



# GIRLS WHO CONDUCT

[www.GirlsWhoConduct.org](http://www.GirlsWhoConduct.org)

For Immediate Release

February 20th, 2021

**GIRLS WHO CONDUCT** is Proud to Announce New Initiative for Young Women Conductors

**Inaugural Program:** Feb. 20 - Mar. 27, 2021

Working to address the long-standing issue of extreme gender imbalance on the conductor's podium, **Girls Who Conduct** is delighted to announce the launch of a unique virtual program designed to provide training and career support for young musicians interested in learning more about conducting. Aimed at beginner conductors with little to no experience, it will serve as an introduction to the various elements and skills required of the profession. Women, women-identifying, and non-binary musicians between the ages of 16-22 (high school juniors through undergraduate seniors), were encouraged to apply.

The first iteration of this unique program will begin on February 20, 2021 and run through March 27, 2021 via a six-week virtual residency due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

Through teacher recommendations and student self-nominations, **36 fellows from six countries** including Argentina, Brazil, Spain, the United Arab Emirates, UK, and the United States were admitted into the program. Fellows will participate in masterclasses led by GWC mentors, including founder Chaowen Ting and a team of five women conductors specializing in different areas of the classical music industry: Kaitlin Bove, Michelle Di Russo, Tanatchaya Chanphanitpornkit, Hannah Nacheman, and Michelle Rofrano. The participants will attend seminars and discussions on leadership style and how women conductors can support one another in making a greater impact on their field.

On why she founded GWC, Dr. Chaowen Ting states: "Growing up, no one ever told me that I couldn't do something because I was a girl. I want that for all girls: to know they have a choice, and that they can work towards whatever they want to become."

"Unlike some of the other programs geared toward already-emerging and established women conductors, this much-needed program will encourage young girls to explore conducting as a career path, provide camaraderie and a community for the alumni as they rise in the profession, and enable more young musicians to add their talents to our collective understanding of this art form."

Girls Who Conduct stands out by being a completely female-led program. On the importance of young women conductors having female mentors, co-creator Dr. Kaitlin Bove shares "I have never had a female mentor or worked under a female conductor. I want to support changing the



field so that no young woman will have to move through her career without visible, representational mentorship like I had to.”

According to conductor Michelle Rofrano, “There’s a common phrase regarding representation: ‘you can’t be what you can’t see.’ This is why we wanted to create a program for young women and non-binary musicians with an interest in conducting, no experience required: we hope that by inviting them into a situation in which female leadership is not an exception, but the norm, they will leave the program with the unwavering belief that they can and should be the leaders of tomorrow– and that they will go on to set that example for the women who will look up to them.”

Helping the young participants of Girls Who Conduct to build confidence and leadership skills through mutual respect will be a core element of the program. Conductor Hannah Nacheman emphasizes “art is about creating and connecting, finding ways to lift each other up.” She continues, “our initiative aims to foster community over competition– to empower and inspire the next generation through interpersonal connection and new ways of thinking. Our goal is to foster not just musical excellence, but artistic connection– human connection– regardless of gender, race, or creed.”

The team of instructors hope not only to lead with words, but also by example. Conductor Michelle DiRusso describes “it has been a pleasure collaborating with this group of brilliant women conductors to design the inaugural Girls Who Conduct program. We hope this sense of collaboration and support between women comes through and inspires our young conductor mentees.”

Beyond their participation in this program, Conductor Tanatchaya Chanphanitpornkit’s hope for young women conductors is that “you wake up one day and think: I am more capable, more courageous, more kind, and more brilliant than I was yesterday. Then ask yourself what you will do for others.”

## **ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

**Girls Who Conduct** is an initiative created in 2020 to empower and encourage the upcoming generation of women, women-identifying, and non-binary conductors by providing a program for training, mentorship, and camaraderie in order to foster diversity and inclusion in classical music. It was inspired by the success of the worldwide initiative Girls Who Code, which encourages and equips young women to pursue careers in computer science -- a historically male-dominated field.

To learn more about Girls Who Conduct and support their mission, visit [www.girlswhoconduct.org](http://www.girlswhoconduct.org).



**2021 FELLOWS**

Ariel Alvarado  
Rory Anderson  
Lily Blanchard  
Kristina Hope Bruening  
Liliana Carpenter  
Tanmayee Chalamalasetti  
Stella Childs  
Madalyn Crane  
Mae Czuba  
Zoe De los Santos  
Kathryn De Witt  
Danielle Densmore  
Helena Fresquet Villafranca  
Priyanka Gohal  
Irene Guggenheim-Triana  
Amanda Herold  
Julia Kim  
Angela Klinkner  
Kameron Lannan  
Amanda Lopes  
Mariya Miles-Flynn  
Marisa Morin  
Laura Orzechoski  
Rachel Pac  
Valentina Paolucci  
Julia Pirzchalski  
Zoe Raisbeck  
Regina Rancourt  
Alicia Ripina  
Lucinda Rissmeyer  
Alena Scott  
Lindsay Spitzer  
Emily Ta  
Isabela Thornsley  
Mica Weiland  
Thea Weinbeck

**2021 AUDITORS**

Sarah Bussineau  
Mackenzie Dupra  
Ashley Flood  
Rebecca Growcott  
Eloise Hartings  
Audrey Potter  
Shaunessy Renker  
Lara Roberts  
Alexandria Sellers  
Rocío Keiko Silvero  
Nilli Tayidi  
Jessica Vargas  
Olivia Wakefield

