

Aga Khan Master Musicians

with Vincent Peirani

Thursday
November 12, 2026
7:30pm

Foellinger Great Hall

THE ACT OF GIVING

Thank you for sponsoring this performance.

With deep gratitude, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts thanks all 2026-2027 Patron Sponsors and Corporate and Community Sponsors, and all those who have invested in Krannert Center.

In addition to performance sponsors, Krannert Center is deeply grateful for the generosity and steadfast support from our season-long patrons and corporate and community partners showcased in the Philanthropy & Advocacy section of our program book.These relationships form the cornerstone of our ability to bring unforgettable performances and enriching experiences to our audiences.

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Krannert Center honors the memory of Endowed Underwriters CLAIRE MAE & G. WILLIAM ARENDS. Their lasting investment in the performing arts will ensure that future generations can enjoy world-class performances such as this one. We appreciate their dedication to our community.

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PROGRAM

AGA KHAN MASTER MUSICIANS

with Vincent Peirani

PERFORMERS

FERAS CHARESTAN, *qunun*
ABBOS KOSIMOV, *doira*
WU MAN, *pipa*
BASEL RAJOUB, saxophones, *duclar*
YURDAL TOKAN, *oud*

with special guest
VINCENT PEIRANI, *accordéon*

The Aga Khan Master Musicians (AKMM) are the resident ensemble of the Aga Khan Music Programme, a flexible collective of master musicians, educators, composers and arrangers whose practices draw on musical traditions from Central Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, China and Europe. Each artist has achieved mastery within a rigorous musical practice shaped by distinctive repertoires, performance techniques and pedagogical traditions. Together, they embody the Programme's commitment to artistic excellence while bringing the knowledge and experience of living musical traditions into contemporary artistic life.

AKMM is defined by the music these artists create together. Deeply respectful of tradition, they draw on inherited musical languages as inspirations for new creations. AKMM is neither an exercise in preservation nor a showcase for traditions placed side by side. Every member of the ensemble is a virtuoso and bearer of a living knowledge, while also a composer, arranger and improviser. Oud, pipa, qanun, doira, saxophone, accordion, cello, and other instruments meet in original music shaped by dialogue, experimentation, and collective innovation. The resulting music is both intricate and intimate, rhythmic and expansive, composed and improvised, reflective spontaneous: music that is informed by the past without being constrained by it, and that is unmistakably its own.

Created by the Aga Khan Music Programme to place master musicians at the center of contemporary artistic life, AKMM has developed a growing body of original work through sustained artistic collaboration and long-term artistic trust, often joined by distinguished guest artists. The ensemble performs on international stages and at festivals, while its members also teach, mentor and contribute to the transmission of musical knowledge. Through performance, education and artistic exchange, AKMM creates opportunities for musicians and audiences to encounter diverse traditions as living sources of creativity and connection.

Program will be announced from the stage.

Sound Engineer: Brian Mohr

Aga Khan Master Musicians is represented by Moon Artists Management / Allen Moon

PROGRAM NOTES

Founded in 2000 by His Late Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan IV, the Aga Khan Music Programme (AKMP) recognizes the vital role of artists and musicians in societies shaped by Islamic cultures and traditions. It regards music as an essential part of human wellbeing, contributing to dignity, identity, belonging and hope, while opening spaces for curiosity, dialogue and pluralism. By supporting artists and expanding access to high-quality music and the arts, the Programme seeks to nurture imagination, strengthen cultural life and enable sustainable livelihoods.

Working across Central Asia, the Middle East, North and West Africa, South Asia, China and Europe, AKMP supports artists and institutions in sustaining musical knowledge while enabling traditions to evolve through contemporary artistic practice. Its programme activities span Education, Performance, Production, New music commissioning & mentoring and the Aga Khan Music Awards (AKMA), creating opportunities for musicians to develop their practices, reach new audiences and engage in meaningful artistic exchange, while enabling communities to sustain and experience their musical heritage as a living part of cultural life.

At the core of the Programme is a belief that musical traditions are living forms of knowledge: rooted in history and sustained through teaching and performance, yet continually renewed through creativity and encounter. AKMP advances both the transmission of traditional practice and the creation of new work inspired by it, creating spaces where diverse musical languages can meet, develop and inspire one another.

PROFILES

FERAS CHARESTAN

Feras Charestan is from the city of Al-Hasakeh, in the northeast of Syria, and studied *qanun* at the High Institute of Music in Damascus. He has performed as a *qanun* soloist with symphony orchestras and has been a member of popular bands as well as contemporary music ensembles, creating new music rooted in Middle Eastern traditions. Feras Charestan currently lives in Stockholm, Sweden and is a founding member of the Aga Khan Master Musicians.

ABBOS KOSIMOV

Abbos Kosimov was born in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, into a musical family. A disciple of the honored Uzbek *doira* player Tuychi Inogomov and winner of the Competition of Percussion Instruments of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, Kosimov established his own *doira* school in 1994 and his ensemble, "Abbos," in 1998. Kosimov performs internationally with Zakir Hussain and Randy Gloss's percussion group Hand's OnSemble and recorded with Stevie Wonder.

WU MAN

Wu Man is an acclaimed performer on the *pipa*, a four-stringed Chinese lute with ancient roots that, due in large part to her efforts, has become a leading instrument of contemporary music in both East and West. Wu Man performs both traditional and contemporary music on the *pipa*, and many new works have been commissioned specially for her. Wu Man plays an active role in cross-cultural music making and is a founding member of the Aga Khan Master Musicians.

BASEL RAJOUB

Basel Rajoub is a saxophonist and composer-improviser whose inspirations include traditional Middle Eastern rhythms and melodies as well as jazz. A graduate of the Damascus High Institute of Music, he creates new music that brings together musicians from the Middle East, North Africa, Asia, and Europe. Winner of Radio Monte Carlo's Moyen-Orient Music Award, Rajoub is the Artistic Director of the Oriental Ensemble at Geneva's Haute École de Musique, a founding member of the Soriana Project and the Aga Khan Master Musicians.

YURDAL TOKCAN

Yurdal Tokcan is a Turkish oud player, guitarist, and composer who bridges classical Ottoman makam, Sufi music, and contemporary cosmopolitan styles. A graduate of Istanbul Technical University's Turkish Music State Conservatory, he began his career with the Istanbul State Turkish Music Ensemble, founded in 1987 by tanbur master Necdet Yaşar, and became its artistic director in 2015. Renowned for his mastery of the oud, Tokcan is also recognized for his intercultural compositions and collaborations, particularly his adaptation of oud technique to the fretless guitar. Among many recordings, his *Hisleniş* has gained international recognition.

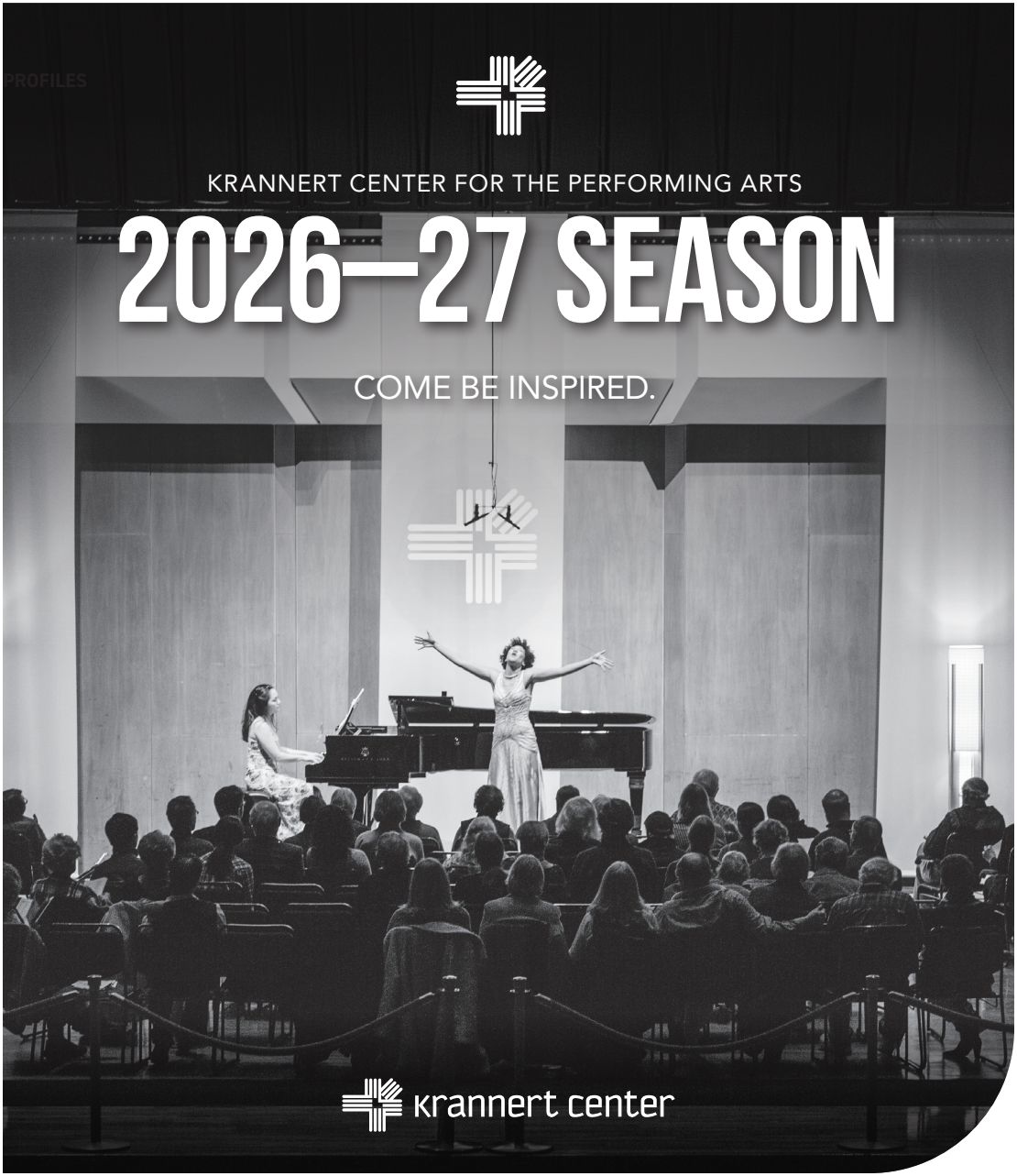
VINCENT PEIRANI

Vincent Peirani is a virtuoso accordionist, to whom the world of jazz devotes international recognition, and expresses himself with remarkable ease in a large number of musical genres moving across boundaries with ease. His open-mindedness and boundless curiosity have led him through countless collaborations to shape his music with multiple influences. It is with an insatiable curiosity that he explores musical languages, whilst bringing a touch of personal magic, and manages to breathe new life into well-known music. His music, as much as his personality embrace different worlds and takes the listener on a new adventure.

KRANNERT CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

2026–27 SEASON

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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.



Come together through the arts.

connect

Krannert Center is a place of connection—a space where the performing arts bring people together, spark dialogue, and create shared experiences that resonate far beyond the stage. Through music, movement, and storytelling, we find common ground, deepen understanding, and celebrate the richness of human expression.

The generosity of our donors and friends makes this connection possible. Your support sustains the Center's commitment to inspiring audiences, supporting artists, and ensuring that all who enter our doors can engage with the transformative power of the arts.

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



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Phyllis Robeson & Family

"An awe-inspiring environment for amazing performances."

Anonymous

"Krannert Center is a great asset to the community!"

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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.

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2026-2027 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.

Thank you to our Youth Series sponsors

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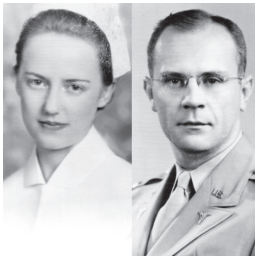
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The University of Illinois, the College of Fine and Applied Arts, and Krannert Center are profoundly grateful for the commitment of Krannert Society members. Through a single donation, documented pledge, or estate gift documented with the University of Illinois Foundation 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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(1912-2000)

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HELEN FARMER

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(1931-2020) April 2014

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July 2025

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Members of the Foellinger Society show their enduring commitment to the arts through a single donation, documented pledge, or estate gift documented with the University of Illinois Foundation 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.



AVIS HILFINGER
(1915-2004)

DEAN HILFINGER
(1912-2006) April 2000



KENNETH ANDERSEN
(1933-2020)

MARY ANDERSEN
August 2009



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April 2012



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April 2014



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December 2025

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Dr. John B. Colwell, Pauline Groves Colwell, and R. Forrest Colwell provided critical funding for the Marquee Performance Endowment. Krannert Center gratefully acknowledges their invaluable contributions and recognize members of this society who make a single donation, documented pledge, or estate gift documented with the University of Illinois Foundation of $100,000 to $249,999.



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(1918-1997)
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September 2001



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(1933-2005)

ANNA MERRITT
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ALICE PFEFFER
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(1936-2023)

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September 2021



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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 Poiesis Quartet is the recipient of Chamber Music America's 2026 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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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 gender-neutral restrooms can be found 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 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 call 911 in case of an emergency.

Please take a moment before the performance to note the 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.

Large bags and backpacks, or any other item deemed to be dangerous or to pose an obstruction will not be able to enter the theatres. Please approach the Patron Services counter for assistance with these items.

Please note that food and drink are not allowed in the theatres, except bottled water.

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 है! 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.

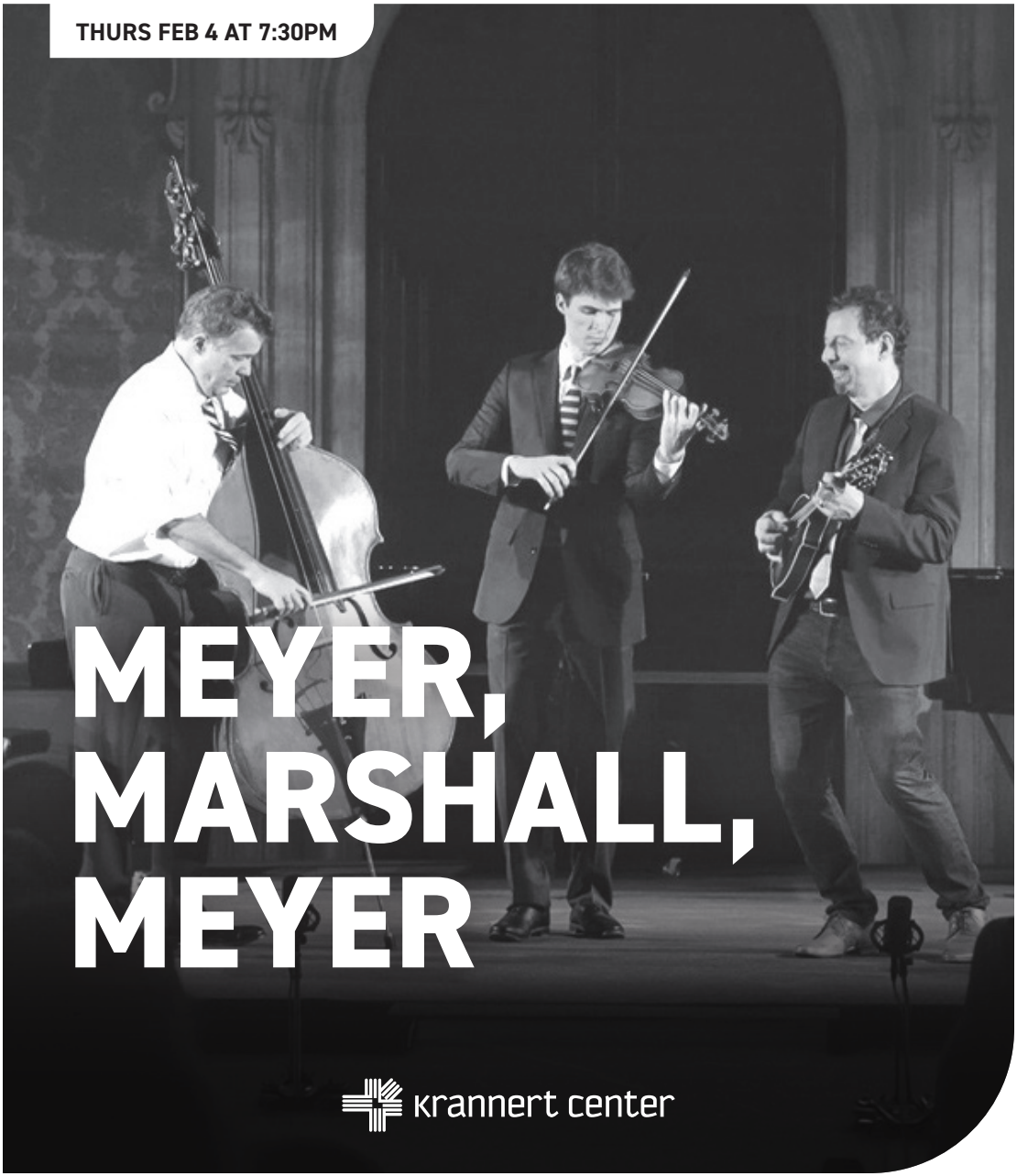
Art at Krannert Center isn't something you just watch—it's something you feel.

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



krannert center

THURS FEB 4 AT 7:30PM



MEYER, MARSHALL, MEYER

krannert center