

The Arizona Symphony Orchestra

María Fátima Corona del Toro, conductor

J Alexander Bennett, conductor

Flute

Kayla Blackburn
Cole Nagoda
Benjamin Rothermich,
piccolo

Oboe

Sara Hammelef
Merle Weisshaupt

Clarinet

Cameron Galvin
Allyson Sudduth

Bassoon

Matthew Dutczak
Chris Werner

Horn

Carson Hielscher
Anyu Merten
Steph Moots
Andy Schaefer
Emma Trantum

Trumpet

Paul Dempsey
Addison Smith

Trombone

Ethan Owens, bass
Sterling Powell
Alex Thompson

Tuba

Guthrie Weishaupt

Percussion

Mitchell Allaman
Matt Kulm
John Swartz

Violin

Madeline Ahluwalia
Giah Bush **
Yixuan Lai
Zarni Newman
Kelsey Osburn *
Shay Parchem
Callum Robbins
Qianqian Zhang Soyfer
Jennalyn Tamio
Kamryn Yessian
Willow Yong

Viola

Ana Dominguez Alvarado *
Jackson Hover
Paige Kaufman
Julia Swoape

Violoncello

Clovis Glasner
Joshua Gordon
Julian Hodge
Pearl Liao
Sarah Roland
Sam Stavely
Taeyon Tsosie
Joshua Vierra *

Bass

Daysha Fuller
Holly Lowry
Simon Missen *
Liliana Peterson

Assistant Conductor

Riddle Orchestral

Assistant

J Alexander Bennett

** concertmaster

* principal



The University of Arizona School of Music presents

The Arizona Symphony Orchestra

María Fátima Corona del Toro, conductor

J Alexander Bennett, conductor

Saturday, December 6, 2025

Crowder Hall, 7:30 p.m.



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS
School of Music

The Arizona Symphony Orchestra

María Fátima Corona del Toro, conductor
J Alexander Bennett, conductor

Saturday, December 6, 2025
Crowder Hall, 7:30 p.m.

PROGRAM

Tragic Overture, Op. 81 Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)
J Alexander Bennett, conductor

Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64 Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
I. *Andante - Allegro con anima* (1840-1893)
II. *Andante cantabile con alcuna licenza*
III. *Valse. Allegro moderato*
IV. *Finale. Andante maestoso - Allegro vivace*

María Fátima Corona del Toro, conductor



An award-winning conductor from Nayarit, Mexico, **MARÍA FÁTIMA CORONA DEL TORO** is the 2025 national recipient of The American Prize in Conducting – University / Community Opera Division. She is currently a doctoral candidate in orchestral conducting at the University of Arizona School of Music, where she studies under the mentorship of Dr. Thomas Cockrell. As a 2022–23 University Fellow, Ms. Corona has served as assistant conductor for the Arizona Symphony Orchestra, UA Opera Theater, and the Philharmonic Orchestra. Her commitment to music education is reflected in her work with the *Esperanza Azteca* social-music initiative in Mexico, where she was the first woman to serve as conductor and artistic director, providing transformative classical music education to underserved children and youth.

Ms. Corona began her musical journey as a violinist, graduating with honors from the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California. Her conducting studies have taken her across the United States, earning a master's degree from Michigan State University. She has held assistant and guest conducting positions with a variety of ensembles, including the Jackson Symphony Orchestra, Grand Rapids Youth Symphony, and Maryland Classic Youth Orchestras.

A passionate advocate for new music as well as the classical canon, Ms. Corona has championed works by contemporary composers such as Anna Clyne, Jessie Montgomery, and Kevin Day. She has conducted orchestras across Mexico, including the Orquesta de Música Popular de la Universidad de Veracruz. In 2024, she was selected for the College Orchestra Directors Association masterclass and served as assistant conductor at Opera in the Ozarks, leading performances of Vittorio Giannini's *Beauty and the Beast* and Maurice Ravel's *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*.

Ms. Corona has led the Arizona Symphony Orchestra in a concert this fall and conducted *Die Fledermaus* with the Orchestra of the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California in Mexico.



J ALEXANDER BENNETT began his DMA in orchestral conducting at the University of Arizona School of Music in August 2023. He is conductor of the UA Philharmonic and is assistant conductor of the Arizona Symphony and UA Opera. Bennett received his MM in Orchestral Conducting, BM in Music Composition, and BA in Spanish Translation and Interpretation from Brigham Young University. He hails from Winchester, Virginia where he developed a love for music and was self-taught until college.

Bennett has studied and is active as a pianist, organist, choral conductor and musical theatre musician. At UA, he has served as music director for two opera productions, Michael Vince's *Hinterkaifeck* and Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Cinderella*. Bennett was also music director of BYU Opera's workshop of *Staggerwing*, working closely with Lisa DeSpain, and to which he contributed new orchestrations and rewrites.

As a composer, Bennett, with Amber Dahlberg, won the American Guild of Organists 2019 student commissioning project which resulted in a collaboration creating *Coccinella*, a 10-minute work for solo organ. He composed the underscoring for *Mary Stuart* and *A Wilder Night*, for which he was also music director, both productions of BYU Arts.

A 2024-25 Allentown Symphony Conducting Fellow, Bennett has conducted a variety of professional, community, and educational ensembles, including the BYU Wind Symphony, and the Saratoga Springs Symphony Orchestra. A father and husband, Bennett in the rare moment of free time sews.