

ARKANSAS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

7pm | February 25 & 26, 2025 | Morgan Hall

RIVER RHAPSODIES CHAMBER SERIES

Southern Harmony

Higdon, Jennifer (b. 1962)	Southern Harmony I. Soft Summers II. Reel Time III. Gentle Waltz <i>Quapaw Quartet</i>	16'
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Latėnas, Faustas (1956-2020)	Pasodoble <i>Tatiana Kotcherguina, viola</i> <i>Gjergji Gaqi, piano</i>	8'
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Bax, Arnold (1883-1953)	Elegiac Trio <i>Carolyn Brown, flute</i> <i>Timothy MacDuff, viola</i> <i>Alisa Coffey, harp</i>	9'
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INTERMISSION

Hermann, Friedrich (1828-1907)	Caprice No. 1 for Three Violins, Op. 2 Adagio – Allegro molto – Più mosso <i>Andrew Irvin, Algimantas Staskevicius & Linnaea Brophy, violins</i>	7'
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Ginastera, Alberto (1916-1983)	String Quartet No. 2, Op. 26 I. Allegro rustico II. Adagio angoscioso III. Presto magico IV. Liberto e rapsodico V. Furioso <i>Katherine Williamson & Geoffrey Robson, violins</i> <i>Timothy MacDuff, viola</i> <i>David Gerstein, cello</i>	25'
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ARKANSAS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

7pm | March 18 & 19, 2025 | Morgan Hall

RIVER RHAPSODIES CHAMBER SERIES

Raised Voices

**Sankoh,
Sarian**
(b. 1996)

Baby Steps

6'

*Nisheedah Golden, mezzo-soprano
Sara Neilson, double bass*

**Barber,
Samuel**
(1910-1981)

Dover Beach, Op. 3

8'

*Sarah Dailey, mezzo-soprano
Quapaw Quartet*

**Vivaldi,
Antonio**
(1678-1741)

"Non ti lusinghi la crudeltade" from *Tito Manlio*, RV 738

8'

*JoAna Rusche, mezzo-soprano
Lorraine Duso Kitts, oboe
Julian Pranata, viola da gamba
Daniel Gilbert, harpsichord*

INTERMISSION

**Schubert,
Franz**
(1797-1828)

***Die Forelle*, D. 550**

3'

*Stephanie Smittle, mezzo-soprano
Carl Anthony, piano*

Piano Quintet in A Major, D. 667

40'

- I. Allegro vivace
- II. Andante
- III. Scherzo. Presto – Trio
- IV. Tema con variazione. Andantino
- V. Finale. Allegro giusto

*Kiril Laskarov, violin
Katherine Williamson, viola
David Gerstein, cello
Landon Honolka, double bass
Carl Anthony, piano*

Baby Steps, by Sarian Sankoh

I wish you could speak, love
Do you wish you could speak
I can see the words
Rolling round your head
Something so small
Simple communication

We know how words don't cooperate
With your funny tongue you have so much to say
We can take baby steps
We can take baby steps

I used to plead
"give me a name, baby, please"
I used to plead
I'll take any name that you give to me

One day we'll talk about everything
For now we make up sounds for the world we see
Do strangers think we're strange, love?
Do strangers think we're strange, love?

Don't matter to me
When you hold my hand so tightly
We can take baby steps
We can take baby steps

Dover Beach, by Matthew Arnold (1822-1888)

The sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand;
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Aegean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Continued on the next page...

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

***Non ti lusinghi la crudeltade*, text by Matteo Noris (1640-1714)**

Do not gratify yourself with cruelty
towards a heart that you should love,
Show pity for your daughter
If you wish to console this heart.

***Die Forelle (The Trout)*, by Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart (1739-1791)**

In a bright little brook
There shot in merry haste
A capricious trout
Past it shot like an arrow
I stood upon the shore
And watched in sweet peace
The cheery fish's bath
In the clear little brook

A fisher with his rod
Stood at the waterside
And watched with cold blood
As the fish swam about
So long as the clearness of the water
Remained intact, I thought,
He would not be able to capture the trout
With his fishing rod

But finally the thief grew weary of waiting
He stirred up the brook
And made it muddy
And before I realized it
His fishing rod was twitching
The fish was squirming there
And with raging blood
I gazed at the betrayed fish



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ARKANSAS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

7pm | April 15 & 16, 2025 | Morgan Hall

RIVER RHAPSODIES CHAMBER SERIES

Timeless Strings

**Brahms,
Johannes**

(1833-1897)

**Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 3
in D minor, Op. 108**

21'

I. Allegro

II. Adagio

III. Un poco presto e con sentimento

IV. Presto agitato

Andrew Irvin, violin

Jayeon Park, piano

**Fauré,
Gabriel**

(1845-1924)

**Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1
in A Major, Op. 13**

23'

I. Allegro molto

II. Andante

III. Scherzo. Allegro vivo

IV. Finale. Allegro quasi presto

Magdalena Ryszkowski, violin

Hee-Kyung Juhn, piano

INTERMISSION

**Vaughan
Williams,
Ralph**

(1872-1958)

String Quartet No. 2 in A Minor

25'

I. Prelude. Allegro appassionato

II. Romance. Largo

III. Scherzo. Allegro

IV. Epilogue. Andante sostenuto

Rockefeller Quartet

ARTISTS

Quapaw String Quartet - *As the ASO's original string quartet, The Quapaw Quartet was founded in 1980. All members of the quartet perform as part of the ASO's River Rhapsodies Chamber Music Series and the Intimate Neighborhood Concerts Series and are in demand for recitals at venues throughout the state. All members are heavily involved in teaching and have not only private studios, but teach at schools and universities around Arkansas.*

Meredith Maddox Hicks (violin) joined the Arkansas Symphony and the Quapaw Quartet in 2002 after receiving her Master's degree in Music Performance and completing Doctoral coursework at Florida State University. A native of Nashville, Tennessee, she graduated from Belmont University with a Bachelor's degree in Violin Performance before becoming an exchange student in Moscow, Russia at the Russian Academy of Music, Gnessin Institute. Her teachers include Elisabeth Small, Karen Clarke and Eliot Chapo.

Meredith's orchestral experience includes the concertmaster position at both of the universities she attended, as well as holding positions with the Memphis, Jacksonville, Naples and New World Symphony Orchestras. She teaches privately and is a member of the Suzuki Association of the Americas. She is the Visiting Lecturer of Violin and Viola at the University of Arkansas Little Rock; a position made possible through partnership between the University and the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra.

Meredith is thrilled to be the 2016/17 winner of the Belmont Encore Award for outstanding alumni in classical music. She became the Principal Second Violinist of the Arkansas Symphony in 2019.

Charlotte Crosmer (violin) grew up in Conway, Arkansas and began playing the violin at the age of four. A few years later she was performing in a string quartet with her siblings as well as taking fiddle lessons. After earning masters degrees in violin performance and chamber music from the University of Michigan, she went on to tour as a member of the crossover ensemble Barrage 8. Charlotte joined the Quapaw String Quartet in 2016 and can also be heard playing bluegrass with The Gravel Yard.

Timothy MacDuff (viola) picked up the viola guided by the teachers in his public school music program where he grew up in upstate New York. After being exposed to the string quartets of Johannes Brahms and Antonin Dvořák at New England Music Camp in Maine, he decided he wanted to become a professional musician.

Timothy joined the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra viola section and Quapaw Quartet in 2019. He was a violin/viola instructor with the Arkansas Symphony's Strings Academy and now serves as adjunct viola professor at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

Timothy received his Bachelor of Music degree from the State University of New York at Potsdam and his Master's degree from Rice University. He completed his Doctoral studies at the University of Maryland. His mentors and major teachers are Shelly Tramposh, James Dunham, and Katherine Murdock

Travis Scharer (cello) grew up in Salem, Oregon where his primary teachers were Noah Seitz and Oregon Symphony cellist Marilyn De Oliveira. He then studied at Indiana University for five years under the tutelage of Eric Kim. During his time in Indiana, he served as principal cellist of the the Philharmonic Orchestra, the school's top ensemble, collaborated with faculty members Katherine Jolly, Stephen Wyczynski, and Jorja Fleezanis, and was a member of the Kuttner Quartet, the university's resident honors ensemble. Travis continued his schooling at the New England Conservatory where he studied with Boston Symphony Principal cellist Blaise DeJardin. In the summers, Travis has taken part in many music festivals and has received fully paid fellowships to attend the Texas Music Festival, Port Townsend Chamber Music Workshop, and the Aspen Music Festival. Travis joined the Quapaw Quartet and the ASO as Assistant Principal Cello in the fall of 2023.

Rockefeller String Quartet - Responding to what was clearly a statewide need, the ASO and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation began a partnership in 2000 to form the Rockefeller String Quartet. The quartet has developed a reputation for providing quality educational programs locally and throughout the state. The quartet and its members perform chamber music extensively in the ASO's River Rhapsodies series and other venues. The members are also involved in teaching students of all ages, both privately and through universities in the state.

Trisha McGovern Freaney (violin) has been an Arts Partner with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and Rockefeller String Quartet since September 2013. A Kansas City native, Trisha holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Violin Performance from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music (UMKC), where she studied violin performance with Benny Kim. Her earlier education includes Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where she studied violin performance with Ian Swensen and chamber music with the late Mark Sokol.

Her career is marked by a rich blend of orchestral, solo, and chamber music performances, as well as a commitment to teaching. She has performed and taught extensively across the Kansas City metropolitan area, Des Moines, Iowa, Wichita, Kansas, Saint Joseph, Missouri, and the San Francisco Bay Area. Trisha has been appointed to several prominent positions: Assistant Concertmaster with the Saint Joseph Symphony, and tenure-track violin positions with both the Des Moines Symphony and the Wichita Symphony Orchestra.

Linnaea Brophy (violin), a native of Memphis, has a versatile background as an orchestral player, chamber musician, soloist and teacher. In 2019, she joined the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and the Rockefeller String Quartet. Linnaea holds a Doctorate in Musical Arts from Stony Brook University where she was the 2018 winner of the Stony Brook Concerto Competition. While at SBU, and under the direction of the Emerson String Quartet, she formed the Anello Quartet, hailed by Woodstock Times "beautifully tonal, coordinated, and balanced."

Prior to her appointment with the ASO, Linnaea gained orchestral experience performing with A Far Cry, a Grammy-nominated chamber orchestra based in Boston. A veteran of the violin concerto repertoire, Linnaea has appeared as soloist with the Nashville Symphony, the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, the Alabama Symphony, and the Vidin Sinfonietta in Bulgaria. Competitions she has won include the Alabama Symphony Concerto Competition, and the Curb Concerto Competition in Nashville. A frequent presence at summer festivals, she is an alumnus of the Juilliard String Quartet Seminar, the Keshet Eilon Summer Mastercourse, and the Perlman Music Program. Linnaea holds a B.A. and an M.M. from the New England Conservatory, where she was a student of Donald Weilerstein and Lucy Chapman

Katherine Reynolds (viola) joined the ASO as principal violist and Arts Partner in 2000. She received a Master of Music degree from SUNY at Stony Brook (NY) and a Bachelor of Music degree from the St. Louis Conservatory. Katherine also holds a principal position in the Conway Symphony. In addition to teaching private lessons in Little Rock, "Kater" also teaches viola at the University of Central Arkansas. Most recently she was a member of the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, Santa Fe Symphony and extra with the Santa Fe Opera Orchestra

Jacob Wunsch (cello) joined the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and the Rockefeller Quartet in the fall of 2019. Actively involved in orchestral performance, chamber music, and music education, he has made concert appearances across the United States, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, France, and South Korea. His accomplishments include winning 1st prize at both the inaugural Briggs Chamber Music Competition and the ASTA (American String Teachers Association) Competition. He has previously served as a section cellist with the Ann Arbor Symphony, the Evansville Philharmonic, and the Owensboro Symphony.

A native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Wunsch began his cello studies at age four at the String Academy of Wisconsin, graduating under pedagogue Scott Cook. His university teachers included Eric Kim, Richard Aaron, Michel Strauss, Jan Ype Nota, and Roger Regter. He received his Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from Indiana University and the University of Michigan, respectively. During his time there, he served as the principal cellist of the leading orchestras at both schools. Through fellowship grants, he attended the Aspen Music Festival and School, the Colorado College Summer Music Festival, and the Garth Newel Music Center.

Wunsch also received a full scholarship to attend the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, the Netherlands, for graduate studies, where he earned his second Master of Music degree as well as an Artist Certificate. In addition to performing and studying, he conducted research and transcription to expand the repertoire for cello ensemble. Wunsch is a dedicated cello educator, both Suzuki Method certified and versed in traditional pedagogy.

Carl Anthony (piano) joined the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra as Principal Keyboardist. He received his bachelor's degree from Bucknell University and earned his master's degree in piano and his doctorate in music theory from the University of Arizona. Always in demand as a chamber musician, Carl performs frequently with resident and guest soloists and with other artists throughout the state. Recent guest appearances have taken him to Yale, New Orleans, Tokyo, Japan, and Vancouver, BC. During the 1999-2000 Arkansas Symphony Orchestra season, he was selected by audience vote to appear as a concerto soloist on the "Audience Choice" Program. He has performed in the U.S. and abroad as the Dionysus Duo, having performed at the National Flute Conventions in Kansas City, Dallas, and St. Louis and internationally in Shanghai, Beijing, China, and Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Carolyn Brown (flute), currently Principal Flute with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and recently retired Professor of Flute at UCA, began her musical education as a young girl, studying piano with her mother and flute with her father. She holds a doctorate in Flute Performance from the Eastman School of Music; during her residency, she was the only woodwind candidate to be unanimously nominated for the prestigious Performer's Certificate. In 1995 she won the Myrna Brown International Artist Competition, and her international travels have taken her to Asia and South America, where she performed recitals and taught masterclasses. She also has performed at numerous National Flute Association conventions. When she is not performing or teaching, she spends her time waiting on her three sweet cats, Ronnie, Siri, and Rosey. She loves being outdoors, especially hiking and is an avid tennis fan.

Alisa Coffey (harp) Currently located in Little Rock, Alisa Coffey is the Principal Harpist for the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra. She was appointed in 2011 and performed the Mozart's Concerto for Flute and Harp Concerto in 2015 with principal flutist, Dr. Carolyn Brown. Alisa performs widely throughout the Mid-South region both as soloist and orchestral performer. She has performed regularly with Iris Orchestra and Symphony of Northwest Arkansas, as well as Shreveport Symphony and Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra.

She is a regular contributor to the Arkansas Symphony chamber series, River Rhapsodies, having performed works such as the Debussy Trio, Ravel Introduction and Allegro, Cras Quintette, and the Roussel Serenade. Formerly in Philadelphia, Alisa held the position of second harp with Symphony in C and also performed with the National Philharmonic, Philly Pops and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Alisa's summers have been spent attending festivals such as Arctosphere Festival, Saratoga Harp Colony, Spoleto Festival U.S.A. and Aspen Music Festival. An enthusiastic educator, Alisa maintains a private studio in Little Rock, and also teaches at Hendrix College. Alisa teaches all ages and has recently completed training in the Suzuki method. As a soloist, Alisa competed internationally at the 2018 Israel International Harp Competition and the 2008 Lily Laskine Competition in Paris, France.

She received recognition in the 2011 Lyon and Healy Awards as well as the 2011 American Harp Society National Competition. Alisa completed her M.M. at Temple University with Elizabeth Hainen and her Performance Diploma at the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music with Judy Loman. She is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Musical Arts degree at the University of North Texas with Dr. Jaymee Haefner. In her spare time, Alisa enjoys cooking anything from Smitten Kitchen, and hiking throughout the great Natural State of Arkansas.

Sarah Dailey (mezzo-soprano) has appeared as a soloist with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, performing songs of H. Leslie Adams and as the featured vocalist for the orchestra's annual touring performances of Home for the Holidays with conductors Geoffrey Robson and Valery Saul. She has sung in a number of regional premieres, including the world premiere of During Wind and Rain: A Delta Family Album, with music specifically written for her voice by Arkansas composer Michael Rice. Recent engagements include Ballet Arkansas's world premiere production of Carmen, featuring Sarah singing the title character's three arias, and her role debut of Hansel in Hansel and Gretel with the South Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, Kermit Poling conducting. Dr. Dailey previously served as Adjunct Instructor of Voice at Hendrix College and Henderson State University and maintains a private studio in Little Rock, AR. She holds degrees in voice from the Oberlin Conservatory (BM) and the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music (MM, DMA). One time in college, she participated in the USFA National Fencing Championships. More at sarahdaileymusic.com

Lorraine Duso Kitts (oboe) is a Professor of Music at the University of Central Arkansas teaching double reeds and adjunct double reed instructor at Hendrix College. Dr. Duso Kitts has been a member of the oboe section of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra for twenty years. She has also performed in orchestras outside of the State of Arkansas, such as the Knoxville Symphony, TN, and the Orquesta Sinfonica de Estado de Mexico.

Dr. Duso has premiered works by John Steinmetz, Christopher Theofanidis, Stefanie Berg, Patrick Long, Karen Griebling, and Paul Dickinson with members of the Arkansas Symphony double reed trio, DDG Trio (Duck, Duck, Goose) and her other trio, the Topaz Trio for oboe, saxophone and piano. Dr. Duso Kitts spent her summers teaching at the New England Music Camp in Maine for twenty-five years. She received her Bachelor of Music degree from Indiana University, her Master of Music degree from Manhattan School of Music and her Doctorate of Musical Arts degree from the University of Michigan. Her teachers include Jerry Sirucek, Joseph Robinson, Tom Stacy and Harry Sargous.

Gjergji Gaqi (piano) is currently the Assistant Professor of Piano at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, with previous appointments including Siena Heights University, College of the Mainland, Brazosport College, and Tyler Junior College. An active performer in both solo and collaborative settings, Dr. Gaqi is a sought-after masterclass clinician and adjudicator. Together with his brother Piro, he is a founding member of the Gaqi Piano Duo, as well as co-founder and Artistic Director of the Settenote Online Piano International Competition. He is currently the MTNA Composition Competition Coordinator for the Arkansas State Music Teachers Association. He has previously served in multiple roles with the East Texas Music Teachers Association, including as President and chair of the ETMA Helen Elbert Collaborative Music Festival. Dr. Gaqi holds degrees from Colby College and the University of Michigan.

David Gerstein (cello) is the Principal Cellist of the Arkansas Symphony. He has appeared as a featured soloist with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and Pine Bluff Symphonies, most recently in 2019 as soloist in the Beethoven Triple Concerto with the ASO. His orchestral solos with the ASO have been described as “absolutely gorgeous” by the Arkansas Democrat Gazette.

Mr. Gerstein is Assistant Principal cellist at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music in Santa Cruz, CA. Mr. Gerstein is currently on the Faculty of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and has previously taught at the University of Arkansas, the University of Central Arkansas, and Hendrix College. He received a BM with distinction from the Eastman School of Music and an MM from Rice University.

Daniel Gilbert (harpichord) is a strings teacher and freelance musician in Memphis, TN. He teaches the Middle School and Upper School strings classes at Lausanne Collegiate School and maintains a private studio at the Grove Music Academy at Second Baptist Church. Daniel performs regularly on violin and viola with the Memphis Symphony, Luna Nova, and on Broadway tours at the Orpheum Theater. Daniel is thrilled to return to ASO's River Rhapsodies as a continuo harpichordist. Daniel lives in Memphis with his wife, Lori, and their three children.

Nisheedah Devré Golden (mezzo-soprano) is a graduate of the University of Central Arkansas. Some of her professional opera credits include Madame Butterfly, 'The Mother in Mavra', 'Prince Orlofsky' in Die Fledermaus, 'Miss Todd' in The Old Maid and the Thief, 'Madame Flora' in the Medium, chorus in Amal and the night visitors, and La Bohème. She made her international debut as 'Zita in the Opera " Gianni Schicchi" in Shanghai, China. Ms. Golden also had the privilege of playing the lead female role of Azelia in William Grant Still's Opera Troubled Island.

Previously, Ms. Golden had the pleasure of appearing as the lead vocalist for the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Opus Ball, honoring Florence Price. She was also the featured vocalist for the ASO's Concert in Memoriam in 2022. In 2023, Ms. Golden returned as one of the lead vocalists for the ASO's neighborhood concert series.

In addition to Opera, Ms. Golden has a professional background in Musical Theatre. Some of the professional plays she has been in include: 'Bloody Mary' in South Pacific, 'Motormouth Mable in Hairspray, Missy Judson in Purlie, One Ninth (about the Little Rock Nine), and many more. All Praise be to God!

Landon Honolka (double bass) joined the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra as principal double bass in the fall of 2024. He also performs regularly with the Oklahoma City Philharmonic and the Oklahoma Baroque Orchestra sections and has performed with the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra, Fort Smith Symphony, and the New Mexico Philharmonic. An accomplished soloist, Honolka has performed concertos with the Arapahoe Philharmonic, the New Mexico Philharmonic, and the Oklahoma City University Symphony Orchestra, bringing the works of Andres Martin to the southwest. He has also been awarded full tuition fellowships to Aspen Music Festival and the National Repertory Orchestra.

Originally from Albuquerque, New Mexico, Honolka began playing the double bass at age 11 through the public school system. He received his bachelor's degree from Oklahoma City University and his master's degree from The Juilliard School as a student of Joseph Conyers. Other important mentors include Harold Robinson, Rex Surany, Timothy Cobb, and Frank Murray. When Honolka is not practicing or performing, he can be found in the gym lifting weights, cooking dishes, and spending couch time with his wife, Jessica, and his dog, Link.

Andrew Irvin (violin) is the Concertmaster of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra (ASO) and has been a substitute Concertmaster with the Abilene, Amarillo, and Omaha symphonies. His solo repertoire ranges from Bach, Mozart, and Haydn to Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, Korngold, and Vaughn-Williams and includes the world premiere of Michael Fines' Double Violin Concerto. Andrew's chamber music highlights include performances with artists including violinist Augustin Hadelich, the Ying Quartet, bassist Milton Masciadri, and composer Steve Mackey. Most exciting for him is the opportunity to make music with the excellent artists of the ASO. Mr. Irvin was the progenitor of the ASO's Bedtime with Bach series, an online concert series originating in March 2020 and known for receiving national press and reaching people around the globe. In 2021 he was awarded Musical America's "Top 30 Professionals of the Year" for his work with Bedtime with Bach. Mr. Irvin teaches a private studio, and his students have attended schools across the US. Some schools include Harvard, Yale, Smith College, Arizona State University, Florida State University, St Olaf, Texas Tech, Interlochen Academy, Johns Hopkins, University of Michigan, Calvin College, and many Arkansas schools. He plays a 1765 Gagliano violin.

Hee-Kyung Juhn (piano) was described as "subtle, technically brilliant, a top-notch, superb pianist" by New York Concert Review, "sensitive and imaginative" by the American Record Guide. Gramophone noted "her acumen for voice-leading lends impressive clarity," on her recording of Bach's Goldberg Variations, which is available at Amazon and digital download sites.

Hee-Kyung was born in South Korea, lived her teenage years in Paraguay, South America, and was later trained at Rutgers University, Juilliard School, and Indiana University, as well as summer programs such as Aspen Music Festival, Tanglewood Music Center, Yale Summer Piano Institute, etc. She performed extensively, and the most memorable concerts are the pandemic-time tour of the east coast with acclaimed violinist Tai Murray that culminated in 92nd Street Y in NYC.

As a church musician, Hee-Kyung has served as a music director and organist at the Trinity United Methodist Church in Little Rock. As an academic, she has taught at the University of California in Santa Barbara, Henderson State University, and currently at Virginia Tech as a visiting piano faculty.

In the summers, she has been on collaborative piano faculty at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, Martina Arroyo Foundation in New York City, Great Mountains International Music Festival in South Korea; and she is currently artist faculty at the Bay View Summer Music Festival in Michigan.

Tatiana Kotcherguina (viola) is an accomplished violist and educator based in Little Rock, Arkansas, since 2004. An active member of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra (ASO), she also teaches violin and viola at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway, AR. Her career spans several countries, including Russia, Mexico, and the United States.

Born and educated in Moscow, Russia, Tatiana began her musical journey at age 7, studying violin and piano. She graduated with honors from the Moscow State Conservatory and later attended Southeastern Louisiana University. She is also certified to teach Russian as a foreign language.

Tatiana has held significant roles such as Principal Violist for the Moscow Chamber Orchestra and the Moscow Experimental Opera Theater. Her teaching career has taken her from Russia to Mexico, where she taught at prominent universities, and then to the U.S., where she has been a dedicated performer and educator based in Mississippi and Arkansas.

Her extensive teaching experience includes positions at Henderson State University and the University of Central Arkansas. Tatiana is also involved in various summer music festivals, mentoring students who have gone on to study at prestigious institutions and pursue careers in music.

Kiril Laskarov (violin) is in his 26th season as Concertmaster of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra. A native of Bulgaria, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the State Academy of Music in Sofia and a Master's degree from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale where he studied with Michael Barta. Laskarov has appeared as a soloist with the Arkansas Symphony, Las Vegas (NV) Philharmonic, Monroe (LA) Symphony, Southern Illinois Symphony, Abilene (TX) Philharmonic, Symphony Irvine (CA), and Texarkana (TX) Symphony and also as a concertmaster with the Arkansas Philharmonic, Monroe (LA) Symphony, Texarkana (TX) Symphony, Southern Illinois Symphony, and McCall (ID) Festival Orchestra. He is scheduled to perform the Camille Saint-Saens Violin Concerto No. 3, Op. 61 with the Texarkana Symphony Orchestra on April 26, 2025.

Sara Neilson (double bass) is from Chicago, Illinois. Her career has taken her to concert halls across North America, including Carnegie Hall, Chicago's Symphony Center, and Québec's Domaine Forget. As a member of the Arkansas Symphony and the Southwest Michigan Symphony, her season highlights include Mahler's Symphony no 7 and Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition. Also a nationally recognized teacher of bass, Ms. Neilson's arrangements are used by young people across the country. When not practicing or performing, she loves to bake bread, knit, and can often be found on the hiking trail with her dog, Olive.

Jaeyeon Park's (piano) recent concerts were held in the Seoul Arts Center, Kumho Art Hall, Cheongju City Hall, Gyeonggi Arts Center, and Gwangju Arts Center. She has also appeared as a soloist with the Gangnam Symphony Orchestra, Gwangju Symphony Orchestra, Benusto Orchestra and the Ukraine Kiev National Radio Orchestra where her performance of Mozart's C major Piano Concerto K.467 was broadcast on KBS-FM. Other recent performances in Asia include Qingdao University, Engaru Art and Culture Plaza and Osaka University. She is a founding member of the trio Uno Animo which has been broadcast on MBC-FM, KBS-FM and KBC-TV. She has been the Music Director of Ensemble-On since 2018.

Dr. Park graduated BM with highest honors from Seoul National University. Subsequently she graduated MM and DMA from the Butler School of Music at the University of Texas at Austin. She taught for 12 years at Chosun University in South Korea as a Professor of Piano where she served as Department Chair for 6 years. She was awarded Chosun University's Faculty Award of Excellence in Teaching in 2010, 2011, and 2020 and Award of Excellence in Research in 2012, 2013, and 2016. Currently, Dr. Park is an Adjunct Lecturer in Piano at UA Little Rock Extended Education.

Julian Pranata (viola da gamba) can usually be found playing in the viola section of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, but he also plays a few other instruments. One of them is the viola da gamba, which he studied with Grace Feldman in New Haven. As a gambist, Julian was part of a continuo group that accompanied Vanderbilt University's Collegium Vocale for performances of Heinrich Schütz's "German Requiem" in Memphis and Nashville. He also participated in a performance of Bach's "Brandenburg Concerto No. 6" during one of the ASO's Intimate Neighborhood Concerts in 2018.

Geoffrey Robson (violin) is the Music Director of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and also serves as the Artistic Director of the Faulkner Chamber Music Festival. In that role, he curates a summer concert series and directs an intensive chamber music experience for students of all ages.

As conductor of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, Robson has led critically acclaimed and sold-out masterworks, pops, chamber, educational, and live-to-film concerts throughout the state. His innovative programming has brought new audiences into the hall and made all feel welcome, and has inspired and energized the orchestra. Robson regularly conducts opera and ballet, as well as symphonic and chamber music. His conducting teachers have included David Hayes, John Farrer, and Larry Rachleff.

He loves to collaborate with creative individuals, and to make music outside of the 'classical' genre, especially improvised music. With his background in violin performance, Robson is in frequent demand as a chamber musician, studio musician, and instrumental arranger. His violin teachers have included Erick Friedman and Alexander Kerr.

JoAna Rusche (mezzo-soprano) has been praised by Opera News for being "notably sweet-voiced." She is an alumna of the Academy of Vocal Arts, where she performed the roles of Donna Elvira in Don Giovanni, Fiora in L'amore dei tre re, Tamara in The Demon, and the Second Lady in Die Zauberflöte. With Opera North, she performed the title role in La Cenerentola, where she was hailed as "an effervescent Cinderella" and was praised for managing "Rossini's florid lines with flair and warmth."

As a young artist with Palm Beach Opera, she premiered the role of Sheva Haddas in the world premiere of *Enemies, A Love Story* and sang the role of Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. More recently, she sang the title role in *Carmen* with Music on Site and was the alto soloist for the 2023 Messiah Festival of the Arts. She received second place in the Birmingham Opera Competition and the Heafner-Williams Vocal Competition, first place in the Long Leaf Opera National Vocal Competition, and she is a two-time District Winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

Magdalena Ryszkowski (violin) joined the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra in September 2009 and is active as a solo and orchestra musician in the United States and Europe.

Magdalena has performed in venues such as New York's Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, where she made her debut in 2002, NY Kosciuszko Foundation, Paul Recital Hall, Chopin Music Academy, Warsaw Philharmonic, and Baltic Philharmonic, to name a few, as well as numerous festivals throughout the United States and Europe.

In addition to performing for over twenty years, Magdalena has been teaching many violin students who, over the years, have had a high success rate of admission to youth orchestras and violin performance programs. Magdalena has been on the Hendrix College Music Department faculty since 2013. Magdalena plays on a c.1775 Antonio Gragani violin.

Stephanie Smittle's (mezzo-soprano), an Ozark Mountains native, history of engagements includes singing ancient chant as a cantor in a 200-year-old Episcopal church, performing folk ballads in the galleries at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and howling in front of roaring amplifiers as a member of southern sludge rock group Iron Tongue. Her self-titled debut solo album is a collection of ten songs for voice and electric autoharp, which the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette called "stunning" and "incandescent ... a skilled and observant lyricist unafraid to express vulnerability and wonder and rage." Smittle has performed with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, Opera in the Ozarks, and Oberlin Conservatory's Oberlin in Italy program.

Algimantas Staskevicius (violin) began his musical career at the age of seven in Vilnius, Lithuania, studying violin and piano. In 1983, he graduated from the M.K. Čiurlionis School of Fine Arts, and in 1990, he received a Master's in Music from the Lithuanian State Conservatory. From 1988 to 1991, he was a violinist with the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra. During that time, he performed numerous concerts in the former Soviet Union, as well as in Poland, Germany, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Spain, Italy, and Japan. From 1992 to 1999, Mr. Staskevicius was Principal Second Violin at the Orquesta Sinfonica de la UANL in Monterrey, Mexico. Since his arrival in the U.S. in 1999, Mr. Staskevicius earned an M.M. degree from Southeastern Louisiana University.

He is currently a violinist of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and the Associate Concertmaster of the Texarkana Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Staskevicius has performed as a soloist with several orchestras, including Filarmonica del Bajío (Mexico), Orquesta Sinfonica de la UANL (Mexico), SLU Chamber Orchestra, Mississippi, Arkansas, Texarkana, and Missouri Symphonies, Orquesta Juvenil de Bellas Artes in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. He has participated in international festivals in Echternach, Schleswig-Holstein, Ansbach, Ivo Pogorelich, Cervantino, and Alfonso Reyes.

Mr. Staskevicius is an avid educator whose experience dates back to 1988. Since then, he has taught extensively at school, college, and university levels in Lithuania, Mexico, and the USA. Currently, he has a private studio and teaches Instrumental Music at Arkansas School for the Blind.

Katherine Williamson (violin) joined the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra in 2013 and assumed the Assistant Concertmaster post in the fall of 2019. Williamson started her tenure with the Orchestra as an Arts Partner with the Rockefeller String Quartet. She has been the Director of the ASO String Academy since 2019 and also serves on the faculty for the Faulkner Chamber Music Festival.

Music has taken Ms. Williamson from the rolling hills of the Meadowmount School of Music in New York, to the mountains of Breckenridge, and to the Konzerthaus stage in Berlin, Germany. She has played as a semifinalist with the New World Symphony, been an associate member of the Chicago Civic Orchestra, and an extra with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. A native of Saint Paul, Minnesota, she still maintains musical connections to her home state as a freelance violinist with the Minnesota Orchestra and, until 2019, as a section violinist for the Mill City Summer Opera.

Williamson earned a Bachelor of Music with Distinction from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University in 2012. She currently resides in downtown Little Rock with her rescue dog, Bernie the beagle.