



Dvořák & Beach

October 16 | 7:30 PM

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Program

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Classics Series

Dvořák & Beach

October 16, 2025 | 7:30 PM

Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Auditorium

Ilya Ram | *conductor*

Tae-Yeon Kim | *cello*

**Flash photography and video/audio recording of this
concert are strictly prohibited.**

Johannes Brahms
(1833 - 1897)

Tragic Overture, Op. 81 (13")

Antonín Dvořák
(1841 - 1904)

**Concerto in B minor for Cello &
Orchestra, Op. 104 (40")**

I. Allegro

II. Adagio ma non troppo

III. Finale: Allegro moderato

Tae-Yeon Kim | *cello*

- INTERMISSION (20") -



Amy Beach
(1867 - 1944)

**Symphony in E minor, Op. 32,
"Gaelic" (41")**

I. Allegro con fuoco

II. Alla siciliana; Allegro vivace

III. Lento con molto espressione

IV. Allegro di molto



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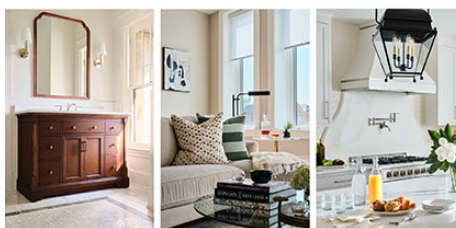


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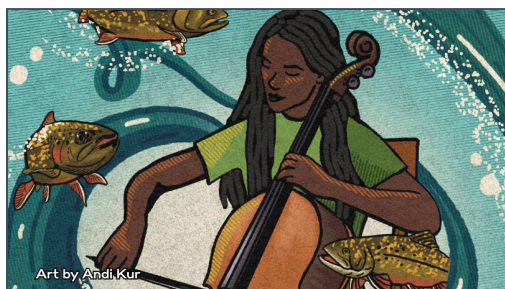


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Ilya Ram

Kayoko Dan Fund Music Director

“Although Ram [...] presents himself as deliberately casual in his shiny silver sneakers, his conducting is the opposite: energetic, spontaneous, yet clear, precise, and attentive to detail.” - Leipziger Volkszeitung

Israeli-American conductor Ilya Ram, praised for his “charismatic and energetic performances” (Crescendo Magazine) and “expressive spontaneity” (Diapason), is internationally recognized for his creative and engaging approach to classical music.

A prizewinner of the 5th Evgeny Svetlanov Competition in Monte Carlo, Ram is the Music Director of the Chattanooga Symphony & Opera, where he has launched an ambitious three-year artistic arc that explores Reflection, Moments, and Destiny - a journey connecting the past, present, and future of orchestral storytelling. His tenure is marked by innovative programming, cross-genre collaborations, and partnerships with local artists and community organizations that expand the orchestra’s cultural reach.

Recent and upcoming highlights include performances with the Szczecin Filharmonia, Orquestra do Algarve, Orchestra Indiana, Deutsche Philharmonie Merck, Magdeburg Philharmoniker, Ensemble Tempus Konnex, Elbland Philharmonie Sachsen, Israel Chamber Orchestra, Ra’anana Sinfonietta, and the Robert-Schumann Philharmonic. He returns for the third time to the IMPULS Festival for Contemporary Music. Among the many soloists he has collaborated with are Pekka Kuusisto, Krist?ne Balanas, Amandine Savary, Ilian Garnetz, Ildikó Szabó, Liv Redpath, Ying Li, and Charlotte Thiele.

Equally at home in the pit and on the concert stage, Ram made his Semperoper Dresden debut with the world premiere of Zad Moulta’s Drei Miese, fiese Kerle and previously served as



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Guest Resident Conductor at Theater Chemnitz, leading productions including Zimmermann's *Weißer Rose* and Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*. As a scholarship holder of the Akademie Musiktheater Heute (Deutsche Bank Stiftung), he premiered three new operas with Ensemble Modern during the 2024/25 season.

A strong believer that the highest artistic results are achieved through joy, curiosity, and creative rehearsal strategies, Ram has worked extensively with young ensembles, including the German National Youth Ballet, Youth North German Philharmonic, and the Dresden Special Music High School.

Committed to artistic innovation, Ram is among the few conductors to have completed the Music.Multimedia.Management project led by the Szczecin Philharmonic in collaboration with Fjord Cadenza Festival and TRAFO Center for Contemporary Art. He has participated in numerous international masterclasses, including the first-ever conducting masterclass at the Bayreuth Festival, and has studied with Christian Thielemann, Klaus Mäkelä, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Sakari Oramo, Neeme Järvi, Marek Janowski, Hartmut Haenchen, Robert Treviño, Steven Sloane, Miguel Harth-Bedoya, Timothy Redmond, Nicolás Pasquet, Johannes Schlaefli, and Jorma Panula.

Ram graduated cum laude from the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music in Tel Aviv and earned his master's degree in orchestral conducting from the Hochschule für Musik "Carl Maria von Weber" Dresden, later completing the Advanced Professional Training for Conductors at the UdK Berlin. His studies were supported by scholarships from the Yotzrim Foundation, America-Israel Cultural Foundation, and the DAAD.

Before beginning his formal studies, Ram volunteered for a year in underprivileged communities in Israel, working with children both in and outside the education system. He later continued his social engagement through the Israeli branch of Physicians for Human Rights.

(October 2025)



Tae-Yeon Kim

cello

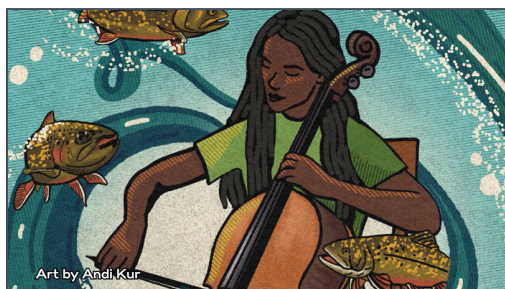
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Born in Seoul, Korea, cellist Tae-Yeon Kim recently won 1st Prize in the 12th Lutoslawski International Cello Competition in Poland, as well as several other special prizes, including an outstanding performance of the work *Grave* by Lutoslawski.

Kim was born into a family of musicians and started playing the cello at the age of 7. She gave her debut solo recital at the age of 12 at the Kumho Arts Center in Seoul, Korea and received a scholarship from The Hyundai Automobile Company and the Kumho Musician Award dedicated to the most talented young musicians from Korea. She is recipient of several awards and prizes, including the Frans Helmerson prize at Kronberg Academy Cello Festival (Germany), Silver Medal and the Best Interpretation of Bach at the Young Tchaikovsky Competition (Russia), 1st Prize (junior category) at the A. Janigro International Cello Competition (Croatia), 2nd Prize at the Osaka International Music Competition (Japan), and 1st Prize and the Conductor's Prize at the G. Mahler International Cello Competition (Germany). She was the youngest Semi-Finalist of the International Paulo Competition in Helsinki in 2023.

She has performed throughout Asia and Europe as an orchestral soloist, including with the Finland Sibelius Orchestra, Novosibirsk Youth Orchestra, Saint Petersburg City Orchestra, Suzuki Orchestra, KimPo Philharmonic, Rium Philharmonic. Her 2024-2026 season includes performances with the Arthur Rubinstein Philharmonic, Tadeusz Szeiligowski Philharmonic, Feliks Nowowiejski Warmia-Mazuria Philharmonic, Tadeusz Baird Philharmonic, Henryk Wieniawski Philharmonic, Karol Szymanowski Philharmonic, Henryk Mikolaj Gorecki Philharmonic, Baltic Fryderyk Chopin Philharmonic and KT Chamber Orchestra. Upcoming performances include recitals in North Carolina, Washington D.C, and at the Seoul Arts center in Korea. She currently studies with Gary Hoffmann and Peter Wiley at the Curtis Institute of Music. She plays a cello by V. Gagliano (1880) Napoli, Italy.



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Program Notes

Tragic Overture, Op. 81

Johannes Brahms

Tragic Overture, Op. 81

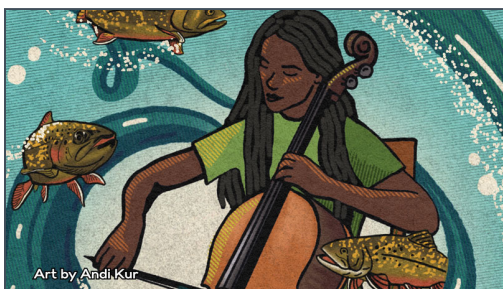
Johannes Brahms

(b. May 7, 1833 in Hamburg, Germany; d. April 3, 1897 in Vienna, Austria)

Brahms wrote two concert overtures, both in the summer of 1880. The Academic Festival Overture is numbered Op. 80 but it debuted in January 1881 after the Tragic Overture was played first in December 1880. Brahms worked on them concurrently, starting work on the Academic Festival Overture first, finishing it in late August. He finished the Tragic Overture in early September.

The impetus for Op. 80 is clear. In 1880 Herr Brahms became Doktor as the University of Breslau awarded him an honorary degree. For that occasion, Brahms offered the school a gift in return, the Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80. That work was uncharacteristically jolly for Brahms and perhaps Brahms' understanding of the importance of writing celebratory music led him to work simultaneously on a piece where he could indulge his darker thoughts.

Brahms himself referred to the overtures as, "the laughing and the weeping" (das lachende und das weinende). Tragic for



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Brahms also meant only an exploration of the universal, stormy, and austere nature of tragedy itself—a purely musical drama—more circumstantial evidence that it was the emotional foil at hand into which he could sink what could detract from the positivity of the other overture.

The music itself is a mini symphony in three parts, (not so) fast, very moderate, and tranquilly fast. Two savage chords launch us, giving way to a searching melody in the strings. Brute force and lyricism are subsumed by a relentless march-like rhythm until it all bursts out in a turbulent landscape of sound.

The middle section cuts the tempo in half. The march of the first part turns into a dirge wandering through a desolate landscape but building to a return of the opening tempest.

As the final section gets underway, the clouds part for a glorious brass chorale—a stunning transformation of the opening theme into a noble anthem. The trombones fulfill their traditional role as messengers of the supernatural. The coda holds an epic, violent struggle, ending with five emphatic final chords that seal the overture's grim fate.

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Concerto in B minor for Cello & Orchestra, Op. 104

Antonín Dvořák

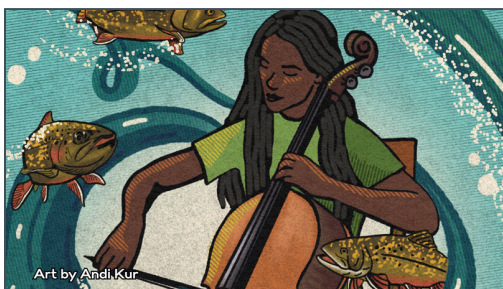
Concerto in B minor for Cello & Orchestra, Op. 104

Antonín Dvořák

(b. September 8, 1841 in Nelahozeves, Bohemia; d. May 1, 1904 in Prague, Austria-Hungary)

Out of the blue philanthropist Jeannette Thurber, without any preliminaries, telegraphed Dvořák in June 1891, “WOULD YOU ACCEPT POSITION DIRECTOR NATIONAL CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC NEW YORK OCTOBER 1892 ALSO LEAD SIX CONCERTS OF YOUR WORKS TWENTY WORDS PREPAID”. The offer was a salary twenty times what he earned in Prague, light work duties, and four months off in the summer. He couldn't refuse. Arriving in New York September 27, 1892, he settled into the house at 327 East 17th St., two blocks from the conservatory. There he would write five major works, the first of which was the perennially popular *New World Symphony*.

The story of his B Minor Cello Concerto spans both continents. Begun in America, its final, deeply personal character was



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forged upon his return to Bohemia in 1895, prompted by intense homesickness and the failing health of Josefina Kounicova, the great love of his youth. The first performance finally took place in London, March 19, 1896. Dvořák conducted with soloist Leo Stern.

The first movement after an expansive introduction is in sonata form. Of the lyrical second theme, Dvořák wrote, "Every time I play it, I start to tremble all over." The mood in the recapitulation brightens considerably and the coda is positively ebullient.

Every profound emotion seems to find expression in the songful second movement. Its center section references "Leave me alone," from Four Songs, Op. 82, Josefina's favorite.

As the first version of the finale was finished only a few months before Dvořák's return home, it fairly quivers with anticipation of "moving from the darkness into the light." A quiet meditative section, inserted after he went home to Bohemia, quotes "Leave me alone" a final time before the full orchestra takes us out with incandescent fervor.

Dvořák wrote a cello concerto as a young man, but did not orchestrate it. Dvořák was embarrassed by much of his early work and burned most of it that was in his possession. Fortunately the piano-score of that cello concerto was with the cellist for whom he had written it, so it waited to be rediscovered in 1925.

A mature Dvořák complained about the cello, as a solo instrument, it "whinges up above, and grumbles down below." Then Dvořák reported, "I've just finished the first movement of a concerto for the cello!! Don't be surprised; I was surprised myself, and I still wonder why I chose to embark upon something like this."

How did it happen? Among Dvořák's colleagues at the conservatory was an Irish-born cellist and composer who had established himself in Germany before deciding to immigrate to the United States. He was Victor Herbert of *Babes in Toyland* fame. Herbert was greatly inspired by Dvořák's *New World* Symphony and he chose the same key, E minor, for his new cello concerto and was the soloist at its premiere in 1894. Dvořák was smitten and went back to hear the second performance the next day. He borrowed Herbert's score and studied it at length. What had seemed preposterous looked irresistible and he began work on Cello Concerto in B Minor on November 8, 1894, finishing the first version on February 9, 1895.

Dvořák and Herbert—something mythic how two immigrants could inspire one another, each after the other—but it wasn't an



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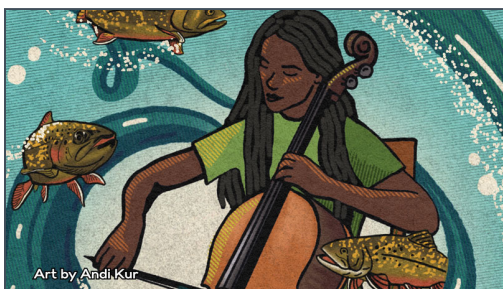
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uncomplicated American success story. Dvořák was homesick. He also worried greatly over the failing health of Josefina Kounicova, the unrequited love of his youth. He resigned from the conservatory and returned to Prague in May 1895. Josefina died on May 27th and he attended her funeral on the 29th. Into the revisions of the concerto as he worked for closure, went bits of his music he knew she had loved. Deeply personal in nature, international in scope, crafted by a master summing up his art, the concerto was first played on his last trip to England on March 19, 1896, Dvořák himself conducting, but not without exposing a last controversy. Dvořák dedicated the concerto to his cellist friend Hanuš Wihan and expected him to play it. Wihan, however, conceived of and wrote out a brilliant cadenza for the final movement as it was first written back in New York. Dvořák's loyalty to Josefina's memory won out and he would not change it. Before he and Wihan could work things out, the event organizers in London hired another cellist Leo Stern who played the debut performance.

Dvořák's fame came piecemeal. He wrote a lot of music in the 1860s, most of it unperformed and unpublished until much later. In the early 1870s, he began to receive recognition in Prague but nowhere else. When Josefina declined Dvořák's marriage proposal, Dvořák married her sister in 1873. He became a church organist at St. Adalbert's church in Prague. The job did not pay well and quashed any ideas of travel, but he did find time to compose and hopefully entered international competitions beginning that year. With Austria's competition for "poor but talented artists" his luck was in. He won a stipend in 1874 and twice more in 1876 and 1877. What Dvořák did not know immediately was that Johannes Brahms was an influential juror on the prize committee, and Brahms above all others was convinced of Dvořák's remarkable talent. Brahms was promoting Dvořák's music before the two even met and made for him the invaluable connection to Simrock, the German publisher. It was Dvořák's piano duets, Slavonic Dances, Op. 46, published in 1878 that were a turning point. Within a few years he was famous around the world.

Brahms began but did not finish a cello concerto of his own, but lived to see Dvořák finish his cello concerto. In a peculiar irony, Brahms looked at Dvořák's score and exclaimed, "Why on earth didn't I know that one could write a cello concerto like this? If I had only known, I would have written one long ago!"

Mrs. Thurber made the National Conservatory noteworthy even before Dvořák's arrival. It was the first such place to be noted, according to Grove's Dictionary [1920], as being "specially successful in helping students of foreign birth and certain special classes, like the blind and those of negro blood." Frances MacDowell, mother of American composer Edward MacDowell (a through-line to Amy Beach as will be seen),



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helped create Mrs. Thurber's vision when, as National Conservatory registrar, she saw to it that Harry T. Burleigh, a talented young African American, was admitted with a scholarship in 1892. Dvořák immediately bonded with the young man, finding him a trove of knowledge of traditional spirituals and folk music shared among slaves. Dvořák was already predisposed to use music of common people. Using folk music and dances from his native land was his stock in trade. Living in a new country he found a fresh wellspring of musical inspiration and passionately embraced it. In his position of influence, he made his case, "In the Negro melodies of America I discover all that is needed for a great and noble school of music." It is fair to say that his advocacy changed American music forever.

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Symphony in E minor, Op. 32, "Gaelic"

Amy Beach

Symphony in E minor, Op. 32, "Gaelic"

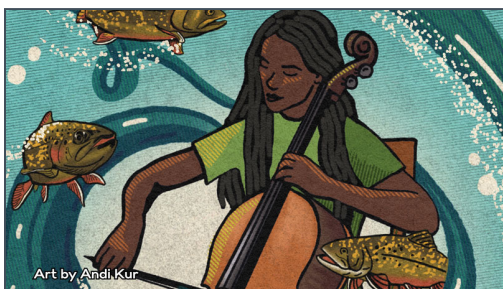
Amy Beach

(b. September 5, 1867 in Henniker, NH; d. December 27, 1944 in New York, NY)

In 1896 Amy Beach was already a formidable presence in American music. When Antonin Dvořák directly encouraged American composers to draw on the music of African-Americans or indigenous people (what he himself did in his renowned New World Symphony), Beach looked back to her own ancestors to write her Symphony in E Minor, a work steeped in the folk traditions of Ireland. When it was premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra on October 30, 1896, the "Gaelic Symphony" was a landmark achievement: the first symphony ever composed and published by an American woman. It delivered a resounding artistic affirmation that American identity was a mosaic of many traditions.

Dvořák's talk given December 15, 1893, the day before his New World Symphony debuted, was covered in the New York Herald. Citing publicly for the first time the sources of inspiration for his new symphony, he emphasized that these musical traditions held the key to developing a distinctively American school of classical music. The national conversation was begun.

Amy Beach took special note of an essay Dvořák wrote, published in February 1895 in Harper's Monthly, titled "Music in



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America.” In it Dvořák wrote a love letter to his American experience and his high hopes for America’s musical future while he prepared to return home to Bohemia. While there is much material of interest to Americans generally and American composers in particular, this passage seemed like the one that probably resonated most strongly with Amy Beach, “The music of the people is like a rare and lovely flower growing amidst encroaching weeds. Thousands pass it by, while others trample it underfoot, and thus the flower threatens to perish. Yet it may be that a lover of music will one day notice it and carefully transplant it to his garden, where it may unfold and blossom to the delight of many.” She took it to heart. In her own words, she needed to show that the folk tunes of the British Isles, especially the Irish, were just as worthy a source of inspiration as any other. “They are,” she wrote, “as beautiful, as pathetic, as heroic, as any of the folk-music of the world.”

Gaelic Symphony was an immediate success, silencing skeptics and cementing Beach’s reputation as a composer of the first rank. It was not just a great symphony by a woman composer; it was a great American symphony.

The symphony is a masterful blend of late-Romantic grandeur and heartfelt folk simplicity. Beach skillfully uses four Irish melodies as thematic source material, weaving them into a dramatic and cohesive four-movement structure. The first movement, dark and turbulent, is built on her own themes but captures the heroic and passionate spirit of Gaelic lore. The beautiful second movement features two authentic tunes, including “The Little Field of Barley,” presented with exquisite lyricism. A playful scherzo follows, based on the lively jig “Go to the Devil and Shake Yourself,” before the finale brings the symphony to a powerful and dramatic close, reprising themes from the opening movement to create a cyclically unified whole.

There is so much more to Beach’s story, a story of perseverance and lasting impact—even here in Chattanooga—that is just as compelling. Her marriage at 18 to Dr. Henry Harris Aubrey Beach, a surgeon 24 years her senior, came with a condition: she was to live as a society patron, limiting her public performances to two charity recitals per year. She saw herself primarily as a concert pianist, but had to curtail that part of her career. Her wonderful portfolio of compositions was greatly enlarged by this agreement. During her 25 year marriage Amy made important connections with her composer peers in New England. She was the youngest “one of the boys” among the Boston Six, so dubbed by another one of the Six, George Whitefield Chadwick.

Also among the Boston Six was composer Edward MacDowell. After his death, his wife Marian fulfilled their shared dream of turning their New Hampshire farm into an artists’ retreat, now known simply as MacDowell. Amy Beach found a creative

home there, completing 18 residencies before her death in 1944. In a final act of support, she bequeathed the royalties from her compositions to MacDowell, a gift that provides the institution with income to this day.

Marian MacDowell also promoted her husband's music and memory by traveling the country and helping found MacDowell Clubs everywhere she went. Chattanooga's MacDowell Music Club was founded in 1916 and continues to this day, a familiar institution to most local musicians.

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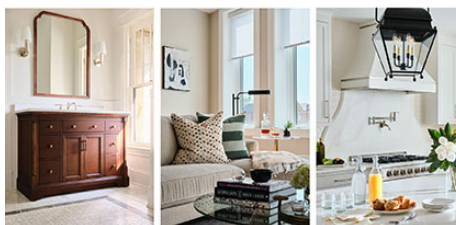
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Orchestra Musicians

Tonight's Orchestra Musicians

Violin 1

*Joshua Holritz, Concertmaster

*David Katz

*Jeanne Johnson

*Emily Drexler

Mayumi Masri

Christy Song



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Chris Thurstone
Annie Thurntone
JP Brien-Slack
Annesley Streets

Violin 2

*Sheri Peck, Principal
*Rachael McFarlane
*Rebecca James
*Lee Smith
Skylar Kim
Jessica Stansbury
Kayla Kwon
*Mary Benno

Viola

*Metiney Suwanawongse, Principal
*Cristina Micci-Barreca
Lacie Bowlware
*Susan Saliny
Rene Reder
Jake Pietroniro

Cello

*Annie Camp
*Paul Vest
*Suzanne Sims
Jenny Hibbard
*Spencer Brewer
*Eric Reed

Double Bass

*Taylor Brown, Principal
*Jonathan McWilliams
*Dexter Bell
Julia Milrod

Flute

*Amelia Dicks, Principal
John L. and Norma B. Anderson Principal Flute Chair
Maria Castillo Rodriguez
Emily Elmore

Oboe

*Jessica Smithorn, Principal
Norma and Olan Mills II Principal Oboe Chair
Mark Ostoich

English Horn

*Carey Shinbaum

Clarinet

*Joseph Miller



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Amy Humberd
Nick Hartline

Bassoon

Ryan Yamashiro
J.T. Holdbrooks

French Horn

*Mackenzie Newell
Harry Ditzel
Eric Hawkins
Connor Parr
Andrew Haynes

Trumpet

*Christian Pagnard, Principal
*Michael Brown

Trombone

Alexander van Duuren
Roger Bissell
Austin Pancner

Tuba

Gilbert Long

Timpani

Keith Lloyd

Percussion

Anthony Henderson

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Nicholas Naegele, Assistant Concertmaster
Nathan Banks
Jeanne Johnson
David Katz
Calvin Lewis
Jasper Sewell

Violin 2

Sheri Peck, Principal Second Violin
Mary Benno
Emily Drexler
Nick Hoy
Rebecca James
Rachael McFarlane
Lee Smith
Jennifer Whittle



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Viola

Metiney Suwanawongse, Principal
Katelyn Hoag
Cristina Micci-Barreca
Casie Runkle
Susan Saliny
Gabriel Schlaffer

Cello

Eric Reed, Principal
Spencer Brewer
Annie Camp
Micah Donar
Suzanne Sims
Paul Vest

Double Bass

Taylor Brown, Principal
Dexter Bell
Jonathan McWilliams

Flute

Amelia Dicks, Principal
John L. and Norma B. Anderson Principal Flute Chair
Lisa Meyerhofer (Leave of Absence)

Oboe

Jessica Smithorn, Principal
Norma and Olan Mills II Principal Oboe Chair
Teresa Spilko
Carey Shinbaum, English Horn

Clarinet

Emily Bowland
Joseph Miller, Bass Clarinet

Bassoon

Eric Anderson, Principal
Shelby Jones
G. Eddie McCrary, Contrabassoon

Horn

Gordon James, Principal
Angela DeBoer
Matthew Meadows
Joseph Demko
Mackenzie Newell

Trumpet

Christian Pagnard, Principal
Michael Brown



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Trombone

Prentiss Hobbs, Principal
Kevin Dombrowski
Christopher Brown (Leave of Absence)
Evan Clifton

Tuba

Neil Konouchi, Principal

Timpani

Alex Wadner, Principal

Percussion

Matthew West, Principal

Harp

Caroline Brown Hudson, Principal

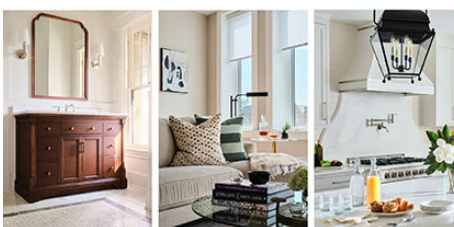
Keyboard

Alan Nichols, Principal



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COOKING CLASSES
BARTENDING

EVENT STAFFING
CORPORATE EVENTS
NON-PROFIT EVENTS
MOBILE ESPRESSO CART

CONTACT

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**Making you the star
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TABLES ★ CHAIRS
LINENS ★ CHINA
TENTS & MORE!

**EVENT RENTALS
SHOWTIME**

423.624.2040 ★ 1220 Latta Street ★ Chattanooga, TN 37406 ★ ShowtimeChattanooga.com



ENCORE! BROADCASTS AT 4 P.M.

2025	2026
October 12	March 1
November 16	March 22
December 21	May 24

CHATTANOOGA SYMPHONY HOUR AT 7 P.M.

2025	2026
October 9	January 22
November 13	February 12
	April 16

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