he curates a summer concert series and serves as director of the chamber music camp for students.

He served as concertmaster of the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra and as Assistant Concertmaster of the Waterbury Symphony. He is also recognized for his skill and versatility as a fiddle player and has established himself as a highly sought-after studio musician. He writes and performs string and orchestral arrangements for recording artists to assist them in achieving their goals in the studio. His arrangements have also been featured on numerous Arkansas Symphony Orchestra performances.

Robson studied orchestral conducting at the Mannes College of Music in New York City under the tutelage of David Hayes and holds violin performance degrees from Yale University and the Michigan State University Honors College. Primary violin teachers include Erick Friedman, Dmitri Berlinsky, James Krehbiel, and I-fu Wang. He studied conducting at Yale University with Lawrence Leighton Smith, Edward Cumming, and Shinik Hahm. Other notable teachers include John Farrer, Neil Thomson, Joana Carneiro, Dirk Brossé, Salvatore Di Vittorio, and Larry Rachleff.



DR. JOHN FARRER

Dr. John Farrer was Music Director of the Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra, California for over 30 years, was formerly President of the Conductors Guild and has been Music Director of the Roswell Symphony Orchestra for over 40 years. He is also Music Director of the Santa Maria Philharmonic. Dr. Farrer is co-founder of the London Conducting Workshop with Maestro Howard Williams.

Dr Farrer is a frequent guest with orchestras in England, and visits London on a regular basis in the capacity of guest conductor. As senior guest conductor of the English Sinfonia he has toured with the orchestra throughout England and northern France. His eight recordings with the London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, Bournemouth Symphony and English Sinfonia have received high praise from critics around the world. He has been associated with the San Francisco Symphony as a cover conductor for the orchestra's subscription concerts.

Dr Farrer was a speaker in the San Francisco Symphony's series of Inside Music talks, led the orchestra in Concerts for Kids, and conducted a programme at Stern Grove which attracted 20,000 listeners. Mr Farrer is also a member of the music advisory committee of the Young Musicians Foundation of Los Angeles, and has been appointed a national trustee of the National Symphony Orchestra of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington.

Maestro Farrer recently received an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from the University of California Fine Arts System. Dr. Farrer served as President of the Conductors Guild and now holds the title Emeritus President of the International Conductors Guild.



DR. JULIUS WILLIAMS

Julius Williams is an award-winning conductor, composer, recording artist, educator, author and pianist and has been named one of Musical America's Top 30 Professionals of the Year in 2022. His career has taken him from his native New York to musical venues around the globe, and he has been involved in virtually every musical genre. Maestro Williams' Carnegie Hall conducting debut was with the "Symphony Saint Paulia" inaugural concerts in New York City. He has conducted American orchestras in Dallas, Buffalo, New Jersey, Oakland, Hartford, New Haven, Akron, Vermont, Knoxville, Sacramento, Paducah, Norwalk, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Savannah, the Harlem Symphony, Color of Music Festival Orchestra, and the New Works Orchestra. Dr. Williams was Music Director of the Washington Symphony (1998-2003) which was the official orchestra of Washington, DC. He was also the Conductor of the Pulitzer Prize performance of the Anthony Davis Opera, "Central Park Five/Five" originally premiering and preparing the work for the Trilogy: An Opera Company, in NJ. His past positions include Artistic Director of the Music Festival of the Costa del Sol, Spain, and Artistic Director of the School of Choral Studies of New

York State Summer School of the Arts for ten seasons. He has conducted on tour the Oberlin Conservatory Opera and Cleveland Opera Theater receiving rave reviews for the performances of the opera, "Harriett Tubman" and the world premiere of the opera "Edmonia" at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan which was broadcast on Michigan Public Television.

Dr. Williams conducted a Gala performance with the Dallas Symphony at the Black Academy Third Annual Riverfest Festival in Dallas Texas. In the past, he has served as Assistant Conductor to the late Maestro Lucas Foss with The Brooklyn Philharmonic and with the American Symphony in New York. He is currently Artistic Director and Conductor of the Berklee Contemporary Symphony Orchestra in Boston and Music Director and Conductor of the Trilogy An Opera Company in New Jersey, he served as Composer with the Boston Symphony Orchestra "Composer In Residence, Project" (2018-20). He also serves as a cover (understudy) conductor to the Boston Pops Orchestra (BSO) in Boston and has served as a cover conductor to the Rhode Island Philharmonic. Most recently he was the conductor of the Academy Award eligible film Sky Blossom. he was guest conductor of the Color of Music Festival in South Carolina featuring the wonderful artist Vanessa Williams. In 2022 he appeared with the Inner City Youth Orchestra at the League of American Orchestras National Conference and also with the National Chorale and Orchestra at David Geffen Hall in New York. Recent past seasons included performances as guest conductor at the Isabella Gardner Museum Boston Series, OneWorld Festival Orchestra in Virginia, the Color of Music Festival Orchestra in Sacramento, the Monteux Festival in Maine, a gala performance with the group "Sweet Honey and the Rock" at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, and the Celebrity Series of Boston with the Berklee Contemporary Orchestra. He also served as an adjudicator in New York for Opera America and as a commentator with the Boston Lyric Opera. He composed the music "Dreams" for the Boston Children's Choir "Raising the Roof "concert televised on national critically acclaimed television and recorded on their 2010 CD. He also wrote and was commissioned to write the music to the score to "Those Heroes Who Healed a Nation" for the dedication of the Shaw 54th regiment memorial performed in 2022 by the Boston Childrens Chorus and as well for the 2022 Boston Pops July 4 spectacular, performed the world premiere orchestral version on national television with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus and Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Keith Lockhart. In addition he composed the Music for the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Hartt School of Music, University of Hartford, with a composition for jazz ensemble, dance. Julius Williams' discography includes the critically acclaimed "Symphonic Brotherhood" a collection of African-

American symphonic music, "Shades of Blue," "The New American Romanticism," Somewhere Far Away, Places in Time, The American Soloist and Midnight Tolls, all available on the Albany Records label. "Moments of Arrival" on Centaur Records and "The Bird That Wants to Fly" a children's opera on Naxos/ Roven Records. 2024-25 saw his newest recordings Alone/Together The Dreams & Diversity of the American Composer, and A Legacy of African American Classical Spirit, released on the Albany Record /Parma Label.

His recordings are on the Albany, Parma, Centaur, Naxos and Videmus Record labels and were featured as the recording of the month on Sirius XM. In addition to his conducting and composing careers, Williams maintains a demanding schedule of speaking engagements, consulting and academics. A dedicated educator, Williams has served on the faculties of Wesleyan University, The University of Hartford, and The University of Vermont. He has been Visiting Conductor of Orchestra at Skidmore College in Saratoga, NY, Affiliate Artist-Teacher of Composition at Purchase College of the State University of New York, and Co-Director of Videmus Records, and Visiting Associate Professor and Jessie Ball Dupont Scholar at Shenandoah University and Conservatory in Virginia.

Dr. Williams is presently Professor of Composition and Artistic Director/conductor at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts and Music Director of Trilogy An Opera Company. Julius Williams' educational consulting and speaking engagements have included, this year (2024) in Spain served as President of the Internationally Judge at the International Wind Band Contest for the "City of Valencia". Maestro Williams has performed and recorded with The Prague Radio Symphony, and The Moscow Conservatory Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica Juvenil, José Joaquín de Olmedo in Ecuador, Principal Military Orchestra of the Defense Ministry of the Russian Federation, The Dvorak Symphony Orchestra, The Volvodanksa Symphony of Serbia, The Dubrovnik Symphony of Croatia, The Brno State Philharmonic, The Bohuslav- Martinu Philharmonic Orchestra, and The Music Festival of the Costa del Sol, Spain. A prolific composer, Maestro Williams has created works for virtually every genre of contemporary classical performance, including opera, ballet, orchestra, chamber ensemble, chorus and solo voice, dance, musical theatre and film. His music has been performed by countless symphony orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Boston Symphony, Detroit Symphony, St Louis Symphony, Richmond, Hartford and countless orchestras around the world in the season 24-25 the Boston Symphony performed his "Songs for My Culture" for Chamber Orchestra. He has also served as Composer-in-Residence of Connecticut's Nutmeg Ballet Company, which premiered his ballet, "Cinderella". The opera "Guinevere" was performed at the Aspen Music Festival and at Dubrovnik Music Festival in Croatia. He was composer of the score for the film "What Color is Love?" and he also scored the theatrical production to "In Dahomey". His Cantata "A Journey to Freedom" for the Reston Chorale and Festival Orchestra in Virginia was recorded on his Album "Somewhere Far Away" 2009 on the Albany He has been an artist at The Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow Russia and The Shanghai Conservatory in China where he also served as the first American Adjudicator of the Rivers Music Composers Competition.

Dr. Williams is the Immediate Past President of the International Conductors Guild serving as President for four years and he is also Chair of the League of American Orchestras Conductors Constituency and a mentor for the League. additionally, he has served on The Advisory Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts ,and Adjudication Committee for the Fulbright Awards,Adjudicator for ASCAP, Adjudicator Ellis-Beauregard Foundation, Educational Consultant to the Norwalk Symphony in Connecticut and He regularly serves as Guest Curator and Host for the Sirius XM Radio Program "Living American" Program.

WORKSHOP REQUIREMENTS

All participating conductors must be Members of the International Conductors Guild -

Click here for [HOW TO JOIN](#) or [RENEW](#)

Regular memberships are \$120/year, student memberships, \$75/year, and senior memberships, \$100/year.

All applicants must apply via our [Online Application Portal](#) which requires a \$40 non-refundable application fee.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Monday, October 27, 2025

10:00am - 12:30pm - Technique Group class

12:30pm - 2:00pm - Lunch

2:00pm - 4:30pm - Conductor technique class

Tuesday, October 28, 2025

10:00am - 12:30pm - Beethoven - Symphony No. 1, C Major, Opus 21 (1795 - 1800) - Two pianos session

12:30pm - 2:00pm - Lunch

2:00pm - 4:30pm - Tchaikovsky - Symphony No. 4, F minor, Op. 36, (1877 - 78) - Two pianos session

Wednesday, October 29, 2025

10:00am - 12:30pm - Price - Symphony No. 1 in E minor (1931–32) - String quartet session

12:30pm - 2:00pm - Lunch

2:00pm - 4:30pm - Tchaikovsky/Price - String orchestra session

Thursday, October 30, 2025

AM - Off podium workshop session

2:00pm - 4:30pm - Beethoven - Full Orchestra session

Friday, October 31, 2025

1:30pm - 4:00pm - Dress Rehearsal - Full Orchestra - All Repertoire

7:30pm - Concert - Full Orchestra

REPERTOIRE

Beethoven - Symphony No. 1, Op.21, C Major (1880)

- I. *Adagio molto - Allegro con brio*
- II. *Andante cantabile con moto*
- III. *Minuet. Allegro molto e vivace*
- IV. *Finale. Adagio - Allegro molto e vivace*

Florence Price - String Quartet No. 1, G Major

- II. *Andante moderato*

Tchaikovsky - Serenade for Strings, in C Major, Op. 48 (1880)

- I. *Pezzo in forma di Sonatina*
- II. *Walzer*
- III. *Elégie*
- IV. *Finale (Tema Russo)*

WORKSHOP TUITION

Ten conductors will be selected as active participants for this workshop. Auditors are welcome.

- Participating Conductor: \$2,650 (USD)
- Auditor Conductor: \$800 (USD)

CLICK HERE TO APPLY

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact

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