



August 22, 2025

Update on the Emerging Black Composers Project

The San Francisco Symphony is pleased to share that work on the Emerging Black Composers Project (EBCP) is continuing, and the winner of the fifth annual EBCP Michael Morgan Prize will be announced in the fall. The winner will be selected from the most recent group of applications submitted for the project.

A call for applications for the sixth annual EBCP Michael Morgan Prize will go out in November.

While the San Francisco Symphony is administering the Emerging Black Composers Project, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music (SFCM) remains a supporting partner to the program.

“I am thrilled that the Emerging Black Composers Project will continue finding and funding some of the best musical talent in the country,” said Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser, chair of the Emerging Black Composers Project. “The committee has been reviewing and listening to submissions from a strong group of candidates, and we look forward to announcing a new winner this fall. It’s been very gratifying to see our past laureates continue to create and enjoy success, which speaks to the importance of not only our program, but all that celebrate and support early-stage artists.”

The winner of the 2025 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 2026–27 season. The winner will also receive mentorship from SFCM Music Director Edwin Outwater and Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser, the Resident Conductor of Engagement and Education at the San Francisco Symphony and chair of the EBCP selection committee.

Applications for the Emerging Black Composers Project will be judged through an anonymous process by a committee of leaders in the field that include Kedrick Armstrong, Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser, Cristian Măcelaru, Nico Muhly, Shawn Okpekbolo, Valérie Sainte-Agathe, Nina Shekhar, Mark Stevens, Trevor Weston, and Natalie Woo.

The 2025 award will mark the twelfth commission resulting from the Emerging Black Composers Project and its partnerships since it launched in 2020. The Symphony and SFCM launched the Emerging Black Composers Project in 2020 with the goal of commissioning ten works by early-career Black American composers over ten years. Now five years in, the project has awarded the Michael Morgan Prize to composers Jens Ibsen, Xavier Muzik, Tyler Taylor, and Trevor Weston, and additional prizes to composers Jonathan Bingham, Shawn Okpebholo, and Sumi Tonooka. Several additional composers have received commissions under the auspices of the initiative. In February 2025, Esa-Pekka Salonen and the San Francisco Symphony gave the world premiere of *Strange Beasts* by 2023 Emerging Black Composers Project Michael Morgan Prize winner Xavier Muzik.

The San Francisco Symphony and conductor Cristian Măcelaru will perform the world premiere of a new work by 2024 winner Tyler Taylor in May 2026 during the Orchestra's 2025–26 season. In addition, on November 16 cellist Gautier Capuçon will perform the world premiere of a new work by composer Quenton Xavier Blache as part of his Great Performers Series recital. Blache's piece is heard alongside 16 other world-premiere works composed for Capuçon's new album, *Gaiā* (to be released by Erato Records on November 7). Capuçon anonymously selected Blache for a [new commission](#) from a pool of applicants under the umbrella of the 2023 Emerging Black Composers Project.

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