

Two afternoons of music

Performances by Portland Youth Philharmonic and pianist Llewellyn Sanchez-Werner set for May 15 and 16

By Lisa Britton
Go! Magazine

PENDLETON — Llewellyn Sanchez-Werner credits his mother with inspiring his love of the arts.

"My mom exposed me to so many different forms of art," he said.

Growing up in Southern California, he attended concerts, toured museums and danced to Frank Sinatra.

But he loved piano the most, and yearned to play.

The only obstacle was his age.

"No one wanted to teach a 2-year-old," he said with a laugh.

So his mom signed herself up for piano lessons. And after a couple weeks, he was the one taking the lessons.

He'd found his passion.

"That was how I wanted to contribute to the world," he said.

Now 25, Sanchez-Werner has a bachelor's and master's degrees from Juilliard (he entered those programs at ages 14 and 18) and received an Artist Diploma from the Yale School of Music. Living in New York City, he has played near and far — Amsterdam, Abu Dhabi, Rwanda, Kenya, the Kennedy Center and the White House, to name a few.

And now, as performing spaces are opening again following pandemic closures, he's even more convinced of the universal value of music — and his responsibility to use his gift.

"A musician can use music to cross barriers and build bridges in a world that needs a lot of healing," he said. "Anybody can hear music and dance to it, sing to it, enjoy it."

PENDLETON PERFORMANCES

This month Sanchez-Werner, a Portland Piano International

Rising Star, joins the Portland Youth Philharmonic's chamber orchestra, Camerata PYP, conducted by Musical Director David Hattner, for an orchestral performance at 3 p.m. Sunday, May 15, at Vert Auditorium, 480 SW Dorion Ave. Tickets are \$15 adults, \$12 seniors and \$5 students. Purchase tickets at portlandyouthphil.org/concerts.

The program features works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Piano Concerto in C minor, KV 491), Felix Mendelssohn (The Hebrides, Op. 26) and Louise Farrenc (Symphony No. 3, Op. 36).

"Camerata PYP will be presenting a program of both well-loved and unknown works for its first trip to Pendleton," Hattner said. "Mendelssohn's Hebrides Overture is a work of such inspiration that Johannes Brahms, a later German composer, suggested he would trade four of his symphonies to have written it himself."

For the Mozart piece, Sanchez-Werner will write and



Chris McGuire/Contributed photo

Pianist Llewellyn Sanchez-Werner plays with the Portland Youth Philharmonic Orchestra Sunday, May 15, at Vert Auditorium, then performs a solo recital Monday, May 16, at Pendleton Center for the Arts.

perform his own cadenzas.

"I'm putting my own stamp on the piece," he said.

On Monday, May 16, Sanchez-Werner will present a solo piano performance at 4:30 p.m. at Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St. Attendance is free but space is limited. Reserve a seat at pendletonarts.org or by

calling 541-278-9201.

He said the solo concert will feature a wide variety of music and styles from numerous composers, including Igor Stravinsky, Frédéric Chopin and Carlos Chávez.

"We'll go to different continents and different time periods," Sanchez-Werner said.



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