

NORTH CAROLINA **SYMPHONY**

Gershwin & More

FRI, FEB 6, 2026 | NOON

MEYMANDI CONCERT HALL, RALEIGH

North Carolina Symphony
Carlos Miguel Prieto, *conductor*
Timothy McAllister, *alto saxophone*

PROGRAM

John Adams Saxophone Concerto

Animato: tranquillo, suave

Molto vivo: a hard, driving pulse

Timothy McAllister, *alto saxophone*

George Gershwin (1898-1937) / Arr. Robert Russell Bennett

Porgy and Bess: A Symphonic Picture

James P. Johnson (1894-1955)

"Victory Stride"



The North Carolina Symphony's **America 250** season continues with a vibrant snapshot of American musical imagination, celebrating the inventive spirit that runs through these works—from Broadway vitality to symphonic jazz to today's bold new sounds.

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About the Artists



Carlos Miguel Prieto, *Music Director*

The Maxine and Benjamin Swalin Chair

Mexican conductor and Grammy-winner Carlos Miguel Prieto started his tenure as Music Director of the North Carolina Symphony at the beginning of the 2023/24 season. From 2007 to 2022, he was Music Director of the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México. In 2023, he received the Fine Arts Medal—Mexico’s highest honor for a musician. He served as Music Director of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra from 2006 to 2023, helping lead the cultural renewal of New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina and earning a Grammy in 2024. Since 2008, he has also led the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería (OSM), guiding the ensemble to a Latin Grammy award and residencies at Bravo! Vail in 2024 and 2025. This past summer, he continued an ambitious recording project of the complete works of Revueltas and Ortiz, as well as recording Beethoven Piano Concertos with Anne-Marie McDermott.

Prieto is in demand as a guest conductor for major orchestras, including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; the symphony orchestras of Atlanta, Dallas, and Toronto; The Cleveland Orchestra and Minnesota Orchestra; and the San Francisco, Houston, and New World symphonies. In 2025, he led concerts with the Philharmonia Orchestra in London and Switzerland and conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl. He also served as Semifinal and Final Round Conductor for the 2025 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition.

Since 2002, Prieto has conducted the Orchestra of the Americas, serving as Principal Conductor until 2011, when he was appointed Music Director. He has also worked extensively with young musicians at The Juilliard School, the Colburn School, the Curtis Institute, and elsewhere. In 2025 he led the Sinfónica Azteca (Mexico’s acclaimed youth orchestra) tour of Mexico. He continues to mentor emerging talent through the Carlos Miguel Prieto Conducting Fellowship at OAcademy, an online conservatory bringing together teachers and students from around the world. He has also worked with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and conducted both the National Youth Orchestra-USA and NYO2 at Carnegie Hall.

Prieto has conducted over 100 world premieres of works by Mexican and American composers, many commissioned by him. He has an extensive discography and was recognized by *Musical America* as Conductor of the Year in 2019. He is a graduate of Princeton and Harvard universities.



Timothy McAllister, *saxophone*

These concerts are the North Carolina Symphony debut for Timothy McAllister.

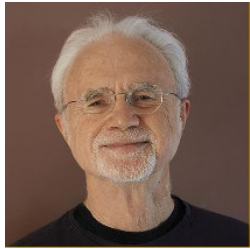
Timothy McAllister has appeared with over 40 orchestras across 25 countries; he is credited with over 60 recordings and 300 premières.

Pulitzer and Oscar-winning composer John Corigliano wrote *TRIATHLON: Concerto for Saxophonist and Orchestra* for McAllister, who premiered the work with the San Francisco Symphony, followed by a recording with the Nashville Symphony. He reprised the work with the New York Philharmonic under Leonard Slatkin. Longtime collaborator Tyshawn Sorey wrote his 2024 Pulitzer Prize-winning work *Adagio (For Wadada Leo Smith)* for McAllister.

McAllister premiered the John Adams Saxophone Concerto with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and was honored with a Grammy for his Adams Concerto and *City Noir* recordings with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. He later appeared with Marin Alsop and the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the London Proms performing the Adams Concerto. His recording of Kenneth Fuchs' *Rush*, with the London Symphony Orchestra under JoAnn Falletta, won another Grammy. Notable soloist debuts include the symphony orchestras of Detroit, Galicia, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, and Minería (Mexico).

McAllister is soprano saxophonist of the Grammy-winning PRISM Quartet and Professor of Saxophone at the University of Michigan; he has also held posts at Arizona State University and Northwestern University, among others. He holds degrees with distinction from the University of Michigan.

About the Music



Saxophone Concerto

[2013]

JOHN ADAMS (b. 1947)

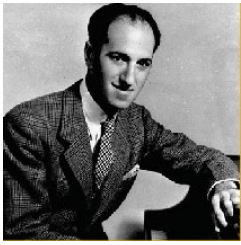
At 25, John Adams left behind his New England roots and the Eurocentric modernism he learned at Harvard to settle in San Francisco. There in that capital of counterculture, influenced by the mysticism of John Cage and the minimalism of Steve Reich, Terry Riley, and Philip Glass, Adams developed his own approach to repetitive cycles and stretched-out forms. He began to diverge from the ascetic purity of minimalism, making room for the orchestral opulence and jazzy punctuation that have defined his voice since the mid-1980s.

A key ingredient in the liveliness of Adams' orchestral sound is his ear for popular music styles in general, and the saxophone in particular—a love inherited from his father, who played alto sax in a swing band. Adams included a quartet of saxophones in his breakthrough opera *Nixon in China* (1987), and the sax reappeared in a number of works that followed, most prominently in *City Noir* (2009). It was through that score that Adams met Timothy McAllister.

"When one evening during a dinner conversation," Adams recalled in a program note, "Tim mentioned that during high school he had been a champion stunt bicycle rider, I knew that I must compose a concerto for this fearless musician and risk-taker." Adams steeped himself in recordings where jazz saxophonists encountered orchestral backdrops, including examples from Charlie Parker, Stan Getz, and Cannonball Adderley.

"While the concerto is not meant to sound jazzy per se," Adams wrote, "its jazz influences lie only slightly below the surface. I make constant use of the instrument's vaunted agility as well as its capacity for a lyrical utterance that is only a short step away from the human voice." After an extended first part that combines the traditional fast first movement and slow middle movement of a typical concerto, the work ends with what Adams described as "a species of funk-rondo with a fast, driving pulse."

Solo saxophone; piccolo, two flutes, three oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, three horns, two trumpets, harp, piano, celesta, strings



Porgy and Bess: A Symphonic Picture
[1935]

GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898-1937) ARR. ROBERT RUSSELL BENNETT

Broadway (and, later, Hollywood) made Gershwin rich and famous, but he still aspired to create serious concert music. His early efforts could hardly have been more successful—they included *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924) and *An American in Paris* (1928). Eventually he set his sights on the loftiest realm of all: grand opera.

Once he decided to adapt DuBose Heyward's novella *Porgy*, Gershwin spent a summer on the barrier islands near Charleston, South Carolina, to soak up the distinctive Gullah culture in those isolated communities where descendants of enslaved people had preserved traditions with unbroken links back to West Africa. Using a libretto that Heyward and his wife Dorothy adapted from their stage play version, plus additional lyrics from his brother and songwriting partner, Ira, Gershwin composed *Porgy and Bess* for an all-Black cast that premiered the opera on Broadway in 1935. It turned out to be Gershwin's last major work of "serious" music; he died from brain cancer two years later, at the age of 38, while working on a movie musical in Hollywood.

In 1942, when the conductor and former Gershwin collaborator Fritz Reiner wanted a concert suite from *Porgy and Bess* for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, he commissioned Gershwin's friend and colleague Robert Russell Bennett. This "Symphonic Picture" features many of the opera's most recognizable tunes, including "I Got Plenty O' Nuttin'," "Bess, You Is My Woman Now," "It Ain't Necessarily So," and of course "Summertime," which has crossed over from its origins as a sweetly sad and consoling aria to become an essential standard in the Great American Songbook.

Piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two alto saxophones, tenor saxophone, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, banjo, harp, strings



"Victory Stride"

[1944]

JAMES P. JOHNSON (1894-1955)

James P. Johnson was a pioneering pianist who developed the influential "Harlem Stride" technique that requires the performer's left hand to leap rapidly between bass notes and chords. As a composer, he's best remembered for "The Charleston" from 1923, a song that has defined the zeitgeist of the Roaring Twenties ever since. Far less attention was paid in his lifetime to more weighty projects like his *Harlem Symphony* from 1932 and the concert he presented at Carnegie Hall in 1944, the same year he recorded this "Victory Stride" with a jazz septet.

Many of Johnson's "serious" works were lost until the conductor Marin Alsop tracked down the long-forgotten scores in his daughter's attic in California. This orchestral adaptation of "Victory Stride" was recorded by Alsop with the Concordia Orchestra in 1994.

Piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two alto saxophones, tenor saxophone, two bassoons, four horns, four trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, piano, strings

The Musicians of the North Carolina Symphony

Carlos Miguel Prieto,
Music Director

*The Maxine and Benjamin
Swalin Chair*

Grant Llewellyn,
Music Director Laureate

Sophie Sze-Ki Mok,
Assistant Conductor
The Lucy Moore Ruffin Chair

Violin I

Justin Bruns, Concertmaster
*The Annabelle Lundy Fetterman
Chair*

Anna Black*,
Associate Concertmaster
*The Assad Meymandi and Family
Chair*

Karen Strittmatter Galvin,
Assistant Concertmaster

Rotating,
Assistant Concertmaster
The Anne Heartt Gregory Chair

Emily Rist Glover
The Jessie Wyatt Ethridge Chair

Paul Goldsberry
The Richard and Joy Cook Chair

Seula Lee
*The Governor James B. Hunt, Jr.
Chair*

Joseph Meyer*

Maria Meyer
*The Tom and Mary Mac Bradshaw
Chair*

K. Lee Morris
The Harvey At-Large Chair

Esther Roestan

Jessica Ryou
The James C. Byrd and Family Chair

Pablo Sánchez Pazos
The Phyllis ("Pat") Conrad Wells Chair

Erin Zehngut
The J. Felix Arnold Chair

Violin II

Jacqueline Saed Wolborsky,
Principal
The Nancy Finch Wallace Chair

Tiffany Kang, Associate Principal
The Blanche Martin Shaw Chair

David Kilbride, Assistant Principal
Qi Cao

Janet Gayer Hall

Chris Jusell

Oskar Ozolinch

Subin Shin

Jeanine Wynton

Viola

Samuel Gold, Principal
*The Florence Spinks and Charles
Jacob Cate and Alma Yondorf and
Sylvan Hirschberg Chair*

Kurt Tseng, Associate Principal
The Betty Ellen Madry Chair

Brian Sherwood, Assistant Principal
Petra Berényi

Amy Mason
The J. Sidney Kirk Chair

Daniel Moore
Sandra Schwarcz
*The Samuel H. and Anne Latham
Johnson Chair*

To Be Filled

Cello

Bonnie Thron, Principal
The June and Tom Roberg Chair

Elizabeth Beilman,
Associate Principal
*The Sarah Carlyle Herbert Dorroh
Chair*

Peng Li, Assistant Principal
Anonymously Endowed

Yewon Ahn
Anonymously Endowed

Emma Cary

The Sara Wilson Hodgkins Chair

David Meyer
The Nell Hirschberg Chair

Marc Moskovitz*
The William Charles Rankin Chair

Nathaniel Yaffe
*The Secretary of Cultural Resources
Betty Ray McCain Chair*

Double Bass

Leonid Finkelshteyn, Principal
*The Martha and Peyton Woodson
Chair*

Joshua DePoint, Associate Principal
*The Dr. and Mrs. Preston H. Gada
Chair*

Jakob Gerritsen

Omar Haffar
*The Harlee H. and Pauline G. Jobe
Chair*

Bruce Ridge
*The John C. and Margaret P. Parker
Chair*

Flute

Megan Torti, Principal
*The Mr. and Mrs. George M. Stephens
Chair*

Mary E. Boone, Assistant Principal
*The Dr. and Mrs. Shaler Stidham, Jr.
Chair*

Vaynu Kadiyali
The Jack and Sing Boddie Chair

Piccolo

Vaynu Kadiyali

Oboe

Melanie Wilsden, Principal
The Hardison and Stoltze Chair

Joseph Peters, Associate Principal
The Lizette T. Dunham Chair

Hoon Chang
The Clarence and Alice Aycock Poe Chair

English Horn

Joseph Peters
The Bruce and Margaret King Chair

Clarinet

Samuel Almaguer, Principal
The Mr. and Mrs. J. Christopher Walker, II Chair

Sammy Lesnick, Assistant Principal
The Kathryn Powell and Green Flavie Cooper Chair

Bassoon

Aaron Apaza, Principal
The Mr. and Mrs. Fitzgerald S. Hudson Chair

Wenmin Zhang, Assistant Principal,
The Beethoven Chair

French Horn

Rebekah Daley, Principal
The Mary T. McCurdy Chair

Kimberly Van Pelt, Associate Principal
The Paul R. Villard and Gabriel Wolf Chair

Gabriel Mairson
The James Marion Poyner Chair

Russell Rybicki
The Mary Susan Kirk Fulghum Chair

The North Carolina Symphony gratefully acknowledges financial support from the State of North Carolina, the honorable Josh Stein, Governor; Wake County; and the City of Raleigh.



Trumpet

Paul Randall, Principal
The George Smedes Poyner Chair

Benjamin Hauser, Associate Principal
The Henry and Martha Zaytoun and Family Chair

Trombone

Devin Drinan, Principal
The Thomas Warwick Steed, Jr. Family Chair

John Ilika, Assistant Principal
The Frances Armour Bryant Chair

Bass Trombone

Matthew Neff
Anonymously Endowed

Tuba

Seth Horner, Principal
The Governor and Mrs. James G. Martin, Jr. Chair

Timpani

Colin Hartnett, Principal
The Patricia R., Steven T. and George F. Hackney III Chair

Percussion

Richard Motylinski, Principal
The Margery and Earl Johnson, Jr. Chair

Rajesh Prasad, Assistant Principal
The Abram and Frances Pascher Kanof Chair

Organ

To Be Filled
The Albert and Susan Jenkins and Family Organ Chair

Library

Stephanie Wilson, Principal Orchestra Librarian
The Mary Colvert and Banks C. Talley Chair

Taylor Troyer, Assistant Orchestra Librarian

*Acting position

**Leave of absence

Named musician chairs are made possible through very meaningful gifts to the Symphony's endowment. As such, these donor families are also members of the Lamar Stringfield Society.

All string players rotate stands on a periodic basis in each section with the exception of titled players: Principals, Associate Principals, and Assistant Principals.

The North Carolina Symphony is a member of the League of American Orchestras and the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians.

The North Carolina Master Chorale is the Resident Chorus of the North Carolina Symphony.

The North Carolina Symphony Foundation gratefully acknowledges the generous gift of the Lupot violin from Arnold and Zena† Lerman.
†deceased

NORTH CAROLINA SYMPHONY

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