



## Balourdet Quartet

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Sunday

March 1, 2026

3pm

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Foellinger Great Hall



# PROGRAM

## Balourdet Quartet

**ANGELA BAE**, violin  
**JUSTIN DEFILIPPIS**, violin

**BENJAMIN ZANNONI**, viola  
**RUSSELL HOUSTON**, cello

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### LEARNING TO FLY

#### FRANZ SCHUBERT

(1797–1828)

**Quartettsatz in C Minor, D. 703** (1820)

#### NICKY SOHN

(b. 1992)

**Galaxy Back to You** (2024)

Active Nucleus

Celestial Motion

Cosmic Dance

Mystical Depths

Water Masers

Supermassive Black Hole

Gravitational Waves

#### MAURICE RAVEL

(1875–1937)

**String Quartet in F Major, M.35** (1903)

Allegro moderato – Très doux

Assez vif – très rythmé

Très lent

Vif et agité

#### *20-minute Intermission*

#### AMY BEACH

(1867–1944)

**String Quartet in One Movement,**

**Op. 89** (1921-1929)

#### ELEANOR ALBERGA

(b. 1949)

**String Quartet No. 2** (1994)

The Balourdet Quartet is the recipient of Chamber Music America's 2024 Cleveland Quartet Award. The quartet's performance has been made possible by the Cleveland Quartet Award Endowment Fund.

The Balourdet Quartet appears by arrangement with Colbert Artists Management, Inc.



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# PROGRAM NOTES

## **QUARTETTSATZ IN C MINOR, D. 703 (1820)**

**Franz Schubert**

**Born 1797 in Lichtenthal**

**Died 1828 in Vienna**

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Franz Schubert's remarkable thousand or more compositions are the product of an extraordinarily full life that was condensed into a period of only 31 years. In his last few years, Vienna's musical society, which still revolved around the aging Beethoven whom Schubert worshipped from afar, finally became aware of Schubert's existence and of his genius.

In December 1820, Schubert wrote the first movement of a string quartet in C minor and began an Andante second movement, but after 41 measures of what promised to be a rich, tragic movement, he put the score aside and never returned to it. For us, it is the chamber music repertoire's equivalent of his *Unfinished Symphony*, an exemplary work that ends suddenly for mysterious reasons. Posterity values the *Quartettsatz* highly, whether Schubert did or not; its original manuscript later became one of the treasures of Johannes Brahms's collection of autographed scores. Its first public performance in 1867, almost 40 years after the composer's death, was part of the Schubert revival of that decade; subsequently, in 1870, the work was first published.

The movement, Allegro assai, is powerful, restless, and dramatic. Here, the young composer, nearing his 24th birthday, finds a personal language of musical expression that owes little to his predecessors. The stormy opening crescendo, which almost prefigures

Wagner, appears to be part of the formal first theme of the movement, but the listener is surprised to discover, at the end, that Schubert has put the initial theme aside and hardly referred to it again until the movement's final measures. All four instruments play without pause or relief in almost every measure except the opening and closing crescendo passages. An almost omnipresent use of tremolo can be heard in both the themes themselves and the accompaniments. This music has an intensity for which Schubert's earlier instrumental works had not prepared his listeners. Particularly noteworthy is that in the recapitulation, where one would expect to hear the theme again presented in a straightforward way and worked out so that the ending occurs in a major key, Schubert instead first recalls the second theme in a major tonality, then moves to the minor but returns again to the major. He does not leave the music there, but closes with the initial theme to remind the listener of its hushed minor key.

In English speaking countries, this work has long been known by the title of its German first edition, *Quartettsatz*, which means only "Quartet-Movement."

## **GALAXY BACK TO YOU (2024)**

**Nicky Sohn**

**Born 1992 in Seoul, Korea**

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Selected as one of the "Cool 100" by *Houston CityBook Magazine*, alongside icons like Simone Biles, Nicky Sohn is a versatile and sought-after voice in contemporary classical music. With a distinctive style characterized by jazz-inspired, rhythmically driven themes, her work has been praised internationally for being not only a

“crowd pleaser” (*YourObserver*), but “dynamic and full of vitality” (*The Korea Defense Daily*), with its “colorful orchestration” (*NewsBrite*), that evokes “elegant wonder” (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*).

Sohn has received commissions and performances from major institutions, including the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke’s, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Annapolis Symphony, the Sarasota Orchestra, and the National Orchestra of Korea. Her work has also been featured by The New York Choreographic Institute, the Stuttgart Ballet, and the Dogs of Desire, reflecting her broad artistic range across orchestral, vocal, ballet, and socially driven music projects.

A passionate advocate for interdisciplinary collaboration, she says: “I’m obsessed with the collaborative aspects of it—working with artists across disciplines. Hearing my work meld with someone else’s imagination is incredibly fulfilling.” A notable example is her *Violin Concerto*, commissioned in partnership with The Women’s Home in Houston, an organization that supports women overcoming addiction and homelessness. The project provided a platform for these Houston women’s stories, reinforcing Sohn’s commitment to using music as a vehicle for advocacy and connection.

In the past year, Sohn’s *Guitar Concerto* was premiered in its chamber orchestra version as part of the 2025 Tanglewood Music Festival. Sohn also worked with the Balourdet Quartet on *Galaxy Back to You*, a piece commissioned in 2024 following the Balourdet Quartet’s Avery Fisher Career Grant win and included on their debut CD. *Galaxy Back to You* premiered December 15, 2024, performed by the Balourdet Quartet at the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library. For the 2025-2026

season, Sohn is composing a new concert opener for the Atlanta Symphony.

Sohn was recently a composition fellow at Tanglewood and has held fellowships with the DACAMERA Young Artist Program, MusiQua Houston, the Hambidge Center, and the Ucross Foundation. A recipient of the Druckman Prize, she has also been commissioned by Robert Spano and the Aspen Music Festival. From orchestral works to chamber pieces and ballet commissions, her music has been celebrated for its energy, richness, and versatility across multiple performance contexts.

Sohn holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from The Shepherd School of Music at Rice University and a Master of Music from The Juilliard School. A dedicated musician from a young age, she graduated from high school at 14, after which she completed a Bachelor of Music at Mannes College of Music. Her mentors have included Gabriela Lena Frank, Anthony Brandt, Anna Clyne, Chris Theofanidis, Richard Lavenda, and Richard Danielpour.

Sohn has written her own program note for *Galaxy Back to You*:

“Two of the most exciting aspects of being a composer have become the inspirations for *Galaxy Back to You*—working within the parameters of each commission and drawing from my personal experiences. The Balourdet Quartet is an ensemble I have admired for years, and it was an absolute delight to finally write for them. All four of them are ecstatic players with so much character and depth, and every performance of theirs has been electric. I wanted to write a piece

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that showcases their powerful dynamic as a group but also highlights their individuality, with a variety of textures, moods, and energy. Each commission brings interesting, sometimes challenging objectives, and for me, parameters are the most fascinating inspirations for my creative process. They help narrow down my ideas, making the process extremely productive and effective.

“For this project, the Balourdet Quartet asked me to incorporate some aspect of AI. While AI can be seen as a threat to artists in all genres, I decided to explore various music-generating AI programs to see what they offered. Though intriguing, I wanted to create a work where I could maintain full ownership of the musical material. So, I turned to ChatGPT, arguably the most widely used AI program, to brainstorm and structure the piece.

“Earlier this year, my partner gifted me a ‘galaxy’ named after me for my birthday. It was an unusual but incredibly sweet gift because he thought I deserved a whole galaxy. The galaxy he gave me is NGC 4258, discovered in 1781. It is an intermediate spiral galaxy in the constellation Canes Venatici, rich with fascinating characteristics. ChatGPT helped conceptualize seven distinct sections, each with names and musical descriptions, which I endeavored to honor with my imagination. I used the galaxy number 4258 as the main thematic idea, focusing on the intervallic relationships of those four numbers. I feel that a string quartet is the most intimate and personal genre for composers—one can truly get a sense of who the composer is through exploring their string quartet repertoire. I believe a string quartet may be the best gift a composer can offer to another (unfortunately,

perhaps!). The title, *Galaxy Back to You*, is quite self-explanatory, as I am giving the galaxy back to my special person, but in my own musical form, for his birthday.”

On her website, Sohn included seven section titles and descriptions that were created by ChatGPT. Those are:

“Active Nucleus: A rapid and intense section with frenetic bowing and dissonant chords, representing the energetic activity of the galaxy’s central nucleus.

“Celestial Motion: Flowing and melodic, with graceful melodies and gentle swells, capturing the majestic movement of stars and galaxies through space.

“Cosmic Dance: Upbeat and rhythmic, with lively melodies passed between the instruments, reflecting the dynamic interplay of celestial bodies.

“Mystical Depths: Deep and resonant tones, with sustained notes and rich textures, evoking a sense of infinite space and the mysteries that lie within the depths of the universe.

“Water Masers: Delicate and shimmering passages, perhaps with harmonics and tremolo, evoking the ethereal and watery nature of the masers.

“Supermassive Black Hole: Deep, resonant tones in the cello, accompanied by ominous chords in the lower registers of the violins and viola, conveying the immense gravity and mystery of the black hole.

“Gravitational Waves: Reflective and contemplative, with gentle, undulating melodies and harmonic swells

that evoke the ripples of gravitational waves traveling through the fabric of space-time. This section features a soothing interplay between the instruments, creating a sense of wonder and awe at the beauty of the cosmos.”

## **STRING QUARTET IN F MAJOR, M.35 (1903)**

**Maurice Ravel**

**Born 1875 in Ciboure, France**

**Died 1937 in Paris**

Maurice Ravel was the son of a distinguished engineer and inventor who, in 1868, patented a self-propelled, steam-powered vehicle that ran for two hours in the streets of Paris. In the 1870s, when the father was working on railroad construction projects in Spain, his first son was born on the French side of the nearby frontier, and the family returned to Paris a few months later. At the age of seven, Maurice Ravel began his musical studies; at 18, he began to write music; at 20, he was a published composer.

At 27, however, Ravel was still a student at the Conservatory in Paris, enrolled in the composition class of Gabriel Fauré, trying to win official honors without which a French composer could then hardly expect to have a successful career. He never succeeded in writing the kind of cantata that would win him the important Prix de Rome; when he submitted the first movement of this quartet for the Conservatory's annual composition prize, the faculty committee dismissed it as too labored. Posterity finds this the most conservative of the work's four movements, but Ravel's great rhythmic and harmonic freedom was apparently beyond the understanding of the reactionary committee.

Only Fauré understood the young composer (who later dedicated the quartet to him), but in the meantime, the faculty dismissed Ravel from the Conservatory, presumably putting an end to his career. Nevertheless, Ravel completed the quartet in 1903 when he was 28, and it was first performed in 1904. Ravel, an intellectual, allied himself to a group of young Parisians called the Apaches, a group of self-declared outcasts made up of artists, poets, and musicians who strove to follow in the footsteps of the work of Mallarmé, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Corbière, Cezanne, Van Gogh, Chopin, Whistler, Valéry, and Debussy as well as to emulate Russian and Asian art. Many Parisian critics were more perceptive than the faculty of the Conservatory. The public also immediately recognized Ravel as an important new composer, admiring his exhibition of new quartet textures in this early work.

Debussy initially supported Ravel and approved highly of this composition, saying, “*Au nom des dieux de la musique et du mien, ne touchez à rien de ce que vous avez écrit de votre quatuor.*” (“In the name of my own gods and the gods of music, do not touch [sic. change] anything of what you have written in your quartet.”) But after the quartets of the two were inevitably compared and too many critics contended that Ravel borrowed from and patterned his quartet on Debussy's work, Debussy finally distanced himself from Ravel, who commented on the situation: “It's probably better for us, after all, to be on frigid terms for illogical reasons.” Similarities between the two quartets (Debussy's was written in 1893, ten years before Ravel's) do exist. Both contain cells of themes, both embrace cyclicity, both use pizzicato to create color in the second movements, and both use mutes in the third movements.

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Ravel's quartet, which has no opus or key expressly indicated, is, nevertheless, in F Major, and integrates several of the influences the Apaches revered, while also developing its own musical style. In his quartet, Ravel brings together Debussy's Impressionistic use of varying tone colors as well as the Classicist's transparent textures and tightly controlled structural organization, and even the unusual Eastern tonal effects.

The first movement, Allegro moderato – Très doux, quite classical in construction, is based on the traditional sonata form, with two contrasting themes, both rich and warm, that become lyrically transformed, developed, and then recalled. The musical material of the first theme reappears in cyclical fashion later in the quartet, tightly interwoven with the subject matter of the succeeding movements. The first violin and viola together introduce the second theme, playing in unison but two octaves apart, creating an unusual tone color. Second comes a brilliant scherzo, Assez vif – très rythmé with a colorful pizzicato opening that Ravel used to create something that has been likened to the sound of a Javanese gamelan or the sound of bells. Here Ravel uses cross rhythms with the outer instruments, the first violin and the cello, playing in 3/4 meter; the inner parts, the second violin and the viola, play in 6/8 meter, using two beats of three eighth notes per beat against them. A contrasting broad section makes up the center, and a short recapitulation of the first section brings the movement to an end.

In the slow middle section, echoes of the first movement appear embedded. The next movement, Très lent, very slow, free, and rhapsodic, has frequently changing tempos and, in cyclic fashion, contains the first theme of the first movement within the new theme. Here again, the tone colors are imaginative and diverse. The spirited

finale, Vif et agité, alternates vigorous drive with calm repose. Historians have suggested that its five-beat rhythm may have Russian inspiration, but in any case, it has an unstable feel. Here again, the theme of the first movement comes back, alternating with lyrical themes and the angry opening motif.

### **STRING QUARTET IN ONE MOVEMENT, OP. 89 (1921-1929)**

**Amy Beach**

**Born 1867 in Henniker, New Hampshire**

**Died 1944 in New York**

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Amy Marcy Cheney Beach (Mrs. H.H.A. Beach) was the first American woman to succeed as a composer of large-scale works of serious music; she was celebrated during her lifetime as the foremost woman composer of the United States. Her mother, a gifted pianist and singer, provided Beach's first exposure to piano. Beach's early feats included improvising duets before the age of two, playing by ear in full harmony at four, and giving public recitals at seven. She taught herself composition by studying the great masters. When her family moved to Boston, she studied with experienced professional teachers interested in helping her develop her talents. She made her Boston debut as a pianist in 1883 at 16, and in 1884, she played Chopin's *Piano Concerto in F Minor* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which had been organized only three years earlier.

Beach learned orchestration and fugue techniques from translating Berlioz and François-Auguste Gevaert's musical treatises. In 1885, she married H. H. A. Beach, a distinguished Boston surgeon and Harvard professor,

slightly older than her father. Following the mores of Victorian society, he restricted her concert appearances, but encouraged her composing.

Beach completed over 300 works, including the *Gaelic Symphony*, a *Piano Concerto*, a large-scale *Mass*, numerous songs and choral works, and many other compositions for chorus, including *Festival Jubilate*, commissioned for the dedication of the Women's Building at the Chicago World's Fair in 1897. She gathered numerous honors and was twice received at the White House. Many of her works were premiered by major orchestras and often these premieres were the first times these orchestras performed music composed by a female composer.

Much of Beach's work shows the influence of American late Romantic composers Horatio Parker, Edward MacDowell, Arthur Foote, and George Chadwick, but her music is also indebted to that of Brahms and Debussy. The majority of her compositions, however, display her own idiomatic style and her gift for melody.

The author of an important history of music in the United States once asked Beach if she resented being called an American composer. Her reply, he reported, was: "No, but I would rather be called a composer." There is no doubt that she frequently gave the same answer when asked about being called a woman composer.

She was widely known for the broad range of her strong musical mind, which led her to translate European theoretical works to English, for example, and to mount a campaign in favor of the work of Brahms when his music was still considered to be difficult and modern. The Boston Symphony Orchestra highlighted her as

a soloist 11 times; the orchestra also premiered her *Gaelic Symphony* on October 30, 1896. It is believed that this symphony was the first symphony by a woman performed in the United States.

After her husband's death in 1910, Mrs. Beach spent four years in Europe, where her *Piano Concerto*, her symphony, and her shorter works were widely performed. She returned to the US at the outbreak of the First World War and, for most of the rest of her long and fruitful life as a busy composer, she lived in New Hampshire.

Several of Beach's works incorporate elements that she adapted from the musical folklore of the Bostonians of her time. The stylistic diversity that she found and transmitted to us is extraordinary. It includes material from native Eskimo and Indian sources and others. In choosing Irish music, Beach tapped into a rich heritage that had been part of the American musical mainstream for at least a century, and by the 1890s, Irish music was assimilated into the new genre called popular music. The Gaelic melodies in this symphony include some that Beach learned from domestic help of Irish background, who were then commonly working in prosperous households. Beach's rare gift for clothing these musical ideas in Brahmsian garb made her an important figure in American musical life.

Beach sketched out her *String Quartet in One Movement, Op. 89* in 1921 at the MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire, but she did not complete it until 1929 in Rome, where she spent the winter that year. Inspired by the three "meager" (Beach's own word) Eskimo or Inuit tunes she used as themes, Beach created a quartet that includes dissonance and chromaticism, yet is also lyrical. It is tonal, rooted in the key of G minor,

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although she included protracted sections where the music never seems to be in any key.

In the US, there were a number of performances during the 1930s, beginning with an invitational program in New York in January 1931 sponsored by the Society of American Women Composers, of which Beach was both a founder and its first president. The work's final performance during her lifetime was at a festival of her music at the Phillips Memorial Gallery in Washington, DC, in November 1942 to celebrate her 75th birthday. Reviewers found it a work of "unusual beauty."

The one-movement quartet is constructed in modified arch form. It begins with and is framed by a slow, dissonant introduction. The body of the work is based on three Inuit melodies, from which Beach not only created the themes but also the work's whole texture. First, an unaccompanied viola introduces the initial Inuit melody, quoting it almost unchanged from the original. In the second lyrical theme, again based on an Inuit melody, the rest of the strings join the viola. The music then takes on a martial tone, after which the lyrical first theme returns to end the slow section. The tempo changes to Allegro for the next section, based on a third Inuit melody, which is extensively developed, as is the martial theme. In the center is a fugue with its subjects and texture inspired by the third Inuit theme.

Punctuating the whole work are double-stopped chords with dissonances; they resolve finally at the work's end. This is truly one of Beach's finest works in which she has joined art and folk music, creating an unqualified American composition.

## **STRING QUARTET NO. 2 (1994)**

**Eleanor Alberga**

**Born 1949, Kingston, Jamaica**

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Eleanor Alberga is a highly-regarded British composer who has received commissions from the BBC Proms and The Royal Opera, Covent Garden. With a substantial oeuvre ranging from solo instrumental works to full-scale symphonic works and opera, she has seen her music performed all over the world.

In April 2025, her *Piano Concerto* was given its world premiere in Liverpool; it received many positive reviews and the performance was streamed on Medici TV and BBC Radio 3. The work was commissioned by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra in conjunction with the Leeds International Piano Competition.

Alberga decided at the age of five to be a concert pianist. Five years later, she had completed composing her first works for piano, including one that her dog, Andy, inspired. In 1968, she won the biennial Royal Schools of Music Scholarship for the West Indies, with which she began studies in 1970 at the Royal Academy of Music in London, focusing on piano and voice. Soon after, she began a career as a solo pianist and was one of three finalists in the International Piano Concerto Competition in Dudley, United Kingdom, in 1974. She soon added composition to performance when she became affiliated with the London Contemporary Dance Theatre in 1978. Under its Artistic Director, Robert Cohan, Alberga developed a deep understanding of modern dance; soon, her company class improvisations became legendary and led to her receipt of dance commissions for the company. Later, she became the

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company's Musical Director, continuing to conduct, compose, and perform on LCDT's many tours.

At different times over the course of her early career, Alberga was a member of the African dance company Fontomfrom and played guitar and sang with the Jamaican Folk Singers. She was part of the duo Double Exposure with her husband, the violinist Thomas Bowes. Recently, the two together founded and nurtured the Arcadia Festival, an original music festival in the English countryside where they live.

After leaving the London Contemporary Dance Theatre, Alberga was able to more completely dedicate her time to composing. Since then, she has written music in many genres: orchestral, chamber, vocal, and works for stage and screen. In 2015, her commissioned work *Arise, Athena!* for the opening of the Last Night of the BBC Proms cemented her reputation as a composer of originality and consummate skill.

She has gathered a number of awards, most notably a NESTA Fellowship in 2000 and a Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award in 2019. In 2020, Alberga was elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music, and in 2021, was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours for Services to British Music.

Alberga's works include music for piano, choral ensembles, chamber music, orchestra, film, opera, and two violin concertos that her husband premiered. She composed three string quartets within an eight-year period between 1993 and 2001. *Quartet No. 2* was commissioned by the Smith Quartet and premiered at the Greenwich Festival in the UK in 1994. Alberga describes her piece in a program note:

"The second quartet, though following quickly on the heels of the first...is altogether more concise and compact. Whereas with the first it had been the extra-musical that had governed the conception of the whole piece, with this second quartet, it was what the listener will hear in the first two seconds that yielded all the raw material needed. This short motive is treated to all manner of variation—inversions, expansions and so on—and is present in some form or another throughout the 15 minutes of the entire work. I have embedded some elements of traditional forms such as scherzo and slow movement into a freely flowing, single span that might allow this quartet to be described as being in a compressed sonata form."

It is actually a single movement work, played without a pause, though structured as four through-played movements. A motive in the beginning gives rise to quickly shifting material. Actually, several motives, introduced one after the other in the work's opening, become the basis for the whole piece. There is much rhythmic life in the work. In the second section of three, a cello is featured with a lyrical melody reinforced by slow-moving harmonies. The third and final section is set in a higher register, with pizzicato strings creating the texture, and the theme passed in turn to each instrument. A return of the middle section leads to a passionate finale. At the end, the first motive comes back and builds in a kind of frenzy toward the emphatic last chords.

Overall, the work is compact and powerful.

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# PROFILES

Photo by Luke Ratray



## BALOURDET QUARTET

The Balourdet Quartet is acclaimed for its vibrant energy and masterful blend of technical precision and emotional depth that brings a fresh perspective to both beloved classics and modern compositions. Its unique closeness and willingness to take creative risks earned it the 2024 Avery Fisher Career Grant, as well as Chamber Music America's 2024 Cleveland Quartet Award. With more than 70 concerts per season, recent highlights include the Balourdet's debuts at Carnegie and Wigmore Halls, and new string quartets by composers Karim Al-Zand, Paul Novak, and Nicky Sohn through grants from Chamber Music America (2021) and the Barlow Foundation (2023). The Balourdet Quartet has recently been named the first ever Quartet-in-Residence at the Seattle Chamber Music Society, and have recently completed residencies at

Indiana University and the New England Conservatory's Professional String Quartet Program.

Highlights of the 2025-2026 season include performances at Carnegie Hall, the Freer Gallery at the Smithsonian, Boston's Celebrity Series in Jordan Hall, and Chamber Music Houston. Recently, they have performed at the Kennedy Center, Buffalo Chamber Music, the Chamber Music Society of Detroit, La Jolla Music Society, and Rockport Music. Among the quartet's collaborators are violinist James Ehnes, pianists Marc-André Hamelin and Simone Dinnerstein, cellists Zuill Bailey and Astrid Schween, violist Jordan Bak, and the Dover, Pacifica, and Ying Quartets. The Balourdet Quartet continues its position as String Quartet-in-Residence with the Chamber Orchestra of the Triangle in North Carolina where they curate the Up Close Chamber Music Series, serve as principals in the orchestra, and engage with the larger community of the Triangle region. Most recently, the Balourdet received the Chamber Music Award from the National Federation of Music Clubs for the 2025-2026 season; they are also winners of the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music's 2025 Innovation Competition for their educational initiative Expedition Strings.

Committed to sharing their musical values with the next generation, the Balourdet Quartet has served regularly as faculty at the Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival, JDR Summer Music Academy, Berkshire Summer Music, and Opus Chamber Music. They have given masterclasses and coachings at Northwestern University, University of Michigan, Rice University, Emory University, New England Conservatory Preparatory Department, Fischhoff Chamber Music Academy, Upper Valley Chamber Music, and Wright State University.

The Balourdet journey began in 2018 in the mountains of New Mexico at the Taos School of Music, where violinists Justin DeFilippis, Angela Bae, and cellist Russell Houston first bonded as friends over long evenings of chamber music, luxurious peppermint schnapps, and extravagant meals created by chef extraordinaire Antoine Balourdet, a renaissance man with an exceptional love of life and music. It was the friendships, a shared passion for music and food, and gratitude for the role the festival played in the formation of the quartet, that inspired the members to name the ensemble in Chef Balourdet's honor.

Soon thereafter, in the heat of a waning Texas summer, Justin, Angela, and Russell joined with violist Benjamin Zannoni at Rice University, and the Balourdet Quartet was formed. Inspired by their love for the repertoire and the excitement of having found each other, the four friends found themselves playing quartets late into the night for fun. After having been together for only one year at Rice University, and a summer at the Aspen Music Festival, they took second prize at the Nielsen International String Quartet Competition and were selected as the only quartet admitted to Boston's historic New England Conservatory Professional String Quartet Program under the tutelage of Cleveland Quartet cellist Paul Katz.

In 2021, the Quartet won the Grand Prize at New York's Concert Artists Guild Competition, which included joint management by Concert Artists Guild in the US and Young Classical Artist's Trust (YCAT) in the UK and Europe. In addition, the Balourdet has received prizes in Canada's Banff International String Quartet Competition and the International Premio Paolo Borciani Competition in Italy; they won the Gold Medal

at the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition and both the Gold Medal and Audience Prize at the Yellow Springs Competition.

## **ANGELA BAE**

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Violinist Angela Bae, born in Seoul, Korea, began her musical aspirations at the age of three. She has appeared as a soloist in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Disney Hall, and Sydney Town Hall, and when she was 16, she became the youngest ever Concertmaster of the American Youth Symphony in Los Angeles. She has won awards in Korea and the United States, including the Korea Times Competition, Alexander and Buono International Competitions, and Mika Hasler Competition. As a chamber musician, Bae has performed with artists including Gil Shaham, Kenneth Goldsmith, Geoffrey Nutall, and Alexander Sitkovetsky. Bae is a recent graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music Professional String Quartet Program where she studied with Donald Weilerstein. She also studied with Paul Kantor at Rice University and Phillip Levy in Los Angeles.

## **JUSTIN DEFILIPPIS**

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Violinist Justin DeFilippis, a native of New Jersey, is a graduate of the New England Conservatory, Rice University Shepherd School of Music, and The Juilliard School Pre-College Division, where his major teachers were Miriam Fried, Nicholas Kitchen, Cho-Liang Lin, Donald Weilerstein, and Elizabeth Chang. He has collaborated alongside artists including the Silk Road Ensemble, Jon Kimura Parker, and Matthew Lipman, as well as members of the Ying and American Quartets.

## **BENJAMIN ZANNONI**

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Violist Benjamin Zannoni has performed around the world and shared the stage with artists such as Ralph Kirshbaum, Elmar Oliveira, Cho-Liang Lin, Anthony McGill, and Marc-André Hamelin. He is a recent graduate from the New England Conservatory and has also received degrees from Rice University, Manhattan School of Music, and The Juilliard School, where he studied with Martha Katz, Mai Motobuchi, James Dunham, Karen Dreyfus, Pinchas Zukerman, Patinka Kopec, Heidi Castleman, and Robert Vernon. Zannoni is originally from Houston, Texas.

## **RUSSELL HOUSTON**

---

Cellist Russell Houston, from Dallas, Texas, is the winner of the Lynn Harrell Concerto Competition and Sorantin International Competition, and performed as soloist with orchestras including the Dallas and Plano Symphonies. Houston has had the privilege of sharing the stage with renowned artists such as Clive Greensmith, Cho-Liang Lin, Brinton Smith, and members of the Cleveland and Dover Quartets. He holds degrees from the New England Conservatory, Rice University, Colburn Conservatory, and Northwestern University, where he studied with Paul Katz, Brinton Smith, Clive Greensmith, and Hans Jensen.

## **CHAMBER MUSIC AMERICA CLEVELAND QUARTET AWARD**

---

Culminating a remarkable 26-year history as an ensemble, the members of the Cleveland Quartet envisioned a lasting legacy for young musicians. They joined forces in 1995 with Chamber Music America and eight prominent chamber music presenters to found the Cleveland Quartet Award and to raise funds for the establishment of the Cleveland Quartet Endowment Fund.

The award honors and promotes a rising young string quartet whose artistry demonstrates that it is in the process of establishing a major career. Providing the quartet with concert appearances on chamber music series around the country, the award enriches the presenters' offerings while helping outstanding young artists gain wide recognition.

Concert presenters of the Cleveland Quartet Award winners are: Buffalo Chamber Music Society (Buffalo, New York), Carnegie Hall (New York, New York), Chamber Music Society of Detroit (Detroit, Michigan), Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery (Washington, DC), Friends of Chamber Music (Kansas City, Missouri), Market Square Concerts (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania), Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Urbana, Illinois), and University of Texas at Austin (Austin, Texas).

Previous winners of the Cleveland Quartet Award include the Aizuri, Verona, Rolston, Dover, Ariel, Jasper, Parker, Jupiter, Miró, Pacifica, Miami, Borromeo, and Brentano String Quartets.

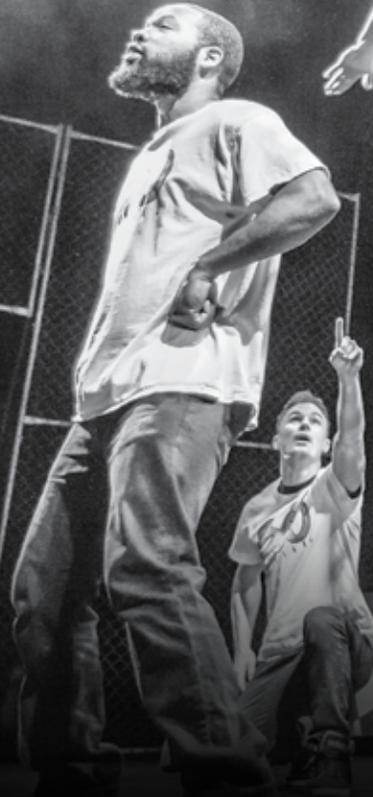


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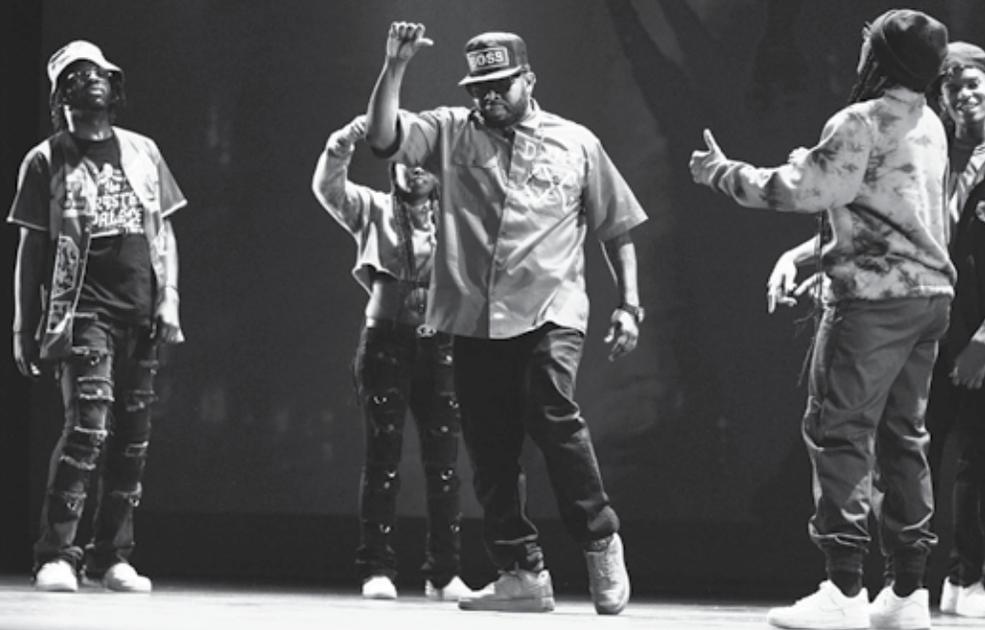




KRANNERT CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

# 2025—26 SEASON

COME BE INSPIRED.



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# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Illinois System carries out its mission in its namesake state, which includes the traditional territory of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Menominee, Ho-Chunk, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands continue to carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity.

As a Land-grant institution, the University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands, as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution. We are also obligated to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them. This acknowledgement and the centering of Native peoples is a start as we move forward.

Krannert Center affirms the commitment by the university to move beyond these statements, toward building deeper relationships and taking actions that uphold and preserve Indigenous rights and cultural equity.

As we gather to experience this performance, we have an opportunity to reflect on the ways that systems of oppression have shaped our society. We can work together to create systems that support human dignity, establish equity, strengthen cross-cultural relationships, and draw upon the creative capacity of all people that make up this community, state, nation, and world.



---

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of the performing arts.

---



Krannert Center is a place of renewal—a space where the performing arts bring fresh perspectives, new energy, and moments of individual and collective healing. Through music, movement, and storytelling, we rediscover hope, embrace transformation, and celebrate the endless possibilities of artistic expression.

The generosity of our donors and friends makes this renewal possible. Your support sustains the Center’s commitment to enriching lives, fostering creativity, and ensuring that all who enter our doors can experience the rejuvenating power of the arts.

Please consider making a gift to Krannert Center today. Your contribution is essential in maintaining the high standards of excellence that define us while expanding the Center’s enduring impact for seasons to come.



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This passionate group of arts advocates assists Krannert Center staff in expanding the Center's leadership and financial resources.

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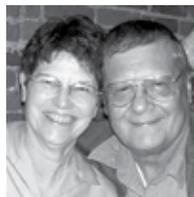
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*"An awe-inspiring environment for amazing performances."*



**Anonymous**

*"Krannert Center, a great asset to the community!"*



**Jo & Thomas Emerson**

*"Discovering the Sunday Salon Series opened our eyes to a new way of experiencing the profound intimacy of chamber music—where every note connects us."*

## **2025-2026 CAMPAIGN FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES**

---

Through the Campaign for Young Audiences, students at the U of I enjoy \$10 tickets for nearly every event presented at Krannert Center while other college students and children receive significant discounts.

### **Campaign for Young Audiences Lead Sponsors**

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## **2025-2026 KRANNERT CENTER YOUTH SERIES**

---

The Youth Series features daytime performances, online media created by performing artists, and educational activities designed especially for pre-K through high school-aged students. Children who participate learn to appreciate the performing arts, gain knowledge, build social skills, and integrate live performance experiences into classroom work.

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The University of Illinois, the College of Fine and Applied Arts, and Krannert Center are profoundly grateful for the commitment of Krannert Society members. Through a single donation, pledge, or estate gift of \$1 million or more, these open-hearted visionaries help build a thriving community and encourage cross-cultural understanding. Their support sustains the extraordinary vision of Herman and Ellnora Krannert to create a vibrant gathering place like no other.



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**G. WILLIAM ARENDS**  
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ZIMMERMAN**  
(1929-1995)  
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**VERNON K. ZIMMERMAN**  
(1928-1996)  
November 2003



**HELEN FARMER**  
.....  
**JAMES FARMER**  
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**ANONYMOUS**  
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# FOELLINGER SOCIETY

Members of the Foellinger Society show their enduring commitment to the arts through a single donation, pledge, or estate gift of \$500,000 to \$999,999. Because of their generosity, everyone in this community can unite in joyful and engaging experiences. These magnanimous arts lovers celebrate the spirit of Helene Foellinger, whose memorial gift honored her sister, Loretta Foellinger Teeple, and established the Marquee Performance Endowment.



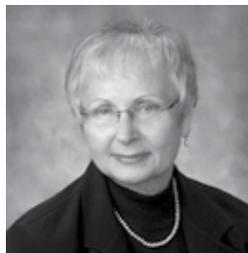
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(1915-2004)

**DEAN HILFINGER**  
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(1933-2020)

**MARY ANDERSEN**  
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**CAROLYN G. BURRELL**  
April 2012



**CAROLE & JERRY RINGER**  
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**EDITH ANN STOTLER**  
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**K. SARAH SPAULDING**  
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University of Illinois President Emeritus and First Lady Stan and Judy Ikenberry have long demonstrated their love for the arts and their deep commitment to enhancing learning experiences for all University of Illinois students. Krannert Center gratefully acknowledges their steadfast support by recognizing donors who make a single donation, pledge, or estate gift in the amount of \$250,000 to \$499,999 as members of the Ikenberry Society.



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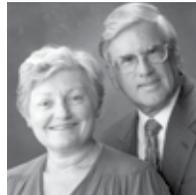
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# COLWELL SOCIETY

Dr. John B. Colwell, Pauline Groves Colwell, and R. Forrest Colwell provided critical funding for the Marquee Performance Endowment, and the Colwell Society gratefully acknowledges their invaluable assistance. Members of this society may make a single donation, pledge, or estate gift of \$100,000 to \$249,999 for celebrating, preserving, and exploring the arts right here and around the globe.



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**JAMES GILLESPIE**  
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**RICHARD NOEL**  
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**BETH L. ARMSEY**  
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February 2017



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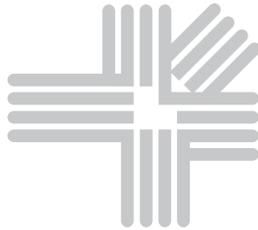


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**2025-26**

A SEASON OF REMARKABLE  
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Endowment support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation continues to enhance Krannert Center's presentation of diverse, world-class national and international visiting artistry; supporting the creation of new work; and increasing engagement and collaboration across campus.



## **Illinois Arts Council**

The Illinois Arts Council Agency provides general programming support to ensure that audiences of all ages have direct access to world-class theatre, dance, and music.



## **The Augustine Foundation**

The Augustine Foundation provides continued major support for ELLNORA | The Guitar Festival.



## **Chamber Music America**

The Balourdet Quartet is the recipient of Chamber Music America's 2024 Cleveland Quartet Award. The quartet's performance has been made possible by the Cleveland Quartet Award Endowment Fund.



## **The Student Sustainability Committee**

The Student Sustainability Committee provided funding for the Krannert Center Audiences Lighting Retrofit Project, which continues to increase energy efficiency, decrease labor requirements, and improve safety conditions.



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Jane & Mark Sudderberg in  
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Brenda & Jim Edgar in memory of  
Stanley Ikenberry  
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Patricia & Robert Davis in memory  
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memory of James J. Kraatz

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Margaret & Scott Cline in memory of Stanley O. Ikenberry  
William Forsyth in memory of Stanley O. Ikenberry  
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Judith & Richard Wagner in memory of Stanley O. Ikenberry  
Lorra & Lawrence Prabhakar in memory of Stanley O. Ikenberry  
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Iris Swanson in memory of Stanley O. Ikenberry  
Wayne Mosser in memory of Stanley O. Ikenberry  
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Stephen Wilson in memory of Stanley O. Ikenberry  
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Xixi Chen  
Leon Chien  
Iyesha Childress  
Rachel Choi  
Leanna Cui  
Nooriyah Doriwala  
Nicole Dudek  
Joseph Edamala  
Nia Ellis  
Maricruz Figueroa  
Myra Gallant  
Andros Gao  
Shuoyuan Gao  
Jada Giddens  
Finn Gray  
Vedansh Gupta  
Jiho Han  
Grace He  
Atalhea Herman  
Kaye Hidalgo  
Yanshu Hou  
Justin Huff  
Hemanth Itte  
Uma Iyer  
Fasih Javed  
Hyorim Jin  
Yixuan Jin  
Jade Johnson  
Rachana Kanathur  
Asheera Kaul  
Sophie Kim  
Ellen King

Pallavi Kochar  
Kyle Krisdakumtorn  
Amelia Lamis  
Maddie Lawson  
Irie Lee  
Isabella Lee  
Julianna Lee  
Jungeun Lee  
Leo Lee  
Tristan Lee  
Zachary Lee  
Ava Lendman  
Tavisha Lijhara  
Hanning Lin  
Sara Lin  
Marlo Lindquist  
Chenzhi Liu  
Chunyu Lu  
Yamini Malli  
Julian Martinez  
Maddie McCammon  
Margaret Meagher  
Daniel Mend  
Zixiang Meng  
Audrey Miller  
Francis Moffatt  
Emily Murawski  
Samuel Naatz  
Ruka Nakatani  
Stuti Pai  
Dhairya Vibhav  
Parikh

Diana Patiño- Carreon	Lixin Wu Sissi Wu
Karol Penuelas	Lily Xie
Christopher Perez	Ziruo Yang
Niranjan Pillai	Qingping Ye
Adithya Raman	Haelly Young
Carolina Rosas	Qihao Zhan
Sukhbir Singh Saggi	Canwen Zhang
Ava Saldana	James Zhang
Eva Santoyo	Jie Zhang
Ellie Schmidgall	Qi Zhang
Santino Schrieber	William Zhang
Carissa Schultz	Xinyu Zhang
Megna Sivakumar	Yijia Zhang
Julia Stern	Jiesheng Zheng
Cliff Sun	Ryan Zhou
Aiki Suzuki	Yifna Zhu
Mann Talati	Margaret Zywicki
Greyson Talkington	
Thomas Valerius	
MacKenzie Van Ryne	
Alex Von Holten	
Connor Waddell	
Rebekah Wakayama	
Archie-Em Walker	
Tess Walker	
Jiaxin Wan	
Xile Wang	
Elodie Ward	
Ari Warner	
Jastina Washington	
Trey Weitner	

# KRANNERT CENTER STAFF

Mike Ross, Director  
Cheryl Snyder, Director of Advancement  
Terri Anne Ciofalo, Associate Director for Production  
Maureen V. Reagan, Associate Director for  
Administration and Patron Experience  
Lindsay Dalrymple, Assistant Director for Operations  
Julianne Ehre, Assistant Director for Programming  
and Engagement  
Craig Miles, Assistant Director for Marketing and  
Communications

## EVENTS

Andrew Almeter, Senior Production Coordinator  
for Events  
Bree Brock, Production Coordinator for Events  
Rebecca Russell, Assistant Technical Director for Events  
Rachel Gladd, Performing Arts Events Coordinator

## PROGRAMMING AND ENGAGEMENT

Julianne Ehre, Assistant Director for Programming  
and Engagement  
Jason Finkelman, Artistic Director of Global Arts  
Performance Initiatives  
Emily Laugesen, Director of Community Engagement  
Sam Smith, Director of Civic Engagement and Social  
Practice  
Nick Wurl, Engagement and Programming Coordinator

## ADVANCEMENT

Cheryl Snyder, Director of Advancement  
David Drake, Advancement Team Assistant

## OPERATIONS

Lindsay Dalrymple, Assistant Director for Operations

### Director's Office

Vanessa Lane, Office Manager  
Zia Moon, Krannert Center Showcase Director, Office  
and Communications Support Specialist

### Building Operations

John O. Williams, Facility Manager  
Tony Mapson, Assistant Facility Manager  
Joe Butsch, Building Electrician  
Steven Lessor, Assistant Chief Building Operations  
Engineer  
Scott Butler, Eric Carr, Emmett Catlin, Austin Dearth,  
Sara Dietrich, John Ekstrom, Jessica Fancher, Bryan  
Franzen, Salatheo Kindle, Jacob Lerch, Chabu Nsokoshi,  
Chad Schwenk, Robert Shaw, Attendants

## MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Craig Miles, Assistant Director for Marketing and  
Communications  
Sean Kutzko, Assistant Communication Director  
Nicholas Mulvaney, Art Director

## **ADMINISTRATION AND PATRON SERVICES**

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Maureen V. Reagan, Associate Director for  
Administration and Patron and Patron Experience

### **Food Services**

Amy Thomas, Food Services Director  
Michael Bunting, Hospitality Supervisor  
Elizabeth Henke, Stage 5 Bar Manager  
John Ingalls, Intermezzo Kitchen Lead

### **Ticketing and Patron Services**

Whitney Havice, Ticketing and Patron Services Director  
Ann-Marie Dittmann, Patron Services Assistant Director  
Ty Mingo, Assistant Ticket Services Director  
Jon Proctor, Ticket Sales Supervisor  
Adrian Rochelle, Front of House Performance Supervisor

## **PRODUCTION**

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Terri Anne Ciofalo, Director of Production  
Maria Miguens, Production Manager

### **Audio Department**

Rick Scholwin, Audio Director  
Alec LaBau, Associate Audio Director and Video Director  
Tyler Knowles, Assistant Audio Director, Live Stream  
Engineer

### **Costume Shop**

Andrea Bouck, Costume Director  
Richard Gregg, Costume Rentals Director and Associate  
Costume Shop Director  
Paige Stewart-Rankins, Hair and Makeup Supervisor  
Julianna Steitz, First Hand  
April McKinnis, EB McTigue, Cutters/Drapers

Kari Little-McKinney, Theatrical Stitcher  
Chantel Renee, Costume Crafts

### **Lighting Department**

Lisa Kidd, Lighting Director  
David Krupla, Associate Lighting Director  
Nicole Rataj, Assistant Lighting Director

### **Properties Department**

Adriane Binky Donley, Properties Director  
Kira Lyon, Assistant Properties Director

### **Scene Shop**

Ryan Schultz, Technical Director  
Tatsuya Ito, Associate Technical Director  
Bill Kephart, Office Administrator  
Bobby Reynolds, Theatrical Scene Shop Coordinator  
Anna Atkinson, Theatrical Scene Shop Assistant  
Rebecca Russell, Acting Crew Head  
Kayley Woolums, Theatrical Scene Shop Assistant

## **PERFORMING ARTS BUSINESS SERVICE CENTER**

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Jenell Hardy, Director of Business Services  
Macauley Allen, Business Services Specialist  
Debbie Delaney, Accounting Staff  
Angela Wang, Business Services Specialist

# WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE AT THE CENTER

**We work to create the best possible setting for the experiences you seek and find here.**

## Necessaries

Restrooms are located in the foyers of Foellinger Great Hall, Tryon Festival Theatre, and Colwell Playhouse; the east entrances on the Lobby level; and in each elevator lobby on Level 1 and Level 3. Lobby restrooms and one restroom in each elevator lobby are fully accessible and contain baby-changing stations.

Ushers will be happy to provide you cough drops courtesy of St. Joseph Apothecary, or disposable foam earplugs if the place starts rockin'.

If you or a companion needs medical assistance, contact an usher or other staff member.

Please take a moment before the performance to note the theatre exits nearest to you. If it becomes necessary to evacuate the theatre, please remain calm, follow the instructions of the house staff, and exit in an orderly fashion to the appropriate safe meeting location which will be announced to you.

## Phones and Devices

The use of cell phones, cameras, and recording devices during performances is prohibited unless otherwise announced from the stage.

## Late Arrivals

As a courtesy to performers and audience members, latecomers will be seated only at times selected in advance by the artist. Should you find that you've arrived late to a performance, our Patron Services staff will keep you informed about the earliest seating opportunity.

## Lost Items

If you are in need of Lost and Found, please visit the Patron Services counter. We will do our best to reunite object and owner!

## Ticket Returns

If you find you can't attend a performance, please contact the Ticket Office in advance, preferably by 6pm the day before the performance (kran-tix@illinois.edu or 217.333.6280). We never charge a handling fee on ticket transactions.

## Accessibility

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts is committed to making experiences accessible for all patrons, and we are delighted to provide a number of services to assist you. Krannert Center is equipped with an assisted listening system, wheelchair-accessible and no-step/few-step seating, and large-print programs, Braille programs, and American Sign Language interpreters are available with three weeks' advance notice.

For assistance regarding your visit please contact patronservices@krannertcenter.illinois.edu or 217.333.9716 or visit go.KrannertCenter.com/Accessibility.

Para ayuda en relación con su visita, favor de enviar un email a:

Pour vous aider dans votre visite, prière de nous envoyer un courriel à:

欢迎! 如若您对您的造访需要帮助, 请发送电子邮件至:

स्वागत हे! अगर आपको अपने रहने के लिए मदद चाहिए, ईमेल कीजिए:

환영합니다! 방문에 관해 도움이 필요하실 때에는...  
에게 이메일로 문의하시기 바랍니다:

**PATRONSERVICES@KRANNERTCENTER.ILLINOIS.EDU**  
**217.333.9716**



# COME BE MOVED.

Art at Krannert Center isn't something you just watch—it's something you feel.

COME ON IN.  
WE'LL SAVE A SEAT FOR YOU.



 krannert center

TUES MAR 03 AT 7:30PM



**NATALIE  
MACMASTER &  
DONNELL LEAHY  
AND THE CELTIC ALL STARS**

 krannert center