

The Music

For this year's Express the Music, students will respond to **the first movement of Kris Bowers' *For a Younger Self* Violin Concerto**. A recording of this piece can be found on most streaming platforms.

[YouTube](#)

[Spotify](#)

[Apple Music](#)

Hear the music live! Kris Bowers' *For a Younger Self* will be performed by the SLSO with Charles Yang on Saturday, January 16 at 7:30pm and Sunday, January 17 at 3:00pm at Powell Hall. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit slo.org.

Suggested Excerpts for Lesson Plan 1

Excerpt 1	0:00 – 2:11
Excerpt 2	2:12 – 5:03
Excerpt 3	5:04 – 7:49
Excerpt 4	7:50 – 11:17

Learn More

Read Kris Bowers' [program notes from the premiere](#) of the piece, where he reflects on his career and the inspiration for his composition.

Watch this [mini documentary](#) about recording *For a Younger Self* with the American Youth Symphony.

About Kris Bowers' *For a Younger Self* Violin Concerto



Composer Kris Bowers (born 1989) grew up in Los Angeles, California. He started learning the piano through Suzuki classes at age 4. When he was in high school, Bowers studied classical and jazz piano at Colburn School for Performing Arts. He then went on to study at Juilliard, where he earned a master's degree in jazz performance with a concentration in film composition. Bowers met violinist Charles Yang when they were both students at Juilliard.



Violinist Charles Yang (born 1988) grew up in Austin, Texas, where his first violin teacher was his mother. He later studied violin at Juilliard and went on to become the violinist and lead singer of Time for Three, a genre-bending trio known for blending classical, folk, pop, and other musical styles.

In 2019, Yang approached Bowers about composing a violin concerto. A violin concerto is a piece of orchestral music that features a solo instrument – in this case the violin. A concerto is like a conversation between a soloist and the larger musical ensemble. Concertos usually consist of three movements, which are shorter, self-contained sections with moments of silence in between.

For Bowers, who was primarily a film composer, this concerto would be his first concert piece for orchestra. Bowers drew inspiration from his and Yang's time in New York as teenagers: moving away from home to a new city and navigating the challenges of attending a serious school of music. Bowers wrote that he and Yang "reminisced about the feeling we had adjusting to a new and incredibly overwhelming environment, and how tough it can be as a young person to overcome fear, stress, self-doubt, etc."

He wrote that the music of the first movement represents a character who is "somewhat melancholic and timid, and pretty soon we feel he is almost being pushed around by the orchestra. The orchestra represents life in this way, and can be both the bully and the mentor. So we go back and forth between these moments of chaos and anxiety, to these gentler sections that represent the pining for tranquility, nostalgia, love, etc."

Creating art – whether that be drawing, writing, composing music, or whatever medium you connect with – can offer a way to reflect on your emotions and tell your story. For Bowers and Yang, *For a Younger Self* became a way to reflect on and process the emotions they felt at an important transitional time in their lives. Bowers wrote, "On some level, writing this piece became a way to send a message to the younger version of myself, in terms of finding a way to maintain balance and inner peace in this chaotic and troubling world, and also as a way to encourage and celebrate my curiosity and love for so many types of music."