



2017-18 Season

SCHOOL WORKSHOP for General Audiences

Weaving the American Tapestry

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES for Music Students

Playing Outside the Box

Improvisation for Classical Musicians

Charting a Career in Music

American Tapestry Collaborative Performance

EXTENDED RESIDENCIES

***Requiem Residency* (for chorus)**

***Play Residency* (for orchestra)**

Each activity is customized to the context and the needs of the school. Additional activities, such as arranging, composition, or instrument master classes (for any combination of bass, cello, violin, percussion, piano, guitar), ensemble coaching sessions, and composer readings, are available.

For more information, schedule, logistics, technical details, contact:

Brian Coughlin, Fireworks Ensemble Director

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REHEARSAL AND WORKSHOP REQUIREMENTS

Activities should take place in a large classroom, lecture hall, or concert venue, as appropriate for the activity and audience size. *American Tapestry* workshops and all rehearsals for collaborative performances should take place in the venue to be used for Fireworks' public performance with full sound reinforcement, backline, and sound crew per the technical rider for the performance when possible. The following equipment is required for most events (see the Technical Requirements for each activity for specifics):

For **SMALL EVENTS** (50 participants or fewer), the following basic setup is required*:

- **Piano** (in tune grand piano or professional upright, or a full-size digital piano)
- **Drum set** (basic 5-piece kit with cymbals, stands, and necessary hardware)
- **Bass amplifier**
- **Guitar amplifier**
- **Six (6) music stands**

For all **COLLABORATIVE PERFORMANCE REHEARSALS** (*American Tapestry*, *Play*, or *Requiem*) taking place outside of the performance venue, and for **WORKSHOPS INVOLVING LARGE VENUES OR AUDIENCE SIZES** (about 50 participants or more), the above setup *plus* the following equipment is required:

- **PA System** (console and speakers, with all necessary cables)
- **Speaking microphones** (3 ideal, 1 sufficient – ideally wireless with mute switch)

**NOTE: Outreach events, particularly those that allow Fireworks to connect with students who have little access to music education, are a priority for the ensemble. Though high-quality sound provides the best experience for all participants, Fireworks will make every effort to work with the school or organization to make the event possible, even if all equipment is not available. Contact Fireworks to work out specifics.*

SCHOOL WORKSHOP for General Audiences

WEAVING THE AMERICAN TAPESTRY

Discover the incredible diversity of American music and explore the hidden threads that tie traditions together. Participants join the ensemble on a lively, interactive musical journey that traces the development of great American idioms such as fiddle music (from Bluegrass to Cajun to the concert music of Aaron Copland), jazz (from blues to big band swing to Bernstein's *West Side Story*), and popular song (from Stephen Foster to rock anthems).

- **Length:** 45 – 60 minutes (1 standard class session)
- **Fireworks members involved:** 6
- **Number of participants:** unlimited
- **Age range:** 5 – 18 (Kindergarten – 12th grade)
- **Experience required:** none
- **Technical requirements:** see Rehearsal and Workshop Requirements (above)



SCHOOL ACTIVITIES for Music Students

PLAYING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Students are encouraged to shed their inhibitions and explore sounds and techniques considered taboo by traditional pedagogy. Through the process of answering questions such as “How can you make a piano sound like a steel drum?... a guitar like a cello?... a cello like a banjo?... a snare drum like a roaring lion?,” students take part in the creative process used by Fireworks when adapting music from a wide variety of styles, periods, and cultures for their instruments.

- **Length:** 45 – 120 minutes (1 – 2 standard class sessions)
- **Fireworks members involved:** 1 – 6 (determined by instrumentation of participants)
- **Number of participants:** 1 – 15 active performer participants per session; unlimited auditors
- **Age range:** middle school, high school, or college students
- **Experience required:** orchestral strings, piano, guitar, or percussion students with at least 3 years of experience on an instrument (Grade 3 level or equivalent)
- **Technical requirements:** depending on instrumentation of participants, piano, guitar amplifier, bass amplifier, and drums and/or percussion may be required

IMPROVISATION FOR CLASSICAL MUSICIANS

Using John Zorn’s improvisation games, Brian Coughlin’s *Play*, and a variety of techniques from jazz, rock, and world music traditions, Fireworks introduces students to the art of improvisation. The workshop begins with a demonstration of approaches used by improvisers in a variety of styles, continues with a hands-on exploration of improvisation methods, and culminates in a group improvisation by all participants. Students are encouraged to think creatively about their musical choices, to take risks, and to listen actively when playing with others—skills that can be applied to any style of music or performance context.

- **Length:** 45 – 120 minutes (1 – 2 standard class sessions)
- **Fireworks members involved:** 1 – 6 (determined by instrumentation of participants)
- **Number of participants:** 1 – 15 active performer participants per session; unlimited auditors
- **Age range:** middle school, high school, or college students
- **Experience required:** orchestral strings, piano, guitar, or percussion students with at least 3 years of experience on an instrument (Grade 3 level or equivalent)
- **Technical requirements:** depending on instrumentation of participants, piano, guitar amplifier, bass amplifier, and drums and/or percussion may be required



SCHOOL ACTIVITIES for Music Students — continued

CHARTING A CAREER IN MUSIC

For many aspiring musicians, the idea of starting a career in the music industry can be daunting. Fireworks provides a DIY toolbox to assist those just starting out position themselves for maximum success, happiness, and resiliency in the challenging and ever-changing field of concert music. With insights from their own experiences over 20 years in music, Fireworks members delve into vital topics such as: how to reconcile career goals with skills and financial needs, how to identify your brand and market yourself effectively, and how to develop partnerships and build community.

- **Length:** 45 – 120 minutes
- **Fireworks Ensemble members involved:** 3 – 6
- **Number of participants:** unlimited
- **Age range:** high school, college, advanced degree, and/or adult
- **Experience required:** none (ideal for composers and performers in school or in the early stages of their careers)
- **Technical requirements:** none (for larger venues and audience sizes—50 participants or more—speaking microphones are required)

AMERICAN TAPESTRY COLLABORATIVE PERFORMANCE

Fireworks invites students to join them in a side-by-side performance of one or more selections from the ensemble's *American Tapestry* program. Pieces can be rehearsed and coached in a workshop setting or prepared for a public concert. Selections are available for advanced middle school/high school ensembles (band or orchestra – Grade 3), and advanced high school/college ensembles (band or orchestra – Grade 4). See the [American Tapestry Project Page](#) on Fireworks' web site for audio, video, and technical requirements. A typical one-day school visit schedule includes a morning "Weaving the American Tapestry" session for a general audience, an afternoon dress rehearsal, and an evening side-by-side performance as part of Fireworks' *American Tapestry* program. Longer residencies and additional activities are also available. Contact Fireworks for score excerpts or more information.

- **Length:** 1 full day
- **Fireworks members involved:** 6
- **Number of participants:** variable (school band or orchestra) —see sample score on the Education page of Fireworks' web site for specific instrumentation.
- **Age range:** middle school, high school, or college students.
- **Experience required:** 3rd – 4th year players and up (Grade level 3 or 4)
- **Technical requirements:** see Rehearsal and Workshop Requirements (above) and technical information on the *American Tapestry* project page for details.



EXTENDED RESIDENCIES

PLAY RESIDENCY (for orchestra)

Fireworks collaborates with an advanced high school, college, or semi-professional orchestra over the course of an extended (2 – 5 day) residency to prepare and perform Brian Coughlin’s concerto for improvising ensemble, *Play*. See the [Play Project Page](#) on Fireworks’ web site for more information, audio, video, and technical requirements. Depending on the schedule, additional workshops, masterclasses, or other activities may be added. Thorough preparation by the participating ensemble in advance of the residency is required.

- **Length:** 2 – 5 days (2 rehearsals minimum—one rehearsal plus dress rehearsal in the performance venue—and a public concert).
- **Fireworks members involved:** 6
- **Number of participants:** variable (large symphony orchestra) — see sample score on the Projects page of Fireworks’ web site for specific instrumentation.
- **Age range:** high school to adult
- **Experience required:** advanced high school, college, or semi-professional orchestral musicians (Grade 4 level and above)
- **Technical requirements:** see Rehearsal and Workshop Requirements (above) and technical information on the *Play* project page for details.

REQUIEM RESIDENCY (for chorus)

Fireworks collaborates with an advanced high school, college, or semi-professional chorus over the course of an extended (3 – 5 day) residency to prepare and perform Brian Coughlin’s rock-meets-plainchant *Requiem*. See the [Requiem Project Page](#) for more information, including audio, video, and technical requirements. Depending on the schedule, additional workshops, masterclasses, or other activities may be added. Thorough preparation by the participating ensemble in advance of the residency is required.

- **Length:** 3 – 5 days (3 rehearsals minimum—two rehearsals plus dress rehearsal in the performance venue—and a public concert).
- **Fireworks members involved:** 6
- **Number of participants:** variable (large SATB chorus) — see sample score on the Projects page of Fireworks’ web site for representative passages
- **Age range:** high school to adult
- **Experience required:** advanced high school, college, or semi-professional singers (moderate–advanced difficulty)
- **Technical requirements:** see Rehearsal and Workshop Requirements (above) and technical information on the *Requiem* project page for details.