

SMOKY VALLEY CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

PRESENTS

AMERICAN MOSAIC

amy beach | leonard bernstein | nichole chamberlain | aaron copland | antonín dvořák
george gershwin | florence price | piotr szewczyk | chee-hwa tan | john williams

FRIDAY, MAY 22, 2026 | 7:30 PM

*Bud Pearson Swedish Chapel
Bethany College*

LINDSBORG, KANSAS

18 YOUNG ARTISTS | 9 COUNTRIES | 1 NIGHT



WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SPONSORS, INCLUDING:



***Welcome to the inaugural year of the Smoky Valley
Chamber Music Festival in Lindsborg, Kansas,
 (“Little Sweden, USA”)!***

As my childhood home, Lindsborg holds a very special place in my heart, and I truly believe it offers unique strengths as a host community for this brand-new chamber festival. As a close-knit agricultural community settled by Swedish immigrants in 1869, Lindsborg is deeply proud of its cultural heritage. Traditions are brought to life through events such as Millfest (May), Midsummer’s Festival (June), Svensk Hyllningsfest (October), and the St. Lucia Festival (December), as well as through a longstanding legacy of both the performing and visual arts. This legacy includes the longest-running annual performance of Handel’s *Messiah* in North America, (which recently celebrated its 145th season!) – the home and galleries of National Geographic photographer, Jim Richardson, Swedish painter, Birger Sandzén; and Broadway RFD, the longest-running outdoor theatre summer program in Kansas. Most of all, Lindsborg is a perfect place to host a new festival because of its people. The community is warm, welcoming, and always conveying a genuine spirit of hospitality and interesting cultural exchange. Indeed, I believe this charming rural town, nestled in the heart of the Smoky Valley, is fertile ground in which to plant a festival tradition celebrating community, education, and multicultural exchange through the arts!

The inaugural Smoky Valley Chamber Music festival will be woven together through the 2026 theme: “American Soundscape.” **When considering music that conveys the essence of “American Sound,” how**

does one begin to distill the melting pot of diverse traditions that have been infused into our nation over the past 250 years? From its European roots to the blend of unique multicultural voices that have shaped—and continue to shape—musical sounds across the United States, this festival celebrates the rich diversity across the landscape of American music. Throughout the festival, you will hear not only American-born composers such as Aaron Copland, George Gershwin, Florence Price, and Caroline Shaw, but also composers with meaningful ties to the United States or our own community, such as Antonín Dvořák, Johann Halvorsen, and Lars Erik Larsson, each one of which whose musical traditions blend influences from around the world, all infused into the American sound. And maybe, you’ll discover a few new composers along the way!

Thank you for attending, and once again, welcome to the inaugural *Smoky Valley Chamber Music Festival!*

Warmly,

Caroline

—

Caroline J. Beckman

Founder & Artistic Director, Smoky Valley Chamber Music Festival |
Lindsborg, KS | svcmf.ks@gmail.com

CONCERT #5:

"American Mosaic"

Young Artists Chamber Concert

Friday, May 22, 2026, 7:30 PM

Bud Pearson Swedish Chapel, Bethany College Campus

George GERSHWIN/James COHN (1898-1937/1928-2021) |

Three Preludes for

Clarinet and Piano (1927/87) | 8'

- I. Allegro ben ritmato e deciso
- II. Andante con moto e poco rubato
- III. Allegro ben ritmato e deciso

Cesarín Caro, clarinet; Abigail Olson, piano

Florence PRICE/Molly WISE (1887-1953/b. 2004) |

Adoration (1951) | 4'

Pedro Mendez, viola; Shiyi Zhu, piano

Nicole CHAMBERLAIN (b. 1977) |

"The Blue Plate," III: Grits for flute, horn, and piano (2018) | 5'

Bekah Walker, flute; Jesús Garcia, horn; Abigail Olson, piano

Amy BEACH (1867-1944) | *Romance*, Op. 23 (1893) | 6'

Moa Glimberg, bass; Shiyi Zhu, piano

Piotr SZEWCZYK (b. 1976) | Three Summer Sketches for Violin,

Clarinet, and Bassoon,

III. Lively (2002) | 4'

Allison Smith, violin; Cesarín Caro, clarinet; Jeff Doucette, Bassoon

George GERSHWIN/Jascha HEIFETZ (1898-1937/1901-1987) |
"It Ain't Necessarily So" from *Porgy and Bess* (1934/47) | 3'
Laura Herrera, violin; Shiyi Zhu, piano

INTERMISSION (10')

Aaron COPLAND (1900-1990) |
"Hoedown" from *Rodeo* (1942/45) | 3'
Caroline Beckman, violin; Abigail Olson, piano

Chee-Hwa TAN (1965) |
Nocturne on a Theme of "Dayung Sampan" (2022) | 5'
Elise Cole, cello; Shiyi Zhu, piano

Amy BEACH (1867-1944) | *Summer Dreams* for Piano Duo, V. Elfen
Tarantella, Op. 47 (1901) | 3'
Andreas and Esther Landstedt, piano

John WILLIAMS (1932) | "Cadenza and Fantasy"
for Violin and Piano
from *Fiddler on the Roof* (1971) | 4'
Allison Smith, Violin; Abigail Olson, piano

Leonard BERNSTEIN (1918-1990) | "Somewhere"
from *West Side Story* (1964) | 3'
Jose Ramirez, violin; Shiyi Zhu, piano

Astor PIAZZOLLA (1921-1992) | *Four, For Tango* (1987) | 6'
Seville String Quartet

***Please join us for a meet-and-greet reception with the
musicians immediately following the performance.***

ABOUT THE MUSIC

GEORGE GERSHWIN / JAMES COHN (1898-1937/1928-2021)

Three Preludes for Clarinet and Piano

Composed: 1927, Arranged: 1987 | Duration: c. 8 minutes

The Three Preludes by George Gershwin are three short piano pieces composed between 1923 and 1926 and published in 1926. They represent a synthesis of classical music and early twentieth-century American jazz.

The first prelude features a rhythmic energy closely connected to the urban jazz of the 1920s. The second, described by Gershwin himself as a “blues lullaby,” reveals an intimate, lyrical, and melancholic character. The third, more dramatic, incorporates rhythms that recall the vitality of jazz of the period.

The Three Preludes have been adapted for various instruments. This version for clarinet and piano especially honors Gershwin’s vision of the clarinet as an instrument capable of uniting two worlds that deeply fascinated him: “the refined sound of classical music and the flexible expressiveness of jazz and blues.”

-Cesarín Caro

FLORENCE PRICE (1887-1953)

Adoration

Composed: 1951 | Duration: c. 4 minutes

Florence Price (1887–1953) was a pioneering figure in American classical music, holding the historic distinction of being the first African American woman to have a symphony performed by a major national orchestra (the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1933). Her rich catalog masterfully bridges the European Romantic tradition with the profound melodic idioms of African American spirituals and folk traditions.

“Adoration” was originally composed in 1951 as a piece for organ intended for church services. This piece stands as one of Price’s most intimate and enduring works. While rooted in a liturgical context, the piece transcends its sacred origins to become a universal meditation on devotion, peace, and quiet introspection.

In this arrangement by Molly Wise in D major, the work is beautifully reimagined for the viola, transforming into an instrumental miniature of profound eloquence and the color of the viola makes the piece resonate with a natural, luminous warmth, perfectly capturing the instrument’s deep, vocal quality. “Adoration” evokes the purity of a wordless prayer inviting the listener into a space of serene stillness and beauty.

-Pedro Pablo Mendez

NICOLE CHAMBERLAIN (b. 1977)

“The Blue Plate”, mvt. III: Grits

Composed: 2018 | Duration: c. 5 minutes

The Blue Plate, by composer and flutist Nicole Chamberlain, was commissioned by the flute, horn, and piano ensemble “The Kitchen

Sync”. Each member requested that a part of their heritage be portrayed throughout the piece, resulting in three movements (dishes, in this case) for each member of the group, all served on a “Blue Plate”.

In this movement, titled “Grits”, we hear not only glimpses of Americana, but also themes that tie the group together in their shared experiences of Athens, Georgia. Sprinkled throughout the movement are fragments of “Battle Hymn of the Republic”, “We Shall Overcome”, and “Stars and Stripes Forever”. Grits—coarsely ground corn kernels boiled with water or milk—refers to the side dish long associated with the American South and its enduring resilience and of course, southern hospitality!

-Nicole Chamberlain

AMY BEACH (1685-1759/1864-1935)

Romance, Op. 23

Composed: 1893 | Duration: c. 6 minutes

Amy Beach grew up as a remarkably talented musician but largely put aside public performance when she married Dr. Henry Harris Aubrey Beach to maintain an expected social status. However, during her married life she continued to compose, including composing the first symphony by an American woman.

Her “Romance” for violin and piano was composed early in her career and dedicated to Maud Powell, who premiered the piece in Chicago in 1893 to such great reception that the performance of the work was repeated on the program. The “Romance” continues to endear itself to audiences with its passionate yet gentle lyricism.

-Allison Smith

PIOTR SZEWCZYK (b. 1976)

Three Summer Sketches for Violin, Clarinet, and Bassoon:

III. Lively

Composed: 2002 | Duration: c. 4 minutes

Three Summer Sketches for Violin, Clarinet, Bassoon by Piotr Szewczyk captures the playful freedom of summer juxtaposed with the languid heaviness of long, hot, summer days. This third movement, Lively, begins with a rhythmically quirky theme that makes use of silence to create a sense of humor. The middle section, Reflective, pulls back to a more conversational feel before surprising the listener with the clarinet's return to the main motif. After an extended duet between the bassoon and violin, the movement finishes with an exhilarating unison of the opening thematic material.

-Allison Smith

GEORGE GERSHWIN / JASCHA HEIFETZ (1898-1937/1901-1987)

“It Ain’t Necessarily So” from Porgy and Bess

Composed: 1934, Arranged: 1947 | Duration: c. 3 minutes

Composed in 1935 by George Gershwin, with lyrics by his brother Ira for their groundbreaking opera Porgy and Bess, It Ain't Necessarily So is originally performed by the charismatic character Sportin' Life. During a

community gathering, he delivers a sermon that openly challenges and protests the literal truth of various Old Testament stories. Drawing from their own Jewish heritage, the Gershwin brothers included a clever musical irony: they based this anthem of protest on the Barechu, the traditional blessing sung in the synagogue before the reading of the Torah, mirroring the call-and-response style of a religious service to accent the character's defiance. In 1944, the legendary violinist Jascha Heifetz took this popular hit and transformed it into a brilliant violin

showpiece that perfectly blends jazz, blues, and traditional klezmer styles. Instead of a singer, the violin literally "talks" through stylish glissandi (slides) that mimic vocal jazz scattling, intricate double-stops, and a swung, bluesy character that captures all the wit and sharp playfulness of the original music.

-Laura Herrera

AARON COPLAND (1900-1990)

"Hoedown" from Rodeo

Composed: 1942, Arranged: 1945 | Duration: c. 3 minutes

Aaron Copland's ballet Rodeo is a celebration of the American West and reflects an important image we have of ourselves. The commission for Rodeo came, surprisingly enough, from the classically-oriented Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, with the music by Copland and the choreography and scenario by Agnes de Mille. The ballet was precedent setting - there were said to be 22 curtain calls at its premiere at the Metropolitan Opera House on October 16, 1942 - and the success of this ballet insured that dance would thrive as an integral part of American musical theater[...]

The ballet's scenario takes place at Burnt Ranch, where a Cowgirl finds herself competing with visiting city girls for the attention of the local cowboys, especially the Head Wrangler. Hoe-down begins with dynamism and verve, signaling the Cowgirl's rebirth: she has suddenly put aside her cowpoke duds and reappeared as the prettiest girl in the room. Copland borrows two square dance tunes - "Bonyparte" and "McLeod's Reel" - to aid in this romp, a fanciful and uplifting take on the American square dance. We have a typical, stand-up-and-cheer Hollywood Western ending, too, as the girl gets the right guy for her, not the aloof and snooty Head Wrangler at all, but Another Cowboy who has shown her respect, kindness, and honor.

-Dave Kopplin

CHEE-HWA TAN (1965)

Nocturne on a Theme of "Dayung Sampan"

Composed: 2022 | Duration: c. 5 minutes

Nocturne on a Theme of Dayung Sampan was composed to give tribute to the rich heritage of Malay folk songs from the region encompassing Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. "Dayung Sampan" literally translates to "Row the Boat."

The 9-bar traditional folk theme in pentatonic is introduced and expanded to portray the story of the long journey by boat from China to Singapore. The theme originated as a Malay language folk song with roots in the traditional Chinese orchestra (gambang kromong) from Betawi, Indonesia. The song became a part of the Malay folk song curriculum in Malaysia and Singapore and was often taught to school

children. The melody was further popularized by Teresa Teng, a famous Taiwanese singer, in her song with completely different lyrics, “Tian Mi Mi.”

One version of the original lyrics are as follows:

Dayung sampan (Paddle the boat) Dayung, dayung sampan (Paddle,
Paddle the boat)

Datang dari negara China (Coming from the land of China)
Sampai Singapura (Until Singapore) Dayung sampan (Paddle the boat)
Dayung, dayung sampan (Paddle, Paddle the boat)
Menuju kita ke utara, (Heading us toward the north)
Sampai Malaysia (Until Malaysia)
Sampai Malaysia. (Until Malaysia)

- Chee-Hwa Tan

AMY BEACH (1867-1944)

Summer Dreams for Piano Duo, V. Elfin Tarantella, Op.

47

Composed: 1901 | Duration: c. 3 minutes

“Fairies, black, gray, green, and white
You moonshine revelers, and shades of night.”

-Shakespeare

As a member of the highly Romantic Second New England School, American composer and virtuosic pianist Amy Beach (1867-1944) forged a unique professional path during an era when composers, particularly in the United States, were expected to be European-trained men. Frequently drawing inspiration from nature, her compositional approach was further heightened by her synesthesia, a trait that caused her to associate different musical keys with distinct colors. Her suite for

piano duet, *Summer Dreams*, beautifully illustrates these Romantic connections between music, literature, and the natural world. "Elfin Tarantelle," headed by a poetic quotation from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, is vivid, equally inspired by nature and the fantastical.

-Andreas Landstedt

JOHN WILLIAMS (b. 1932)

"Cadenza and Fantasy" for Violin and Piano from Fiddler on the Roof

Composed: 1971 | Duration: c. 4 minutes

The beloved musical *Fiddler on the Roof* opened on Broadway in 1964 featuring music by Jerry Bock and lyrics by Sheldon Harnick. The score features intervals, harmonies, and rhythmic patterns drawn from

traditional Jewish Klezmer music as the story focuses on the small, struggling town of Anatevka where the citizens hold their Jewish traditions tightly while also anticipating inevitable crackdown by the

Tsar. This cadenza and fantasy by John Williams was written for Jewish-American violinist Isaac Stern for the 1971 film adaptation of the musical and includes some favorite themes from the movie in a thrilling, virtuosic format that captures the spirit of the musical and its ongoing endearment to audiences.

-Allison Smith

LEONARD BERNSTEIN (1918-1990)

“Somewhere” from West Side Story

Composed: 1964 | Duration: c. 3 minutes

Leonard Bernstein was one of the most influential American musicians of the twentieth century: a celebrated composer, conductor, pianist, and educator whose work bridged the worlds of classical music and Broadway theater. Equally at home conducting the New York Philharmonic and composing for the stage, Bernstein brought together jazz, classical traditions, Latin rhythms, and popular song in a uniquely American musical voice. In *West Side Story*, his score combines rhythmic vitality, sophisticated harmonies, and profound lyricism, helping redefine what musical theater could achieve.

Somewhere or *There is a Place for Us* is a duet from Act II, Scene 2 of the musical *West Side Story* by Leonard Bernstein, with lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. Premiering on Broadway in 1957, *West Side Story* reimagines Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* amid the tensions of rival gangs in New York City, confronting themes of prejudice, violence, identity, and the longing for connection. Within this turbulent setting, “*Somewhere*” emerges as one of the musical’s most touching and emotionally powerful moments. The song represents a dream of escape

and reconciliation for the show’s protagonists, Tony and Maria, who imagine a world free from hatred and division. The music moves between tenderness and quiet desire, capturing both the fragility of hope and the enduring human desire for belonging.

Since its premiere, “*Somewhere*” has remained an enduring anthem of compassion, unity, and hope. Its message continues to resonate across generations as a reminder of music’s power to imagine a more humane and understanding world.

-José Ramirez

ASTOR PIAZZOLLA (1921-1992)

Four, For Tango

Composed: 1987 | Duration: c. 6 minutes

After traveling to France to study the European musical traditions with acclaimed 20th-century composition teacher, Nadia Boulanger, Piazzolla was encouraged to embrace his own Argentinian roots and develop his own compositional voice. This turning point led to what would become known as the “New Tango.” *Four, for Tango* is Piazzolla’s only work for string quartet. It is a single-movement composition that combines jazz-influenced rhythms, sultry harmonies, colorful timbres, and extended techniques—such as percussive tapping and glissandi—to convey the sensuous mood characteristic of Piazzolla’s signature dance form: the Tango.

-Chung-Wen (Katy) Lee

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS



Born and raised in California, pianist **ABIGAIL OLSON** loves nothing more than sharing her music with others. You can find her at the piano most hours of the day teaching, performing, and collaborating with other musicians. She is passionate about using music to create meaningful interactions with people of all ages and from all walks of life.

Abigail’s performing career as a soloist and collaborator has led her to venues such as the National Conference for Keyboard Pedagogy, the

Colburn School in Los Angeles, and Meng Concert Hall under the direction of Carl St. Clair. Abigail holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from The Master’s University and two graduate degrees. Her studies in Collaborative Keyboard from California State University, Fullerton, and Piano Performance and Pedagogy at Ohio University have led to performance and teaching opportunities across the county. Currently working as a teacher of piano, ballet pianist, and freelance collaborator in Southeastern Ohio, Abigail is also a certified Dalcroze Music Educator.



Violinist **ALLISON SMITH** finds her greatest inspiration in musical collaboration and in bringing music to audiences with limited access to the performing arts. Allison serves as Adjunct Violin and Viola Faculty at Cairn University and is a member of the strings faculty at Cornerstone Christian Academy in Southwest Philadelphia and Gwynedd Mercy

Academy High School.

As a performer, Allison is the principal second violinist of the Pennsylvania Chamber Orchestra and a section violin member of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Symphony Orchestra and the New Jersey Chamber Orchestra. She also is a frequent substitute musician for several regional orchestras, including the Bay-Atlantic Symphony, Reading Symphony Orchestra, Symphony in C, and Lancaster Symphony, among others. Allison also enjoys frequent chamber music collaborations and opportunities to premiere and promote new compositions, including being a founding member of Ensemble Musica Deo and Vienna Serenade.

Allison received her B.M. in Music Education from Grove City College, where she studied with Rochelle Agnew and was a winner of their 2020-2021 Concerto Competition. Following that, Allison completed her M.M. in Violin Performance and Professional Performance Certificate from Penn State University, where she studied with James Lyon, was a recipient of the Creative Achievement Award, and worked as a graduate teaching assistant. Allison has participated in summer festivals in Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Chicago, Idaho, and South Carolina and has performed across the United States.

She has had the honor to perform professionally at Carnegie Hall as concertmaster for CCM artist Lauren Daigle as well as at the Kennedy Center with True North Presents.



ANDREAS LANDSTEDT and **ESTHER JIHYE HAN**

began playing two-piano and four-hands works together in 2018, making the AndEs Piano Duo official with a full-length debut recital in New Mexico in 2022. The husband-and-wife duo has since performed on international stages in the United States, Germany, and Canada to great acclaim, notably at the Orford Musique Academy and the Internationales Klavierfestival Lindlar.

Competition accolades include Finalist of the 2024 MTNA Stecher and Horowitz Two Piano Competition, the 2024 North International Music Competition, and the 2023 Ohio International Piano Duet & Duo Competition, and Winner of the 2024 United States International Duo Piano Competition and the 2023 UK International Music Competition. In 2023, the duo launched their creative project, SERIE ANDES, a concert series inspired by Western traditional wedding gifts. The duo

was featured in an honors article in the July/August 2024 edition of the KC Studio Magazine.

The duo has coached under Jeffrey Savage of the NFMC Ellis Award-winning duo 88 SQUARED. They have performed for masterclasses with Anderson & Roe, Christina and Michelle Naughton, and the Liang-He Duo, and have received coachings from Margo Garrett, Sylvia Wang, and Alvin Chow. Both Andreas and Esther completed undergraduate studies and Graduate Certificates in Piano Performance at the University of New Mexico, as well as graduate studies at the University of Missouri–Kansas City Conservatory. Andreas and Esther live with their daughter, Clara, and two cats.



Flutist and Texas native **BEKAH WALKER** is an aspiring artist deeply committed to sharing her love of music with her audience. With a passion for performance, she strives to captivate listeners and tell a compelling story through her playing, creating an enchanting and dynamic musical experience. Bekah is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) degree at the University of Missouri–Kansas City, where she studies with Dr.

Terri Sánchez. She also works as a Library Information Specialist in Music and Media at UMKC’s Miller Nichols Library, combining her passion for music with her interest in research and library science. As a soloist, she has received a number of recognitions including having a featured recording on 91.9 Classical KC, Honorable Mention in the Bowling Green State University Solo Honors Competition for her performance of Michael Daugherty’s *Trail of Tears* and 2nd prize in the Perrysburg Solo Honors Competition. She holds a Master of Music

degree from Bowling Green State University, where she also studied with Dr. Terri Sánchez, and a Bachelor of Music degree from Texas Christian University, where she worked with Dr. Shauna Thompson and Dr. Kristen Queen. During her graduate studies, she served as a teaching assistant and faculty artist for a number of flute camps, including the SMI Flute Institute hosted at BGSU as well as UMKC’s Summer Flute Institute.

Current highlights of her musical journey include performing flute/piccolo in the *Stardew Valley: Symphony of Seasons 2025* Tour concert, performing with the Topaz Quartet, quarterfinalists in the 2025 Fischhoff National Chamber Music and performing in a masterclass for internationally renowned flutist Emmanuel Pahu. She plays on a Haynes 14k Custom Fusion Flute. Outside of music, Bekah enjoys reading, crocheting and spending time with her husband Jesus, and their small grey cat, Mimi.



CAROLINE BECKMAN has performed in venues across the United States, Europe, and Asia, including in solo and chamber music masterclasses with Gil Shaham, Kurt Sassmannshaus, David Chan, Phillipe Quint, Frank Huang, and Keiko Tokunaga. Summer festival highlights include the David Kim Orchestral Institute (Philadelphia, PA),

MasterWorks Festival (Spartanburg, SC), Brevard Music Center Summer Institute (Brevard, NC), Credo Music Festival (Oberlin, OH), and Your Body is Your Strad Institute (Caroga Lake, NY). She holds a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Music degree from Cedarville University and a Master of Music (MM) degree in Violin Performance and String Pedagogy, with two Graduate Certificates, Music Performance and Music Leadership,

from Ohio University. Her writings have been published in the College Music Symposium (CMS) Writing Forum, and her research on Franz Joseph Haydn’s Role in the Birth and Development of the Modern String Quartet was accepted to present at the 2020 National Conference of Undergraduate Research (NCUR) in Bozeman, MT. An enthusiastic music educator, Caroline is a certified teacher with the Suzuki Association of America (SAA), and has taught on faculty at the Ravinia Festival’s “El Sistema” Youth Summer Music Program in Chicago, IL, and as Adjunct Professor of Violin at Benedictine College in Atchison, KS.

A native of Lindsborg, Kansas, Caroline is currently based in Kansas City, where she is pursuing doctoral studies with Joseph Genualdi at the University of Missouri–Kansas City Conservatory and performs as a member of the UMKC Conservatory Graduate Fellowship String Quartet.



CESARIN CARO FELIZ is a Dominican clarinetist who graduated in 2023 from the Conservatorio Nacional de Música (National Conservatory of Music) in Santo Domingo. His orchestral career began at an early age, and in 2018 he was appointed principal clarinetist of the Orquesta Sinfónica Juan Pablo Duarte (Juan Pablo Duarte Symphony Orchestra) of the National Conservatory of Music.

In 2019, Cesarín participated in the CLARIFEST VI International Clarinet Festival in Guatemala, where he received instruction from distinguished clarinetists such as Michel Lethiec and Bettina Aust. That same year, he

represented the Dominican Republic as a guest musician with the Orquesta Guatemalteca de Vientos (Guatemalan Wind Orchestra), further strengthening his connection to the Latin American wind ensemble tradition. In 2021, he once again represented his country as a member of the Banda Sinfónica Integrada de las Américas (Integrated Symphonic Band of the Americas). This multinational ensemble brought together musicians from seven countries across the continent, providing a dynamic environment for artistic collaboration and engagement with a diverse symphonic wind repertoire.

Within the Dominican musical landscape, Cesarín has maintained an active and influential presence. He served as principal clarinetist of the Orquesta Dominicana de Vientos (Dominican Wind Orchestra). He has also actively participated in the clarinet festival CLARINETISIMO in the Dominican Republic, taking part in concerts, and masterclasses with renowned clarinetists such as José Franch Ballester and Philippe Cuper. He also appeared as a guest clarinetist during the 2024 and 2025 symphonic seasons of the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de la República Dominicana (National Symphony Orchestra of the Dominican Republic).



ELISE COLE is a versatile cellist from Colorado who believes in connecting people through the joy of making music. She loves engaging audiences in both traditional concert venues and unexpected spaces — from a rock-climbing gym to an impromptu performance aboard an airplane. Highlights include performing the Shostakovich Cello Sonata on live broadcast after winning the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp

staff solo competition, a trio performance with Tony Caramia on WXXI's

Live from Hochstein, and chamber music appearances at Hampden Hall in Denver. She is the Assistant Principal Cellist of the Boulder Symphony.

An avid chamber musician, Elise has performed at the T-Town Chamber Music Festival, Bowdoin International Music Festival, and Montecito International Music Festival, where she studied with and collaborated alongside faculty in chamber and solo settings. She has performed in masterclasses for the Borromeo String Quartet, Aeolus String Quartet, Jesús Castro-Balbi, and Bion Tsang. She is the co-founder of Ponderosa Strings, an ensemble providing live music for events across Colorado.

In addition to performing, Elise has a passion for teaching and strongly believes in equitable music education. She teaches at El Sistema Colorado, a nonprofit serving youth from historically marginalized communities in Denver. She also serves on the faculty at the Parlando School of Musical Arts in Boulder and runs a small private cello studio in Lafayette. Elise is a registered Suzuki Book 1 teacher and integrates the philosophy that every student can succeed into her broader student-centered teaching approach.

Elise holds a Bachelor of Music from the Eastman School of Music, where she studied with David Ying and served as Assistant Principal Cellist of the Eastman Philharmonia. She earned her Master of Music from the University of Colorado Boulder, where she studied with David Requiro. When she is not playing cello, Elise can be found enjoying the mountains, hiking, rockclimbing, and stargazing.



A passionate performer and teacher, **JEFF DOUCETTE** has had the opportunity to perform throughout the east coast and midwest, with groups such as Orchestra Miami, Miami MusicFestival, Cape Cod Symphony, Missouri Symphony, St. Joseph Symphony, Kansas City Chamber Orchestra, as well as the Kansas City Symphony. During his time at the University of Miami Frost school of Music, he was the

contrabassoonist for a televised production of Modest Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition, under the baton of Maestro Gerard Schwarz. He is currently a member of the substitute musicians list for the Kansas City Symphony and Missouri Symphony. Beginning his teaching career at the Wynwood Arts Charter School in Wynwood, Florida, he has had students go on to earn both full and partial scholarships to attend universities across the country to pursue bassoon. Jeff Doucette currently teaches private lessons throughout the Kansas City metro area, as well as assists with band programs in the Blue Valley School District. Originally from Windham, New Hampshire, Jeff Doucette is a bassoonist currently living in Kansas City, Missouri, where he is pursuing a Doctorate of Musical Arts at University of Missouri Kansas City studying with Dr. Leigh Muñoz. Additionally, he holds degrees from Boston University and the University of Miami Frost School of Music, where he was fortunate to study with esteemed faculty such as Nancy Goeres, Gabriel Beavers, Dr. Robert Carnochan, Valerie Coleman, and Maestro Gerard Schwarz.



JESUS GARCIA PALACIOS is a musician currently based in Kansas City, MO. Jesus is a native of Monclova, Coahuila (MEX) and has spent most of his life in the United States.

Prior to Kansas City, Jesus pursued a Master of Music at Indiana University and a Bachelor of Music at Texas Christian University, where he sustained an active musical presence

throughout the communities. His primary mentors are Denise Tryon and Heather Test.

Jesus continues to maintain a diverse musical profile, where his engagements range from standard repertoire to innovative, contemporary programs. Part of these efforts include an emphasis in historically-informed performance, where Jesus performs on the natural horn, a nineteenth-century predecessor to the modern valve-horn. Jesus also performs with numerous chamber ensembles, including brass/wind quintets and horn ensembles.

Jesus' other contributions to music include numerous years in brass instrument repair and music publishing; his most recent project includes *The Grand Theoretical and Practical Method for the Valve Horn* (edited by Denise Tryon). In addition to music, Jesus is also a prolific reader and enjoys building a life with Bekah, his wife.

JOSÉ STIVEN VILLA-RAMIREZ was born in Medellín, Colombia. He grew up in the small neighborhood of Limonar where he completed his high school studies in the Fe y Alegria School. He started music and violin studies at the age of 12 at the Network of Music Schools in Medellín. In 2010, he was admitted to study with professor Ana María



Trujillo in the preparatory division of the Conservatory of Music at Antioquia University. In 2012, he started a bachelor of music in violin performance at the same University with professor Poliana Vassileva. He also studied violin at Iberacademy with Roberto Gonzalez in 2012.

In June of 2017, he finished his bachelor studies at the University of Antioquia with an honorable mention. He then joined the Youth Philharmonic Orchestra of Colombia and the Bogotá Youth Chamber Orchestra where we worked for two years. During this time, he formed the Gabo String Quartet and went to the US to study a master in performance

(chamber music). Mr. Ramirez's violin teachers include Cathy Meng Robinson from the Miami String Quartet and Amy Lee, associate concertmaster of The Cleveland Orchestra. In 2022, Mr. Ramirez finished a masters degree in chamber music at Kent State University. Nowadays He is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts in Instrumental Performance at University of Missouri-Kansas

Conservatory where he studies with Professor Benny Kim of the Miami String Quartet.



Venezuelan violinist **LAURA HERRERA** began her musical studies at the age of 7 at "La Casa de la Cultura" in Carora, Venezuela. She was a member of "El Sistema" in Venezuela and served as the Concertmaster of the "Orquesta Sinfónica Juvenil Pedro León Torres." In 2017, she attended the Interlochen Arts Academy and graduated

with honors in 2018. She then pursued a bachelor’s degree in Violin Performance at the Chicago College of Performing Arts-Roosevelt University under the guidance of Almita Vamos and MingHuan Xu, graduating Magna Cum Laude in 2022. Ms. Herrera has participated in well-known music festivals such as Interlochen Arts Camp, Chautauqua Music Festival, and Arthosphere Festival and has taken part in masterclasses led by renowned violinists, including Ilya Kaler, Robert Chen, Nancy Wu, and Jun Iwasaki. Ms. Herrera received a Master of Music in Violin Performance, studying with Benny Kim at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music, where she also held a prestigious position as part of the Graduate String Quartet Fellowship. Ms. Herrera joined the Kansas City Symphony sub list in the fall of 2022 and was recently recognized as one of the recipients of the 2023 KC Sigma Alpha Iota Scholarship Competition. Currently, Ms. Herrera is based out of Charlotte, North Carolina, USA, where she performs as a violinist in the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra.



MOA GLIMBERG is a Swedish double bass player and composer from outside Malmö in southern Sweden. Currently based in New York City, she is pursuing a Master’s degree at The Juilliard School studying with Timothy Cobb, principal bass of NY Phil.

Moa moved to the United States in 2021 to begin her undergraduate studies at the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings in Macon, Georgia, where she studied double bass with Jeffrey Turner and Daniel Tosky and graduated in 2025. Moa was awarded the Robert

McDuffie Center Scholarship for “exemplary artistry”, was a winner of the Brevard Music Center Concerto competition in 2024, performed with

the New York String Orchestra Seminar in Carnegie Hall the winter of 2024, and has been a standing substitute for the New World Symphony Orchestra in Miami, Florida. Moa is also a recipient of a substantial scholarship from the Swedish American Foundation that enables her studies in the US.

Moa is active across a wide range of musical genres, performs with the improvisation/fiddle “DuoNord”, and she recently appeared as a soloist on the album *Cycle & Stars*, performing her own composition for double bass and string orchestra. Her work combines classical training with a strong interest in contemporary and genre-crossing music.



PEDRO PABLO MENDEZ’S musical journey began even before he was born. Though not a musician herself, his mother purchased a violin before he was born in the hope that one day her child would become an artist. At five years old, Mendez began studying the instrument that had been waiting for him. He received his formal training in Venezuela at the Vicente Emilio Sojo

Conservatory, earning a diploma in Violin Performance. After establishing himself professionally, he became a faculty member of the same conservatory, mentoring the next generation of musicians. His early formation was deeply shaped by Venezuela’s renowned El Sistema, where he later served as a teacher and artistic leader. From 2017 to 2019, he was Director of the Latin American Violin Academy, guiding and training numerous young artists across the region. In 2019, Mendez was awarded a scholarship to pursue studies in the United States at Roosevelt University in Chicago, where he earned his Bachelor

of Music in Viola Performance. There, he studied with Roland and Almita Vamos and Li-Kuo Chang.

Mendez collaborated on a Grammy Award–winning recording featuring the music of contemporary composer Jessie Montgomery, contributing to a project reflecting the evolving voice of American classical music. His orchestral experience also includes appearances with major American ensembles such as the Nashville Symphony, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, where he served as Principal Viola. Mendez currently performs as a member of the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra. Mendez performs on a fine viola generously loaned from the Margaret Harvey instrument collection in Chicago.

In March, 2026, Pedro Mendez won a Section Viola position in the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.



Established in 2017, the **SEVILLE STRING QUARTET** is the current Graduate Fellowship String Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Missouri–Kansas City Conservatory. The ensemble is composed of four doctoral string candidates—violinists Caroline Beckman and Qiufan Chen, violist Chung-wen (Katy) Lee, and cellist Seungchan Song—whose diverse backgrounds from China, South Korea, Taiwan,

and the United States bring a rich range of cultural perspectives to their collective artistry. The quartet’s name reflects the connection between Kansas City, Missouri, and its sister city, Seville, Spain, symbolizing curiosity, kindness, and unity across cultures.

As ambassadors for UMKC, the ensemble has cultivated a strong presence throughout the Kansas City metropolitan area and beyond,

presenting performances at both premier venues including the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, Yardley Hall, and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, and community engagement performances at the KU Cancer Center, Hospice House, and Children’s Mercy Hospital.

In March 2025, the quartet was invited to compete as semi-finalists in the 11th Biennial Plowman National Chamber Music Competition. As new music enthusiasts, the quartet has participated in residencies with distinguished living composers Chen Yi and Jake Heggie.

The ensemble has participated in masterclasses with Grammy Award-winning violinist Gil Shaham, as well as members of the acclaimed Del Sol and Miami String Quartets. Their primary coach and mentor is cellist Michael Mermagen, faculty artist at both the UMKC Conservatory and the Aspen Music Festival and School.

To stay up to date with the activities of the quartet, follow us on Facebook at [@UMKC Conservatory Graduate Fellowship String Quartet](#) or on Instagram at [@stringquartet.umkc](#). You can also contact us by email at stringquartet.umkc@gmail.com.



Pianist **SHIYI ZHU** has earned wide acclaim for her artistry and expressive musicianship. A recent performance of works by Franz Liszt was praised for its “dazzling technique and strong musicality” by Wu Han, Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

An active soloist and collaborative artist, Zhu has appeared with the University of Florida Symphony Orchestra and is the winner of the Xiamen International Piano Competition (2022) and the Liszt International Youth Piano Competition (2019). Her performance venues include Carnegie Hall in New York, the Brevard

Music Festival in North Carolina, and the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. As a dedicated chamber musician, Zhu has collaborated extensively with instrumentalists and vocalists in diverse ensemble settings. In 2024, she performed a chamber work by a living composer for clarinet, violin, and piano at Florida State University’s Festival of New Music. She also appeared at

the Brevard Music Festival, performing Shostakovich’s Piano Quintet in G minor, Op. 57. In addition, she is frequently invited to perform in duo piano and four-hand repertoire.

In addition to performing, Zhu’s research explores the intersection of psychology, performance optimization, and piano practice. She was invited through peer-reviewed selection to present “Alexa, Fix My Rhythm,” at the 2026 MTNA National Conference.

Born on Gulangyu Island—known as China’s “Island of Music”—Zhu began studying piano at age four with her grandmother. She studied Piano Performance at Xiamen Conservatory of Music and earned a master’s degree in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from East China Normal University. She is currently pursuing the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Piano Performance at the University of Florida, where she serves as a Teaching Assistant and studies with Steinway Artist Dr. Evan Mitchell.

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Lindsborg Old Mill and Swedish Heritage Museum



**Please Join us for Other Smoky Valley Chamber Music
Festival Concerts and Special Events throughout the
week!**

All events are free and open to the public.

Monday, May 18, 7:30pm

Välkommen To Lindsborg

A pop-up performance ft. SVCMF Young Artists at the Välkommen
Bridge & Bike Trail

Tuesday, May 19, 4:00pm

Teaching the Piano: A Masterclass WITHIN a Masterclass

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church

Featuring: Dr. Karen Savage, SVCMF Faculty Artist; Shiyi Zhu, SVCMF
Young Artist; Carolyn Hofer, SVCMF Student Artist
Performing Beethoven: *Sonata No. 27 in E minor, Op. 90*

CONCERT #1: American Soundscape

Tuesday, May 19, 7:00pm

Seville String Quartet

St. Bridget's of Sweden Catholic Church

Works by Caroline Shaw, Florence Price, and Antonín Dvořák

Wednesday, May 20, 11:00am

Virtuosic Soundscape

Sunflower Terrace, North Entrance at Bethany Village

Featuring: Shiyi Zhu & SVCMF Young Artists

Wednesday, May 20, 3:00pm

Summer Sound & Stories

Lindsborg Community Library

Featuring SVCMF Young Artists: Bekah Walker, Flute; Jeff Doucette,
Bassoon; Jesus Garcia, Horn; Allison Smith, Violin; Cesarín Caro, Clarinet

Wednesday, May 20, 4:00pm

America's First Lady of the Baton: An Introduction to the Life & Legacy of Ebba Nylander Sundstrom — Swedish-American Violinist, Conductor, and Lindsborg Native

Lindsborg Old Mill & Swedish Heritage Museum

Presented by Caroline J. Beckman, M.M.

Doctor of Musical Arts Candidate at the University of Missouri-Kansas
City Conservatory of Music

CONCERT #2: *Scandinavian Soundscape*

Wednesday, May 20, 7:00pm

Young Artists String Chamber Concert, featuring Moa Glimberg, Bass
Swedish Pavilion at Lindsborg Old Mill & Swedish Heritage Museum

Works by Johann Halvorsen, Lars Erik Larsson, and Edvard Grieg

Thursday, May 21, 12:45pm

Bach & Chalk

SVCMF Young Artist Elise Cole & Chalk Artist Shelly Carlson

Blacksmith Roastery & Coffee Shop

Original chalk drawing created in real time during a live performance of
J. S. Bach's *Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major, BWV 1007*

CONCERT #3: *European Threads*

Thursday, May 21, 7:00pm

Faculty Artist Recital

Sandzén Art Gallery

Works by Robert Schumann, Bela Bartok, Edvard Grieg, and Lukas Foss

CONCERT #4: *American Sketches*

Friday, May 22, 3:00pm

Bethany Lutheran Church

Featuring: AndEs Piano Duo Andreas Landstedt & Esther Jihye Han
Landstedt Composers: Amy Beach, Libby Larsen, Edward MacDowell,
and Logan Skelton

CONCERT #5: *American Mosaic*

Friday, May 22, 7:30pm

Young Artists Showcase Recital

Pearson Chapel on the campus of Bethany College

Works by George Gershwin, John Williams, Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein, and Amy Beach

Saturday, May 23, 10:00am – 2:00pm

Spring Artists' Studio Open House

Red Barn Studio Museum

Area artists invite you to experience Lindsborg's art scene by stepping inside working studios of artists and enjoying performances by SVCMF musicians.

Featured studios and map of locations found at
Red Barn Studio Museum

Saturday, May 23, 2:15pm

Lindsborg Folkdanslag

Southeast Lawn, Presser Hall on the campus of Bethany College

Come enjoy a pop-up performance of Swedish Folk dancing before the SVCMF Finale Concert

CONCERT #6: *Smoky Valley Soundscape*

Saturday, May 23, 3:00pm

Festival Finale Concert

Presser Hall Auditorium, Bethany College

Works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Edvard Grieg, Aaron Copland,
and AJ Harbison