

The Crane School of Music • SUNY Potsdam

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Crane Symphony Orchestra

Dr. Ching-Chun Lai, Director of Orchestras



The Crane Symphony Orchestra is the second oldest college orchestra in the United States, and in its long legacy, students at Crane have worked with legendary conductors and musicians, such as Nadia Boulanger, Sarah Caldwell, Aaron Copland, Howard Hanson, Gunther Schuller, and Robert Shaw, to name a few.

The mission for Crane Symphony Orchestra is not only pursuing a high-standard of performance. We are also committed to providing students with an excellent ensemble experience as part of the education for future music teachers, performers, scholars, composers, and music industry leaders.

The Crane Symphony Orchestra performs a wide range orchestral repertoire, from baroque to contemporary music. Every year, the CSO performs four full symphonic concerts and two concerts in collaboration with the Crane Chorus. In 2016, the Crane Sym-

phony Orchestra and the Crane Chorus performed at Carnegie Hall with guest conductor Duain Wolfe (director of the Chicago Symphony Chorus), and in 2012, the two ensembles took the stage at the Avery Fisher Hall in New York City, performing Verdi's *Requiem*. In 2013, under guest conductor Christof Perick, in collaboration with American Boychoir, Crane Symphony Orchestra and Crane Chorus performed Benjamin Britten's monumental *War Requiem*. Other recent guest conductors include JoAnn Falletta, Larry Rachleff and Joseph Flummerfelt.

The Orchestra also tours regularly. Recently, CSO performed at the NYSSMA Winter Conference, on Long Island, and in the Albany area. In 2020, the orchestra will perform with the Crane Chorus at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center under the baton of guest conductor Maestra Sara Hicks.

Crane Chamber Orchestra

The chamber orchestra concentrates on the study and performance of repertoire written for this orchestration, ranging from baroque to contemporary music.

Crane Opera Orchestra

Instrumental students at Crane have opportunity to join the opera orchestra, which performs fully-staged operatic works with the Crane Opera Ensemble. The size of the ensemble depends on specific work being performed, which is drawn from Baroque through contemporary operatic and musical theatre repertoire.

The Crane Opera Ensemble was the winner of the 2015 and 2003 (Division 3), and co-winner of the 2009 (Division 2) National Opera Association Collegiate Production Competitions. The spring 2010 production of *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* was awarded first place in the American Prize in Operatic Performance competition while the 2017 production of *The Tender Land* was awarded 3rd place (both in the College/University Division).

In 2018, Crane premiered *Mayo*, a new opera Crane commissioned from Tom Cipullo through the Domenic J. Pellicciotti Opera Composition Prize.



Auditions

Students wishing to perform in the orchestras must take a placement audition, scheduled during the first two days of each semester. Each studio faculty administers their own auditions, and in consultation with ensemble directors, determines ensemble placements and seating. Information such as

time, location and materials needed for auditions may be obtained from the respective studio teacher. While auditions for Crane performing ensembles are open to all students, the audition process is rigorous and competitive.

Faculty

Dr. Ching-Chun Lai has conducted orchestras and ensembles in Asia, Europe, and the United States. A committed educator and experienced ensemble clinician, Dr. Lai has worked with youth orchestras and school ensembles in Taiwan, Canada, and United States.

Besides standard symphonic repertoire, Dr. Lai is equally comfortable with Baroque literature, contemporary music, and opera. Dr. Lai has studied with Gunther Schuller, James Smith, Charles Peltz, and Yu-Hsian Chang, and she holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Orchestral Conducting from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Master of Music degrees in Conducting and Music Education with Distinguish Performance and Academic Honors from the New England Conservatory of Music; and a Master's degree in Aeronautics and Aeronautics Engineering from the National Cheng Kung University in Taiwan.

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