



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Louisville Orchestra Receives \$3.2 Million to Continue Kentucky’s Statewide In Harmony Tour

With \$11.8 million in total support for the In Harmony Tour from the Kentucky General Assembly, the initiative is helping shape a national model for public investment in the arts.

*“In Harmony Tour” continues June 25 - 27,
with special engagement featuring internationally renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma slotted for 2027*

LOUISVILLE, KY. (April 16, 2026) – The Louisville Orchestra proudly celebrates the award of **\$3.2 million from the Kentucky General Assembly to continue Kentucky’s statewide In Harmony Tour through 2028**, strengthening a groundbreaking initiative that has brought orchestral music directly to **50 counties** and **57,000 Kentuckians** across the Commonwealth. With this new allocation, total support for the program now reaches **\$11.8 million**, making the legislature the **largest independent donor in the Orchestra’s history**. Since launching in 2022, the In Harmony Tour has grown into a nationally recognized model for how public investment in the arts can expand cultural access, strengthen communities, and connect people across an entire state.

The funding comes as part of one of the most significant investments in arts and cultural institutions in Kentucky’s history. In addition to the Louisville Orchestra’s statewide initiative, the General Assembly has allocated funding to a number of Louisville cultural organizations including the Kentucky Center for the Arts, Louisville Ballet, Speed Art Museum, the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage, the Frazier History Museum, and others. Together, these appropriations reflect a growing statewide commitment to strengthening Kentucky’s cultural infrastructure and expanding access to arts experiences for residents across the Commonwealth.

Over the past several years, the success of the Louisville Orchestra’s statewide touring initiative has helped demonstrate the broad civic and educational impact that cultural investment can achieve. The In Harmony Tour has shown how arts organizations can serve communities across an entire state, reaching audiences far beyond traditional concert halls while strengthening local partnerships, supporting education, and celebrating Kentucky’s cultural heritage.

“Over the past several years, the In Harmony Tour has demonstrated the powerful role the arts can play in connecting communities across Kentucky,” said **House Speaker David Osborne**. “By bringing live orchestral performances and educational programs directly to towns and cities throughout the Commonwealth, the Louisville Orchestra has shown how cultural investment can enrich lives, support education, and strengthen communities. The

General Assembly is proud to support initiatives that expand access to the arts for Kentuckians across our state.”

“Louisville’s arts institutions are central to our city’s identity and continued growth, and I was proud to help lead the effort to secure this investment in the Louisville Orchestra’s In Harmony Tour,” said **Senator Raque Adams**. “The Louisville Orchestra continues to set the standard for innovation and outreach, and this initiative represents the very best of what we can achieve when we invest in the arts.”

“Louisville’s arts community is one of our city’s greatest strengths, and the Louisville Orchestra has demonstrated time and time again how we can use the arts to reach and connect with our neighbors throughout Kentucky,” said **Louisville Mayor Craig Greenberg**. “This is another amazing example of how the partnerships we’ve built with leaders in Frankfort can strengthen institutions like the Louisville Orchestra and expand meaningful experiences like the In Harmony Tour.”

In Harmony – The Commonwealth Tour of The Louisville Orchestra is a pioneering statewide initiative delivering transformational musical experiences directly to Kentucky communities. Since its launch in November 2022, the program has reached **50 counties across the Commonwealth**, bringing live orchestral concerts and community events to audiences across Kentucky while celebrating the rich musical heritage and traditions that unite communities throughout the state.

From courthouse lawns and school gymnasiums to libraries and public parks, the initiative connects Kentuckians with world-class musical performances while fostering civic pride, cultural exchange, and educational opportunity.

As of February 2026, the tour has brought:

- **235 total events**
- **57,000 attendees statewide**
- **45 free orchestra concerts across 29 zip codes, reaching more than 36,900 audience members**
- **190 community engagement events in 67 unique zip codes**, including
 - 80 education programs in schools
 - 60 “Once Upon an Orchestra” musical storytimes in libraries
 - 34 public pop-up performances
 - 16 collaborative community performances
- Altogether, community events have reached an additional **19,100 individuals**.

The tour featured Kentucky artists including **Sam Bush, Michael Cleveland & Flamekeeper, Tessa Lark, Ben Sollee, and Chris Thile**, alongside Louisville Orchestra musicians in solo and chamber performances. It has also included **seven world premieres by composers from the Louisville Orchestra Creators Corps**, highlighting Kentucky’s role in shaping the future of American music.

Looking ahead, the tour will include **a special engagement featuring Yo-Yo Ma in 2027**, bringing one of the world’s most celebrated musicians to communities across Kentucky as part of this statewide cultural effort.

The next performances of the In Harmony Tour will take place this summer, with **free outdoor concerts in Glasgow, Shelby County, and Elizabethtown**, continuing the Orchestra's mission to bring live symphonic music directly to communities across the Commonwealth. **Registration for these events is now open.**

Upcoming performances include:

Thursday, June 25, 2026 – 7:30 PM (Central)

Glasgow Town Square

Friday, June 26, 2026 – 8:30 PM (Eastern)

Freeman Lake Park Bandstand, Elizabethtown

Saturday, June 27, 2026 – 8:30 PM (Eastern)

Shelby County Fairgrounds

The June program features a lively mix of orchestral classics and American favorites, including **Bernstein's Overture to *Candide*, selections from Dvořák's Symphony No. 8 and Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5, Copland's *Hoe Down*, John Williams' iconic *Star Wars* theme, and more**, performed by musicians of the Louisville Orchestra alongside guest artists.

“The In Harmony Tour has transformed the way we think about what an orchestra can be,” said **Music Director Teddy Abrams**. “By bringing music directly to communities across Kentucky, we are building relationships, sharing extraordinary artistic experiences, and demonstrating that orchestral music belongs to everyone. We are deeply grateful to the Kentucky General Assembly for recognizing the value of this work and for making it possible for us to continue expanding it.”

What began as an ambitious effort to bring orchestral music to communities across Kentucky has grown into one of the most expansive statewide arts initiatives in the United States. The In Harmony Tour has demonstrated how sustained public investment can dramatically expand access to the arts while strengthening educational opportunities, civic pride, and cultural connection across an entire state.

“Support from the Kentucky General Assembly has allowed the Louisville Orchestra to think boldly about how we serve our entire state,” said **Louisville Orchestra Board Chair Jordan Harris**. “We are profoundly grateful for this partnership and for the vision of our legislative leaders. Their support ensures that communities across Kentucky can experience the power of live music and that the arts continue to play a vital role in the life of our Commonwealth.”

The success of the In Harmony Tour is now drawing attention from orchestras and cultural leaders across the country as a **replicable model for how states can invest in the arts as essential public infrastructure**. By demonstrating how a statewide orchestra initiative can connect communities, support education, and expand cultural access, Kentucky is helping establish a new national precedent for public support of the arts.

As the tour continues to grow, the Louisville Orchestra will expand concerts, school visits, library programs, and community collaborations designed to ensure that every Kentuckian has the opportunity to experience live orchestral music.

More information about the In Harmony Tour can be found at LouisvilleOrchestra.org/InHarmonyTour.

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About the Louisville Orchestra

The Louisville Orchestra was created in 1937 and sprung up in a time of need, just after the great flood and in the wake of the depression. Robert Whitney was invited to conduct the newly established orchestra, known then as the Louisville Philharmonic, and arrived from Chicago that same year. In its formation, the goal was to create a new model for the American symphony orchestra, as it was conceived through an ambitious effort that emphasized innovation through the commissioning, performance, and recording of new works by contemporary composers. The Louisville Orchestra garnered international critical acclaim, became the first orchestra to establish a record label, and cemented a place in history for its contribution to contemporary classical music. In its first two decades, the Louisville Orchestra commissioned/recorded up to 52 new works annually and ultimately created 150 vinyl recordings (LPs) of more than 450 works.

The Louisville Orchestra continues to be recognized as a cornerstone of the Louisville performing arts community. Music Director Teddy Abrams has helmed the Louisville Orchestra since 2014, and the Louisville Orchestra has returned to its origins of commissioning new music and recording, having released two albums under the prestigious Decca Gold label. A wide variety of immersive and innovative concert performances and educational programming continue to receive national attention. Recent press coverage includes articles and mentions in The New Yorker, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Rolling Stone, Pitchfork, and CBS Sunday Morning. Accolades include three invitations to perform at Carnegie Hall; the Leonard Bernstein Award for Excellence in Educational Programming; the League of American Orchestras 2019 Ford Musician Awards for Excellence in Community Service; and 19 American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) awards for adventurous programming in use of contemporary music.

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