

For release: June 1, 2023

The Cleveland Orchestra announces six musician appointments



Charles Paul
(Photo: Roger Mastroianni)



Meghan Guegold Hege
(Photo: Roger Mastroianni)



Tanner Tanyeri



Youngji Kim



Genevieve Smelser

(Photo: Rūta Kuzmickas)



Liyuan Xie

(Photo: Rose Bao)

CLEVELAND – The Cleveland Orchestra announced updates to musician personnel with five new members and one member to a first assistant principal position. Earlier this year, **Charles Paul**, a bass section member since 2022, was appointed first assistant principal bass. The Cleveland Orchestra will also welcome: **Meghan Guegold Hege** as assistant/utility horn, **Tanner Tanyeri** as percussionist, **Youngji Kim** and **Genevieve Smelser** as first violinists, and **Liyuan Xie** as second violinist. Hege will start June 26, while Tanyeri, Kim, Smelser, and Xie will start August 28.

At the conclusion of his 21st season, Music Director Franz Welser-Möst has appointed about half of the current members of The Cleveland Orchestra.

“I always look for musicians who are the absolute best fit and that means having an incredibly high standard of musicality for this world-class ensemble. When that special person shows up, we all know they are the right person for the position,” Welser-Möst said.

Charles Paul, first assistant principal bass (Mary E. and F. Joseph Callahan Chair)

Double bassist Charles Paul joined The Cleveland Orchestra in January 2022, having previously served as a member of the double bass section of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. He has appeared in *The Boston Globe*, *The Houston Chronicle*, and on the American Public Media radio program *Performance Today* as a soloist, chamber musician, and collaborator.

Hailing from Detroit, Michigan, Paul holds a Bachelor of Music and Master of Music in double bass performance from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University under the instruction of professors Paul Ellison and Timothy Pitts. Paul has received numerous accolades including first prize of the 2016 TCU International Double Bass Competition, semifinalist of the 2017 International Society of Bases Solo Competition, Tanglewood Music Center Fellowships in 2016 and 2017, Aspen Music Festival and School Fellowship in 2015, and Spoleto Festival USA Fellowships in 2018 and 2019.

Paul performs a wide variety of repertoire, as a member of Teatro Nuovo Bel Canton Orchestra, a founding member of the Kinetic Ensemble, and with Complexions Contemporary Ballet. He has premiered works for solo double bass and chamber music by Doug Balliet, Erin Gee, Theo Chandler, and Jon Anderson. In 2018, Paul worked with his mother Meg Paul and the Gerald Arpino Foundation in a recreation of the 1971 work for dance and solo double bass, *Valentine*, by Gerald Arpino and Jacob Druckman. Additionally, in 2018, Paul performed as a solo act on the main stage of the Detroit Music Weekend, opening for the Jackson Five.

“My life changed forever when I joined The Cleveland Orchestra. There is nothing sweeter in life than the inspiration and excitement gained by the people you work with; each week I’ve spent with the musicians that have become my friends and family confirms that feeling. Bass player Scott Haigh left a legacy and tremendous shoes to fill, and I am thrilled to serve this ensemble in his chair. I continue to learn from the excellence exemplified daily at The Cleveland Orchestra. The pleasure is all mine, and with every performance I grow a bigger fan of ‘America’s Finest Orchestra,’” Paul said.

Meghan Guegold Hege, assistant/utility horn

Meghan Guegold Hege will join The Cleveland Orchestra in July 2023. She was principal horn of the Akron and Canton Symphony Orchestras and frequently performed with The Cleveland Orchestra as a substitute player over the past 13 years. She has also performed with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Florida Orchestra, and the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra of Columbus. Her orchestral studies started before her senior year of high school as a member of the horn section of The Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra.

Guegold Hege was a faculty member at the Cleveland Institute of Music (CIM) from 2011 to 2022, coaching chamber music students and teaching horn lessons, and coaching chamber music through the Preparatory and Continuing Education Division at CIM (CIM Prep) and the Joint Music Program (JMP)

with Case Western Reserve University. Her preparatory and JMP students have gone on to pursue additional degrees at CIM, New England Conservatory, University of Michigan, Royal Danish Academy of Music, and the Royal College of Music. She was also the chair of the Winds, Brass, and Percussion Department for CIM Prep.

A Northeastern Ohio native, Guegold Hege has a master's degree in performance from CIM, where she studied with Richard King, and a bachelor's degree in performance with honors from the University of Akron, where she studied with William Hoyt. She also studied with Rick Solis, Eli Epstein, and David Jolley, and was mentored by Julie Landsman, Ellen Dinwiddie Smith, and Gail Williams. She spent summers at the Music Academy of the West, National Repertory Orchestra, Tanglewood Music Center, and Artosphere Arts and Nature Festival.

She was a recipient of a Presser Foundation Scholarship at Akron, a winner in two Tuesday Musical Association scholarship competitions, and was a featured soloist with the Akron and Canton Symphony Orchestras.

"Becoming a member of The Cleveland Orchestra has been a lifelong goal of mine, something I have dreamed of and worked toward for two decades since I was a teenager playing horn in The Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra. It has been an honor to play with The Cleveland Orchestra as a substitute and extra horn player over the past 13 years, but now to come back home to my native Cleveland as a member of the horn section brings me so much joy. I am very grateful to Franz Welser-Möst and the audition committee for giving me this opportunity, and I am looking forward to making music with my teachers, mentors, and friends in this extraordinary orchestra," Guegold Hege said.

"I am deeply grateful to my parents, both of whom were Ohio public school music teachers, who picked the horn for me at age 9. They have been incredibly loving supporters, as has my husband, Daniel."

Tanner Tanyeri, percussion

Tanner Tanyeri will join the percussion section of The Cleveland Orchestra in August 2023. A native of Madison, Wisconsin, he began his musical journey at a young age when he sat down at his older brother's drum set. He holds a Bachelor of Music from the University of Michigan, a Master of Music from The Juilliard School, and an artist diploma from the Glenn Gould School in Toronto. His mentors included Joseph Gramley, Tom Sherwood, Daniel Druckman, and Charles Settle.

Tanyeri has performed frequently with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the New World Symphony. In 2022, he was selected as a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center, where he performed in various orchestral and chamber music settings. He also performed as a member of the Lucerne Festival Academy's Contemporary Orchestra in 2022. Tanyeri also spent time in residence at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, National YoungArts Week, and toured as a member of the National Youth Orchestra of the United States.

In addition to his performing career, he has worked as a fellow with The Juilliard School's Music Advancement Program and as assistant percussion coordinator with the National Youth Orchestra.

“I’m beyond humbled and honored to be joining the percussion section of The Cleveland Orchestra. The storied sound of the Orchestra and its commitment to music making has been a continual source of inspiration, and it’s a dream come true to have the opportunity to contribute to this organization,” Tanyeri said.

Youngji Kim, first violin

Korean violinist Youngji Kim was previously a second violinist with the Minnesota Orchestra and a substitute with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. She graduated with a Master of Music degree from the Yale School of Music, where she studied with Ani Kavafian and Syoko Aki, and a bachelor’s degree from Seoul National University with professors Ju-young Baek, Hyun a Kim, and Hyuk-joo Kwun.

Her musical awards include winning the KBS KEPCO Competition, the Segye Ilbo Competition, second prize at the Joongang Music Competition, and third prize at the Hong Kong Generation Next Arts International Music Competition. She was also selected as a Gyeonggi Young Artist and Kumho Young Artist in Korea, where she had her debut concerts.

Kim has performed with many leading Korean orchestras, including the Korean Symphony Orchestra, Gyeonggi Philharmonic Orchestra, KBS Symphony Orchestra, Seoul National University Symphony Orchestra, and Busan Philharmonic Orchestra. She made her solo debut, presented by the Kumho Young Artist Concert Series. She played a quintet concert during the Spirit of SNU Strings Chamber Concert Series at Seoul Arts Center, and solo recitals at two renowned concert halls in Seoul: Kukje Art Hall and Youngsan Art Hall.

Kim was selected as one of three finalists for the Los Angeles Philharmonic’s Play with Ray festival, performing alongside the Philharmonic as a guest member and receiving a master class from violinist Ray Chen. She has also participated in master classes with Pinchas Zukerman, Daniel Austrich, Christoph Poppen, and Hye-jin Kim.

On the recommendation of professor Kathleen Winkler, she performed at the Aspen Music Festival String Showcase. She has also served as principal violinist with the Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra and the Yale Philharmonia, and as concertmaster of the Seoul National University Symphony Orchestra. Kim has participated in many additional festivals, including the Summit Music Festival and Pablo Casals Festival.

“When I learned I would be a first violin in The Cleveland Orchestra, I felt like I had become a part of history. My mind filled with memories of the countless great albums from this incredible orchestra.”

Genevieve Smelser, first violin

Genevieve Smelser comes from a family of musicians and began violin at age 3 in the Chicago, Illinois area. Growing up, her primary teachers included Mathias Tacke of the Vermeer Quartet and Gerardo Ribeiro. In 2017, Smelser received her bachelor's degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music as a

student of Stephen Rose. During her studies at CIM, Genevieve won the 2015 Concerto Competition, performed Brahms's Violin Concerto with the CIM Orchestra, and received the 2017 Award of Violin Excellence upon graduating.

In 2019, Smelser received her master's degree from Rice University's Shepherd School of Music as a student of Paul Kantor. During her studies at Rice, she won the 2019 Concerto Competition and performed Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No. 1 with the Shepherd Symphony. From 2019 to 2021, Smelser was a member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, where she served as concertmaster under the direction of Ken-David Masur.

She has performed in many music festivals across the world, including Grant Park Music Festival, Verbier, Spoleto, Fontainebleau, The Perlman Music Program, and Music Academy of the West. As an orchestral player, she has performed extensively with many ensembles including the Cleveland and Philadelphia Orchestras, as well as the Chicago, Houston, and Milwaukee Symphonies.

"Cleveland has felt like a second home since I attended the Cleveland Institute of Music. As a student, coming to Severance Music Center and hearing The Cleveland Orchestra changed my life, and 10 years later, I feel honored to work alongside such exquisite musicians and people," Smelser said.

Liyuan Xie, second violin

Chinese violinist Liyuan Xie will join The Cleveland Orchestra this fall. Liyuan is currently pursuing his first-year master's degree with Miriam Fried at the New England Conservatory (NEC). He holds a bachelor's degree from NEC, and previously studied with Binyou Zhou at the Middle School affiliated with the Shanghai Conservatory.

Since his solo orchestral debut at age 11, Xie established his career as a violinist and has collaborated regularly with the Shanghai Philharmonic, Shanghai Opera House Symphony, Nanjing Philharmonic, Qingdao Symphony, Shanghai Chamber Orchestra, and Novus Classical Camerata Orchestra. Recent concert engagements include performances of the Beethoven and Mendelssohn violin concertos with the Nanjing Philharmonic Orchestra, Bruch's First Violin Concerto with the Brookline Symphony Orchestra, and the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto with the Apollo Ensemble of Boston, as well as recitals in Providence, Randolph, New Britain, and Boston.

Xie has participated in numerous prestigious festivals including the Verbier Festival, Tanglewood Music Festival, Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival, and the New York String Orchestra's 50th Anniversary. He is currently a member of the Boston Ballet Orchestra and has performed as a guest violinist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at the Tanglewood Music Festival. He also performed as assistant principal second violin with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. As concertmaster, he has performed with the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra, Verbier Academy Orchestra, Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra, National Youth Orchestra of China, as well as NEC's Symphony, Philharmonia, and Chamber Orchestra.

“I have been listening to recordings of The Cleveland Orchestra since I was a little kid and it’s such a great pleasure to be able to play with them,” Xie said. “There are a lot of great concerts I’m really looking forward to next season, but I’m particularly excited about Bartók’s String Quartet No. 3, arranged for string orchestra, next January at Carnegie Hall.”

###

Media Contact:

Jen Steer / jsteer@clevelandorchestra.com / 216-231-7637