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Youth Symphony will perform Guatemalan marimba music

NORWALK, Conn. - Mayor Harry Rilling , will host the Annual Gala Concert of the INTAKE Music Organization (Instrumentally Native Taking on the Classics), to be held on March 22 at Norwalk Concert Hall, at 7:00 PM , featuring special and one-of-a-kind performances by the Norwalk Youth Symphony's Concert Orchestra and Marimba Union Musical from Antigua Guatemala. On this day, Beethoven's Egmont Overture will merge with traditional works for the Guatemalan national instrument: the marimba.

This concert counts with support from the organized Guatemalan community groups such as Grupo Quetzal from Stamford and the Brotherhood of the Lord of Esquipulas from Saint Mary's of Stamford, who will present folk dances representing their country's scenes and landscapes with works like "Luna of Xelaju", " El Rey Quiche" among others. An art exhibit at the atrium will also be displayed, titled " Guatemala Everywhere " by Guatemalan painters residing in Connecticut.

According to Stephen Perry, advisor to the INTAKE Organization, this is a reflection of the importance of working together, with the intent of empowering national pride and exposing young musicians of the Symphony Orchestra to new cultures that are always present and sometimes get lost and forgotten in diaspora, between Norwalk and Stamford.

These were plenty of reasons for which Mayor Harry Rilling, after learning about Intake Organization's work since 2011, decided to endorse this project as a host, which commits him to opening the doors to the Concert Hall at Norwalk City and provide a reception for the Friends of Intake, artists and patrons of the musical organization founded by Angelica Durrell, a former student from the Norwalk Public Schools System.

"I think it's important to have cultural events in Norwalk showcasing ethnic diversity. Not only to enjoy different cultures but to forge pride in one's roots and place of origin," said Rilling.

The mayor expressed his satisfaction that the "sons of Norwalk are now returning and giving back to their city what they got from it as they were children." He recalled his years when he was student at Tracey School, Jefferson, West Rocks and Norwalk High School. Similar to Durrell, who also attended those schools.

“As we enter our third year of programming, we are delighted that the City of Norwalk continues to support our mission and has allowed us to grow and create unique and innovative partnerships with renowned organizations like the Norwalk Youth Symphony” said Intake founder and Artistic Director, Angelica Durrell. “As a social entrepreneur and violinist from Norwalk, this is the first time in 58 years that the youth symphony, and any other orchestra that we know of in the area, will be performing Guatemalan music with international performers with such an open and innovative mentality that will truly engage and reflect our local communities”, she added.

Symphonic works by Beethoven, and traditional pieces from Guatemala will be performed at this concert, including a debut performance at Norwalk Concert Hall by students from the INTAKE Native Instrument Academy; USA marimba legend Arthur Lipner joining the INTAKE Ensemble and Marimba Union Musical; and a triple concerto for the Alturas Duo and quena (charango, guitar, and quena, a native pan flute instrument) highlighting Chilean music written for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the London Philharmonic by Horacio Salinas. To learn more about the INTAKE Organization, visit [www.intakemusic.org](http://www.intakemusic.org).

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#### About INTAKE

The INTAKE Organization, Inc., is a Connecticut-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, founded in 2011. The mission of INTAKE Organization (Instrumentally Native Taking on the Classics) is to improve the quality of life for opportunity youth by providing access to quality classical music education through the use of native instruments that represent diverse cultural backgrounds. INTAKE has partnered with the University of Connecticut, holding residencies at the United States Embassy in Quito and the National Assembly of Ecuador; the City of New Haven’s Department of Arts, Culture and Tourism; City of Norwalk, and the Stamford Public Schools System. INTAKE strives to increase classical music audiences through public performances, educational workshops, community outreach events, and cultural advocacy. Board members include Maureen Pavia from Stamford Gives Back, Afa Sadykhly Dworkin from the national Sphinx Organization, and composers Gabriela Lena Frank and Tania León as Honorary Board members.

#### About the Norwalk Youth Symphony

The Norwalk Youth Symphony is sponsored by the City of Norwalk, Connecticut. The Norwalk Youth Symphony is dedicated to enriching the lives of young people within a musical community. Founded in 1956, the NYS has expanded since that time to include over 230 musicians from more than 30 area towns each year. Many alumni have gone on to study professionally at music conservatories and colleges such as Juilliard, Eastman, Manhattan School of Music, Berklee College of Music, Hartt College of Music and the New England Conservatory. All NYS members gain an invaluable discipline and musical experience that instills a lifelong appreciation of music, the arts, and community engagement.