



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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THE 50TH SEASON OF THE OCALA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCED

OCALA, Fla. (May 21, 2025) – The Ocala Symphony Orchestra is pleased to announce their 2025-2026 season with timeless masterworks, exciting repertoire, and world-class soloists under the baton of Maestro Matthew Wardell. The 50th season begins June 29, 2025, with Red, White, and OSO Blue, and subscription performances begin October 2025. The upcoming season will feature six subscription concerts, seven special events, and four chamber music concerts for guests of all ages. Unless otherwise indicated, events are held at the Reilly Arts Center located at 500 NE 9th St. Ocala, FL 34470.

The Symphony's special concert selection is on sale now, including the annual Red, White, and OSO Blue celebration, Nutcracker with live orchestra, and the new chamber music series in the NOMA Black Box at the Reilly Arts Center.

"Planning our 50th Anniversary Season was both a joy and a responsibility. After much research, listening, and reflection, each piece I've programmed was thoughtfully chosen and has deliberate meaning. This milestone season reflects the heart of "Your Orchestra, Your Music." It features repertoire that will absolutely thrill and delight, world-class soloists joining us from home and abroad, and a collective program that surpasses anything we've done before. The 2025-26 season is not only a celebration of our first 50 years but a bold statement that—with your continued support—your orchestra will be playing your music for the *next* 50 years and beyond" - Matthew Wardell, Music Director.

Current Ocala Symphony Subscribers can renew their subscriptions today by calling our box office at 352-351-1606 or visiting in person during our hours Tuesday through Friday 10 AM to 2 PM. New subscribers can begin purchasing on July 1 at 10 AM. [Click here](#) to complete the early bird registration form and be among the first contacted for new subscriptions. Season subscribers can save as much as 42% over single tickets, priority seating, free ticket exchanges, and other loyalty perks. Single tickets for subscription concerts will be available starting August 1, 2025. Season support is provided by WUFT Classic and Ocala/Marion County Visitor and Convention Bureau.

We will also be hosting Open Rehearsals, sponsored by AdventHealth Ocala for students and families and Coffee/Cocktails with the Conductor events. These events are free, open to the public, and serve to give audiences a behind-the-scenes look at how a concert comes together, learn more about the composers and music that you will hear during concerts, and connect with the orchestra outside of a formal concert setting. For more information about season subscriptions, essential dates, and tickets for individual concerts visit www.reillyartscenter.com/ocala-symphony.

2025-2026 Ocala Symphony Orchestra Subscription Concerts

Nights in the Gardens of Spain

Saturday, October 18, 2025 – 7:30 PM & Sunday, October 19, 2025 – 3:00 PM

Open Rehearsal (free to the public): Friday, October 17, 2025 - 7 PM

Kick off the Ocala Symphony's milestone 50th Anniversary Season with a thrilling concert of vibrant rhythms and evocative melodies! This dazzling program takes you on a musical journey through Spain, showcasing its rich cultural tapestry and fiery passion. Experience the electrifying energy of Rimsky-Korsakov's Capriccio Espagnol and be swept away by the shimmering beauty of Manuel de Falla's Nights in the Gardens of Spain, featuring the extraordinary Spanish pianist, José María Inglés. After intermission, explore the lush landscapes of María de Pablos' Castilla – her music coming to the United States for the first time! – and revel in the timeless allure of selections from Bizet's Carmen. This unforgettable evening marks the beginning of a golden year for the Ocala Symphony. Come celebrate five decades of music, community, and artistry!

Pops! Goes the Holidays

Saturday, December 6, 2025 – 7:30 PM | Sunday, December 7, 2025 – 3:00 PM

Celebrate the magic of the season with a festive holiday concert for the whole family! Experience the warmth of Christmas Canticles and the heartwarming charm of The Snowman and the Snowdog, performed live with film! After intermission, revel in the holiday spirit with beloved classics, including Fantasia on Greensleeves and Tchaikovsky's sparkling Pas de Deux from The Nutcracker. Raise your voice in a joyful Holly Jolly Sing-A-Long and cap the night with the iconic Sleigh Ride by Leroy Anderson. This enchanting program is the perfect way to celebrate the season—don't miss it!

Sponsored by On Top of The World.

Romantic America

Saturday, January 24, 2026 – 7:30 PM & Sunday, January 25, 2026 – 3:00 PM

Open Rehearsal (free to the public): Friday, January 23, 2026 - 7 PM

Immerse yourself in an evening of American orchestral splendor! Led by the Ocala Symphony's Principal Guest Conductor, Raymond Chobaz, the performance begins with Charles Tomlinson Griffes' The Pleasure-Dome of Kubla-Khan, a shimmering, exotic tone poem inspired by Coleridge's mystical poetry. Next, celebrated violinist Yefim Romanov takes the stage for Samuel Barber's Violin Concerto, Op. 14. From its lyrical opening to its fiery finale, this American masterpiece showcases virtuosic brilliance and heartfelt expression. After intermission, the program concludes with Howard Hanson's Symphony No. 2, "Romantic". A sweeping and richly melodic work, this American symphony's lush textures and triumphant themes are a heartfelt tribute to the enduring power of the human spirit. Don't miss this unforgettable journey!

Film Music Spectacular

Saturday, February 14, 2026 – 7:30 PM & Sunday, February 15, 2026 – 3:00 PM

Open Rehearsal (free to the public): Friday, February 13, 2026 - 7 PM

Experience the magic of Hollywood with an evening of unforgettable film music! From the sweeping romance of Tara's Theme from Gone With the Wind to the thrilling adventure of Pirates of the Caribbean, this program celebrates the power of the silver screen. Through powerful music, relive the wonder of Star Wars, the timeless charm of Breakfast at Tiffany's with Moon River, and the breathtaking awe of Jurassic Park. With highlights from The Dark Knight, Harry Potter, Cinema Paradiso, and How to Train your Dragon, this concert promises a spectacular journey through some of the most iconic movie scores ever composed. Let the music transport you to the worlds of your favorite films in this must-see event!

To Spring!

Saturday, March 21, 2026 – 7:30 PM & Sunday, March 22, 2026 – 3:00 PM

Open Rehearsal (free to the public): Friday, March 20, 2026 - 7 PM

Celebrate the beauty of nature and the brilliance and growth of young talent! The program begins with Daniel Perttu's evocative To Spring, a lush and colorful piece that captures the spirit of renewal and growth, written in honor of his two young daughters. Then you'll experience the incredible artistry of the winners of our 35th Annual Young Artist Competition as they take the stage to showcase their extraordinary skills alongside the Ocala Symphony. After intermission, be transported to the countryside with Beethoven's Symphony No. 6, "Pastoral". From the tranquil scenes by the brook to the drama of a thunderstorm and the joyous gratitude that follows, this programmatic masterpiece is a vivid

and uplifting tribute to nature's beauty and power. Don't miss this inspiring evening of music, talent, and celebration!

I Got Rhythm: Bernstein, Gershwin, and Copland

Saturday, April 11, 2026 – 7:30 PM & Sunday, April 12, 2026 – 3:00 PM

Open Rehearsal (free to the public): Friday, April 10, 2026 - 7 PM

The dynamic finale of our golden anniversary season is pulsing with vibrant energy and brilliance! The program begins with Leonard Bernstein's sparkling Overture to Candide, followed by selections from West Side Story and the lively Three Dance Episodes from On the Town, capturing big city life and the magic of Broadway. In Act II a returning friend of the orchestra, Evans Haile, dazzles on piano in Gershwin's playful Variations on "I Got Rhythm", paired with the cinematic beauty of An American in Paris. Gershwin's jazz-infused melodies will transport you to the bustling streets of 1920s Paris. This exciting program concludes with Aaron Copland's sweeping Billy the Kid Suite, celebrating the bold spirit of the American West. Don't miss this electrifying journey through some of the most iconic works of the 20th century.

Special Concerts

Red, White, and Ocala Symphony Blue: A Salute to our Troops

Sunday, June 29, 2025 – 3:00 PM

The Ocala Symphony pays tribute to our Independence and a celebration of all things patriotic with a special salute to our Veterans! You'll be marching to the beat of Sousa, enjoying all kinds of American music from pops to the profound, and leave feeling completely uplifted in this celebration of America's 249th birthday! This annual event sells out every season, so get your tickets fast! *Sponsored by Grace Dunlevy and Bob Levenson and Justin Yancey - Edward Jones Financial Advisor.*

Threads of Light: A New Requiem

Sunday, September 28, 2025 – 3:00 PM

This world premiere work from local treasure Joshua L. Mazur brings together talent, heartfelt creativity, and the combined artistry of your Ocala Symphony and Chorus. Composed specifically for the Ocala Symphony's golden anniversary season, Threads of Light is a luminous blend of traditional mass texts and deeply personal poetry. Featuring a unique instrumentation with crowd-favorite soloists, Alexis Ault, Hannah Mazur, and Kimberly Milton, this new work creates a rich, intimate soundscape. Do not miss this exploration of light, hope, and renewal!

Handel's Messiah

Sunday, November 23, 2025 - 3:00 PM

Immerse yourself in the transcendent power of Handel's Messiah with the Ocala Symphony Chorus. From the joyous proclamation of For Unto Us a Child Is Born to the triumphant Hallelujah chorus, this program is a musical journey that resonates deeply with audiences year after year. As a unique addition, the program includes Johann Sebastian Bach's Mein Jesu, was vor Seelenweh in a lush arrangement by Leopold Stokowski. We'll conclude with the stirring I Know That My Redeemer Liveth and Worthy Is the Lamb, leaving listeners uplifted and inspired. Whether you are a lifelong lover of Handel's work or discovering it for the first time, this concert promises to be an unforgettable celebration of seasonal themes, artistry, and community.

22nd Symphony Under the Lights

Friday, December 5, 2025 – 7:30 PM

Free Admission

Hot chocolate, family, friends, and festive music! What more could one ask for? The Ocala Symphony and members of the Ocala Youth Symphony bring this joyful annual free concert to the community under the incredible oaks of Tuscahill Park. Bring a blanket or chair and enjoy! *Sponsored by Jenkins Auto Group and City of Ocala.*

Nutcracker with the Ocala Symphony

Saturday, December 13, 2025 – 7:00 PM

For the first time ever in Ocala, experience the magic of live orchestra and ballet when the Ocala Symphony Orchestra and Dance Alive National Ballet unite for a breathtaking live performance of Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker. *In partnership with Dance Alive National Ballet.*

Young Artist Competition Finals

Sunday, January 11, 2026 – 3:00 PM

This special recital performance features the finalists from our 35th annual Young Artist Competition. These talented young musicians, from our junior and senior divisions, take the stage to perform their concerto with a pianist for a live audience. The winners will be selected live immediately following the performance and will go on to perform as soloists with the full Ocala Symphony at "To Spring!" on March 21 and 22, 2026.

Celtic Visions II

Sunday, March 15, 2026 - 3:00 PM

Embark on a retrospective journey through beloved music inspired by Celtic Woman, Riverdance, and Enya. Celtic Visions II is an enchanting concert showcasing timeless melodies and modern classics that capture the heart and soul of the Celtic tradition. The evening features the Ocala Symphony and Chorus, performing alongside a trio of gifted sopranos—Hannah Mazur, Alexis Ault, and Hannah Stucky. These extraordinary musicians bring this iconic music to life with passion and artistry. Whether you are a fan of the traditional or the contemporary, Celtic Visions promises an unforgettable evening of music that will touch your heart and transport your spirit. Join us for this celebration of Celtic artistry, where the ethereal beauty of the past meets the vibrant energy of the present.

Ocala Symphony's Music Box Series

Join virtuosic musicians from the Ocala Symphony and their talented friends for an intimate chamber music experience in the Reilly's NOMA Black Box Theatre. These world-class performances go beyond the music, featuring engaging discussions where musicians share insights and stories about the pieces they perform.

Music Box 1: Joshua and Hannah Mazur

September 7, 2025 - 3:00 PM

Featuring Ocala Symphony Chorus Choirmaster Joshua Mazur and friend of the orchestra, soprano Hannah Mazur.

Music Box 2: The Tritium Ensemble

November 9, 2025 - 3:00 PM

Featuring the Ocala Symphony's Principal 2nd Violinist, Aniela Moldovan, horn section member, Will Winter, and Canadian composer and pianist, Christopher Goddard.

Music Box 3: Kristen Stoner and the Flutes of the Ocala Symphony

March 1, 2026 - 3:00 PM

Featuring Ocala Symphony Principal Flute, Kristen Stoner and OSO flutists, Dylan King, Emily Theobald, and Karissa McKinney.

Music Box 4: Arnold Irchai and Dale Fedele

May 3, 2026 - 3:00 PM

Featuring Ocala Symphony Principal Bassoonist, Arnold Irchai and clarinet section and utility player, Dale Fedele.

Coffee & Cocktails with the Conductor

These free, educational and engaging sessions give audiences the opportunity to learn more about each concert repertoire, the history behind the pieces and composers, and participate in an informal Q&A with Maestro Matt Wardell.

Coffee with the Conductor: Season Preview

Wednesday August 13, 2025 - 10:00 AM at the Marion Theatre

Cocktails with the Conductor: Season Preview

Wednesday August 13, 2025 - 6:00 PM in the NOMA Black Box at the Reilly Arts Center

Coffee with the Conductor: Opening Night

Wednesday October 15, 2025 - 10:00 AM at the Marion Theatre

Cocktails with the Conductor: Opening Night

Wednesday October 15, 2025 - 6:00 PM in the NOMA Black Box at the Reilly Arts Center

Coffee with the Conductor: Romantic America

Wednesday January 21, 2026 - 10:00 AM at the Marion Theatre

Cocktails with the Conductor: Romantic America

Wednesday January 21, 2026 - 6:00 PM in the NOMA Black Box at the Reilly Arts Center

Cocktails with the Conductor: The Orchestra and Film Music

Wednesday February 11, 2026 - 6:00 PM in the NOMA Black Box at the Reilly Arts Center

Coffee with the Conductor: To Spring! and the Young Artists Competition

Wednesday March 18, 2026 - 10:00 AM at the Marion Theatre

Coffee with the Conductor: I Got Rhythm and Closing Night!

Wednesday April 8, 2026 - 10:00 AM at the Marion Theatre

Cocktails with the Conductor: I Got Rhythm and Closing Night!

Wednesday April 8, 2026 - 6:00 PM in the NOMA Black Box at the Reilly Arts Center

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