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SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY ANNOUNCES CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE SIXTH ANNUAL EMERGING BLACK COMPOSERS PROJECT

The competition looks to further identify and promote inventive Black composers, of any music genre, under the age of 35

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—The San Francisco Symphony announced today that applications are now open for the sixth annual [Emerging Black Composers Project](#) (EBCP) Michael Morgan Prize and the Cabrillo Emerging Black Composers Prize.

The winner of the 2026 Michael Morgan Prize will receive a \$15,000 award for a new music commission that will receive its world premiere with the San Francisco Symphony during the 2027–28 season. The winner will also receive mentorship from Edwin Outwater, music director of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser, Resident Conductor of Engagement and Education at the San Francisco Symphony and chair of the EBCP selection committee.

The Emerging Black Composers Project is administered by the San Francisco Symphony; the San Francisco Conservatory of Music is a supporting partner to the program.

The award was named the Michael Morgan Prize in 2023 in honor of the late maestro, the first chair and co-founder of the EBCP.

“The composer laureates of the EBCP are moving forward in their careers in ways that are filling us with joy,” said Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser. “We feel that the program, with its blend of fluid mentorship and concrete opportunity, has been a positive and foundational building block in the careers of many of our composers. As we continue to add new collaborators, who themselves are expanding the scope of prizes and commissions, we expect that the musical ripple effect of the EBCP will be felt—and heard—for generations.”

The 2026 recipient award will mark the 13th commission from the Emerging Black Composers Project and its partnerships since it launched in 2020.

“As someone involved in this project from the beginning, I’ve found each Michael Morgan Prize winner has had their career and life changed for the better by the EBCP,” said Edwin Outwater. “Beyond this, the mere act of applying gets a composer’s work exposed to an incredible panel of evaluators who are volunteering their time specifically to support Black composers. Many of the panelists reach out to applicants to find ways to further support their work. I highly encourage all eligible composers to apply.”

The Emerging Black Composers Project is a 10-year commitment to spotlight early-career Black American composers and their music. It was launched in 2020 with the first-place commission awarded in June 2021 to Trevor Weston, with additional prizes awarded to Sumi Tonooka, Shawn Okpebholo, and Jonathan Bingham. Additional winners of the project include Jens Ibsen, Xavier Muzik, Kyle Rivera, and Tyler Taylor. Taylor, winner of the Michael Morgan Prize in 2024, will have his work premiered by conductor Cristian Măcelaru and the San Francisco Symphony, May 22–24, 2026. Rivera, [winner of the 2025 prize](#), will have his work premiered with the San Francisco Symphony during the 2026–27 season.

In addition to the Michael Morgan Prize and in partnership with the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, the Cabrillo Emerging Black Composers Prize is an independent award that will be chosen from this same pool of applicants. This additional winner will receive a cash prize for the composition of a new five- to seven-minute symphonic work to receive its world premiere by the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra during an upcoming Cabrillo Festival season. The winner will also serve as composer-in-residence at the festival.

Applications for the Emerging Black Composers Project are judged through an anonymous process by a committee of leaders in the field including Bartholomew-Poyser and Outwater. The full committee will be announced at a later date.

Applicants are encouraged to apply today. This year’s EBCP submission deadline is February 1, 2026; winners will be announced in spring 2026.

The Emerging Black Composers Project is underwritten by Michèle and Laurence Corash.

How to apply

Black American composers (US citizens or permanent residents) aged 35 or under during 2025 who have completed a degree program in composition or music performance, or have equivalent experience, are encouraged to apply.

Applicants must submit a resume along with three scores and recordings of past or current compositions reflective of their work by 11:59pm PT on February 1, 2026.

For further information or to apply, visit sfsymphony.org/ebcp.

Emerging Black Composers Project Fellows

Michael Morgan Prize

Trevor Weston (2021)

Jens Ibsen (2022)

Xavier Muzik (2023)

Tyler Taylor (2024)
Kyle Rivera (2025)

Cabrillo Festival EBCP Winners

Nathaniel Heyder (2023)
Tyson Gholston Davis (2024)

Additional Prizes

Shawn E. Okpebholo (2021 Oakland Symphony EBCP Commission Winner)
Sumi Tonooka (2021 San Francisco Conservatory EBCP Commission Winner)
Jonathan Bingham (2021 National Brass Ensemble Commission Winner)
Quenton Xavier Blache (2023 Gautier Capuçon Commission Winner)
Jordyn Davis (2024 SFCM Roots & Jazz American Music EBCP Commission Winner)

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