

**CHOIRS ONTARIO ANNOUNCES DR. JEAN-SÉBASTIEN VALLÉE AS
2026 ONTARIO YOUTH CHOIR CONDUCTOR**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 4, 2025 | Toronto, Ontario - Choirs Ontario is excited to announce the appointment of Dr. Jean-Sébastien Vallée as conductor of the 2026 Ontario Youth Choir. The Ontario Youth Choir is one of Ontario's most prestigious youth choirs and choral training programs, and core artistic program for Choirs Ontario.

"On behalf of the Choirs Ontario board, I'm thrilled to welcome Jean-Sébastien Vallée as the 2026 OYC conductor," comments Dr. Patrick Murray, Choirs Ontario board President. "As one of Canada's leading choral performers and pedagogues, he brings extraordinary experience working with young adults, adults and professional singers alike to this role, and I know our singers will grow tremendously under his guidance and leadership this summer."

Jean-Sébastien Vallée is a renowned Canadian-American conductor, scholar, and pedagogue recognized for his expertise in vocal, choral and orchestral repertoires. A career spanning over several decades, Vallée has conducted numerous ensembles across North America, Europe, and Asia, and has collaborated with some of the world's most prestigious orchestras including the Chicago and Toronto Symphony Orchestras, l'Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, and the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa.



Dr. Vallée is Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the renowned 160-voice Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and the professional chamber ensemble, the Toronto Mendelssohn Singers. In addition, Jean-Sébastien is Professor of Music, Director of Choral Studies, and Coordinator of the Conducting & Ensembles Area at the Schulich School of Music of McGill University. He has previously served as the Director of Choral Studies at California State University, Los Angeles, and was on the choral faculty of the University of Redlands.

Recent and upcoming engagements include performances at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest, tours with the National Youth Choir of Canada and the 2026 Alberta Youth Choir, and collaborations with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Orchestre symphonique de Québec, the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

"I am deeply honoured and absolutely thrilled to be selected as the Conductor for the Ontario Youth Choir in 2026. The OYC is a vital incubator for the next generation of Canadian choral artists. I look forward to working with these immensely talented young singers, fostering their artistic growth, nurturing their passion, and collaborating with them to achieve choral excellence. To invest in these musicians and help shape the future of our community is truly a dream come true." - Dr. Jean-Sébastien Vallée

Conductors for the Ontario Youth Choir are selected by competitive nomination and reviewed by a committee consisting of the Choirs Ontario board executive, members at large, and an external reviewer. This year's committee comprised Patrick Murray, Charissa Bagan, Elise Naccarato, Maureen Clark, Matthew Emery, and Lydia Adams.

The 2026 Ontario Youth Choir will run from July 31 to August 9, 2026.

Choirs Ontario is excited to welcome Jean-Sébastien Vallée and honoured to have him lead the artistic team in the 55th Ontario Youth Choir.

ABOUT THE ONTARIO YOUTH CHOIR (OYC)

The Ontario Youth Choir is the province's honour choir and an intensive 10-day summer training program for Ontario singers ages 16 to 23. An exceptional musical and singing experience, OYC combines rehearsals, masterclasses and private voice lessons, while learning from an eminent conductor. The group of motivated and enthusiastic singers spend a week at an Ontario university music faculty, followed by a mini performance tour and concerts.

ABOUT CHOIRS ONTARIO

Choirs Ontario is the provincial arts service organization for the choral arts sector and community in Ontario. Our mission is to foster vibrant, inclusive and accessible choral communities by providing programs, services and resources; creating opportunities; and engaging Ontario's diverse population in the transformative power of choral music.

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