



## The Music of Billy Joel with Tony DeSare

SAT, JUN 27, 2026 | 8PM

North Carolina Symphony  
 Sophie Mok, *conductor*  
 Tony DeSare, *vocalist, piano*  
 Dylan Shamat, *bass guitar*  
 Michael Klopp, *drums*

### PROGRAM

*Selections will be announced from the stage.*

*There will be a 15-minute intermission.*

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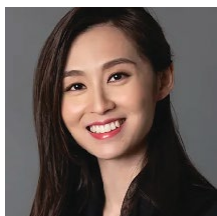
The North Carolina Symphony gratefully acknowledges financial support from the State of North Carolina, the honorable Josh Stein, Governor; Wake County; and the City of Raleigh.



*Thank you also to the generous individuals, businesses, foundations, and community partners who support the North Carolina Symphony through contributions each season.*

## About the Conductor

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*Sophie Mok, Assistant Conductor  
The Lucy Moore Ruffin Chair*

In 2024, Sophie Sze-Ki Mok began her tenure as Assistant Conductor of the North Carolina Symphony. Since 2023, she has also served as Assistant Conductor of the Asian Youth Orchestra, where she worked alongside Joseph Bastian and Jader Bignamini. She has assisted esteemed conductors including Marin Alsop, Jonathon Heyward, Thomas Wilkins, and Tan Dun. Upcoming engagements include serving as cover conductor for the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. Previously, she was a Conducting Fellow with the Miami Symphony Orchestra and Assistant Conductor of the Frost Symphony Orchestra at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music.

Mok was selected to compete in the La Maestra Conducting Competition in 2024 and was one of several finalists to compete in Riccardo Muti's Italian Opera Academy in 2022. In 2019, she won second prize at the International Conductor's Competition held during the Deutsches Musikfest. For six years, she served as the conductor of the Hong Kong Youth Wind Philharmonia, mentoring young musicians from elementary school through college.

Born in Hong Kong, Mok began her musical journey as an oboist. She received her bachelor's degree in oboe performance from Hong Kong Baptist University and later furthered her studies at the University of Colorado at Boulder, where she earned a master's degree. As a conductor, she holds a master's degree in orchestral conducting from the College-Conservatory of Music (CCM), and an Artist Diploma in conducting from the University of Miami Frost School of Music under the tutelage of Gerard Schwarz.



Tony DeSare, *vocalist, piano*

*Tony DeSare made his North Carolina Symphony debut as a featured soloist performing jazz standards at a New Year's Eve concert in 2014.*

Tony DeSare has garnered critical and popular acclaim for his concert performances throughout North America and abroad. From jazz clubs to Carnegie Hall to Las Vegas, headlining with Don Rickles and major symphony orchestras, DeSare has brought his fresh take on old-school class around the globe. DeSare has four top ten Billboard jazz albums and has been featured on the CBS' *Early Show*, NPR, *A Prairie Home Companion*, and NBC's *TODAY Show*. His music has been posted by social media celebrity juggernaut George Takei, and he has also collaborated with YouTube icons Postmodern Jukebox. DeSare can be seen on Hulu's *Godfather of Harlem* (season 3, episode 9) performing the Sinatra classic "That's Life."

DeSare is an award-winning composer. He not only won first place in the USA Songwriting Competition but has written the theme song for the motion picture *My Date With Drew*, several broadcast commercials, and the full soundtracks for the Hallmark Channel's *Love Always, Santa* and Lifetime's *A Welcome Home Christmas*.

DeSare's recent and forthcoming appearances include The Cleveland Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Rockport Music, and Birdland Jazz Club & Theater.

New recordings, originals, and videos of standards are released regularly on DeSare's YouTube channel, Apple Music, and Spotify.

Tony DeSare is a Yamaha Artist.

# The Musicians of the North Carolina Symphony

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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 Roger Colson and Bobbi Lyon Hackett Chair*

To Be Filled  
*The Mary Susan Kirk Fulghum Chair*

## 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

You can support over 150,000 North Carolina students this year by donating to the Annual Fund so they can experience your Symphony's education programs! Your contribution supports **artistic excellence, statewide service, and music education.**

*Plus, your gift counts towards the 2025/26 State Challenge Grant goal!*

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