

# Portland Junior Symphony, 1927

*By Unknown*

This photograph from 1927 shows the three-year-old Portland Junior Symphony. When it started, the young musicians practiced in the attic of music teacher Mary V. Dodge. It was the first youth symphony in the country, founded when Dodge asked Portland Symphony Orchestra guest conductor, Jacques Gersikovitch, to lead a combined group of promising music students from Irvington School and her violin school. The group is now called the Portland Youth Philharmonic (PYP).

Gersikovitch led the orchestra for twenty-nine years, and under his direction they gained national attention, pioneering the youth orchestra movement. Jacob Abshalomov, the next conductor, began arranging international tours, and the youth group gained prominence in other parts of the world as well.

The tradition continued in 2000, when the PYP traveled to New Zealand and Australia for its eighth international tour with conductor, Huw Edwards. Edwards was honored at his final performance with PYP in April 2002, and the group moves forward under the baton of conductor Mei-Ann Chen.

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