Kennesaw State University
College of the Arts
School of Music

presents

2013-2014 Guest Artist Series

Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Robert Spano, conductor
Wu Han, piano

Friday, January 24, 2014
8:00 p.m.
Audrey B. and Jack E. Morgan, Sr. Concert Hall
Dr. Bobbie Bailey & Family Performance Center
Sixty-third Concert of the 2013-14 Concert Season
Program

BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913-1976)
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Opus 13 (1938, rev. 1945)

I. Toccata
II. Waltz
III. Impromptu
IV. March

Intermission

HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)
Symphonie fantastique, Opus 14 (1830)

I. Reveries, Passions (Largo; Allegro agitato e appassionato assai)
II. A Ball (Valse. Allegro non troppo)
III. Scene in the Country (Adagio)
IV. March to the Execution (Allegretto non troppo)
V. Dream of a Witches’ Sabbath (Larghetto; Allegro)
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Opus 13 (1938, rev. 1945)
BENJAMIN BRITTEN
1913-1976

Benjamin Britten was born in Lowestoft, England, on November 22, 1913 and died in Aldeburgh, England, on December 4, 1976. The first performance of the Piano Concerto took place at Queen’s Hall in London, England, on August 18, 1938, with the composer as soloist, and Sir Henry Wood conducting the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra. In addition to the solo piano, the Concerto is scored for two piccolos, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, side drum, tenor drum, bass drum, tambourine, cymbals, gong, glockenspiel, whip, harp and strings. Approximate performance time is thirty-three minutes.

At the outset of 1938, English composer Benjamin Britten informed the BBC (via his publisher Boosey & Hawkes) that he wanted to compose a piano concerto for the upcoming Proms season. Britten, a superb pianist, proposed that he be the soloist in the work’s premiere.

The BBC agreed, and in February of 1938, Britten commenced work on the Concerto, completing it on July 26. During the rehearsal period, Britten informed his publisher, Ralph Hawkes: “The piano part wasn’t as impossible to play as I feared, and with a little practice this week ought to be O.K…It certainly sounds ‘popular’ enough & people seem to like it all right.”

The premiere of the Britten Piano Concerto took place at Queen’s Hall in London on August 18, 1938. In a program note, Britten explained his Concerto was “conceived with the idea of exploiting various important characteristics of the piano-forte, such as its enormous compass, its percussive quality, and its suitability for figuration; so that it is not by any means a Symphony with pianoforte, but rather a bravura Concerto with orchestral accompaniment.”

While critical reaction was mixed, the Concerto and Britten’s virtuoso performance were a great success with the Queen’s Hall audience. The drama heightened when, during a particularly demanding solo passage, one of the studs in Britten’s shirt flew off. Following the concert, a crowd waited outside the artists’ entrance for autographs. The 25-year-old Britten, according to one friend, “was quite overcome.”

In 1945, Benjamin Britten revised the Concerto, substituting the original third-movement Recitative and Aria with an Impromptu. The latter is based upon music Britten composed in 1937 for a radio play about King Arthur.

Musical Analysis

I. Toccata

A toccata is, in musical tradition, a work designed to display the instrumentalist’s technical facility, particularly with rapid passagework. The opening movement
of the Britten Piano Concerto most certainly aligns with the spirit of the *toccata*. But the first movement is also cast in sonata form, with the introduction, development and recapitulation of two principal themes. After a brief, dashing orchestral introduction, the soloist introduces the bravura, perpetual motion opening theme. The strings present the yearning second principal theme. Throughout the *Toccata*, the themes are often presented in tandem. An extended solo cadenza leads to a hushed synthesis of the two principal themes, culminating in the dashing final bars.

II. *Waltz*

Britten’s *Waltz* moves in fits and starts, accompanied by odd splashes of instrumental colors. The restless central portion features the glockenspiel and *col legno* (played with the wood of the bow) strings. A powerful restatement of the opening waltz (*Tempo I- con slancio*) resolves to a *ppp* close.

III. *Impromptu*

The third-movement *Impromptu* is in the form of a *passacaglia*, a series of variations over a repeated theme. The solo piano introduces the *passacaglia* theme at the outset. The theme journeys throughout the orchestra, serving as the basis for the wide-ranging variations that spotlight the piano. An especially forceful variation resolves to hushed solo arpeggios, the bridge to the finale that ensues without pause.

IV. *March*

The hushed introduction builds inexorably to the soloist’s forceful statement of the *March*’s principal melody. Throughout, the military character of the *March* is prominent, particularly in a sequence scored for the piano, cymbals and bass drum. The closing measures (*molto più presto*) offer a compelling synthesis of the *March* and first-movement *Toccata*’s opening theme, capped by the emphatic final bars.

*Symphonie fantastique*, Opus 14 (1830)

HECTOR BERLIOZ

1803-1869

Hector Berlioz was born in La Côte-Saint-André, Isère, France, on December 11, 1803, and died in Paris, France, on March 8, 1869. The first performance of the *Symphonie fantastique* took place at the Paris Conservatoire on December 5, 1830, with François-Antoine Habeneck conducting the Orchestra of the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire. The *Symphonie fantastique* is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, E-flat clarinet, two clarinets, four bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, two cornets, three trombones, two tubas, timpani (two players), bass drum, cymbals, suspended cymbals, snare drum, low bells (off-stage), two harps and strings. Approximate performance time is fifty-two minutes.

“I shall marry that woman”

In September 1827, Hector Berlioz, then a 23-year-old student at the Paris Conservatory, attended productions by an English touring company of Shakespeare’s
Harriet Smithson, a beautiful and young Irish actress, portrayed the tragic heroines, Ophelia and Juliet. The combination of Shakespeare's incomparable poetry and Smithson's riveting stage presence was more than the impressionable Berlioz could bear. The composer recalled that, during the September 11 performance of Hamlet, "A feeling of intense, overpowering sadness overwhelmed me and I fell into a nervous condition, like a sickness of which only a great writer on physiology could give any adequate idea.”

Still, the infatuated Berlioz returned on September 15 for Smithson's performance in Romeo and Juliet: “It was too much. By the third Act, hardly able to breathe—as though an iron hand gripped me by the heart—I knew that I was lost.” Legend has it that after the performance of Romeo, Berlioz proclaimed, “I shall marry that woman and on that drama I will write my greatest Symphony.” In later years, Berlioz emphatically denied that he ever uttered those words. Still, Berlioz, always known for his dry wit, acknowledged, “I did both.”

Berlioz was determined that Smithson would take notice of his own artistic talents. At tremendous personal expense, he arranged for a concert at the Conservatory, featuring a program consisting entirely of his own compositions. Smithson neither attended the concert nor, apparently, even knew it had taken place. Not to be deterred, Berlioz then forwarded several letters to Smithson, who finally ordered her maid to refuse any more correspondence from the young composer. When Smithson left Paris in 1829, she and Berlioz still had not met.

The Fantastic Symphony

Berlioz soon heard scandalous (and false) rumors that Smithson was carrying on an affair in London with her manager. This news seemed to provide Berlioz with the final impetus for a musical depiction of his obsession with the beautiful actress. In February of 1830, Berlioz wrote to his sister, “I am about to commence my grand symphony (Episode in the Life of An Artist), in which the development of my infernal passion will be depicted.” On April 16 of that same year, Berlioz announced that his Symphony was complete.

The premiere of the Symphonie fantastique took place at the Paris Conservatory on December 5, 1830, with François-Antoine Habeneck conducting the Orchestra of the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire. In some ways, the premiere fell short of the composer's expectations. Berlioz hoped for an orchestra of 220 players, but the actual ensemble at the premiere numbered 130. The performance itself, Berlioz recalled, “was by no means perfect—it could hardly be, with works of such difficulty and after only two rehearsals. But it was good enough to give a reasonable idea of the music.” Once again, Harriet Smithson was nowhere to be found.

Nevertheless, the drama, innovation and sheer audacity of the young composer's vision stunned the audience. By the time Harriet Smithson returned to Paris in 1832 and attended a performance of the Fantastic Symphony, it seemed the actress was the only person in the entire city who didn't realize she was the inspiration for the music. When Smithson discovered the truth, she finally agreed to meet Berlioz. After a brief courtship, the two wed on October 3, 1833. Franz Liszt and Heinrich Heine served as witnesses. However, the marriage became an unhappy one, and in the early 1840s, Smithson and Berlioz separated.
Even after the acrimonious conclusion of their marriage, Berlioz acknowledged his artistic kinship with Harriet Smithson, and the profound influence she exercised upon his development as an artist. Toward the end of her life, Smithson suffered paralysis, and died in 1854. After her death, Liszt wrote to Berlioz: “She inspired you, you loved her and sang your love, her mission was fulfilled.”

There is no question that Harriet Smithson inspired one of the seminal works in concert music. Composed just three years after Beethoven’s death, the *Symphonie fantastique* suggested entirely new paths for aspiring composers. The work’s five (not the usual four) movements are unified by a central and repeated motif, known as the *idée fixe*. Whereas symphonies of the 18th and early 19th centuries are, in the main, abstract works, the *Symphonie fantastique* attempts to relate a specific (and patently autobiographical) tale. Berlioz portrays that tale on a canvas that radiates the most daring and brilliant orchestral colors. And while some pioneering works make for better study than listening, the *Symphonie fantastique* continues, almost two centuries after its premiere, to entertain and thrill audiences.

**Hector Berlioz Describes his *Fantastic Symphony***

Berlioz, a gifted and prolific writer, provided the following program notes for his *Symphonie fantastique*.

A young musician of morbidly sensitive temperament and lively imagination poisons himself with opium in an attack of lovesick despair. The dose of the narcotic, too weak to kill him, plunges him into a deep slumber accompanied by the strangest visions, during which his feelings, his emotions, his memories are transformed in his sick mind into musical images. The Beloved herself becomes for him a melody, a cyclical theme (*idée fixe*) that he encounters and hears everywhere.

(Annotator’s note: The *idée fixe* is introduced approximately five minutes into the opening movement by the flute and first violins.)

**I. Reveries, Passions (Largo; Allegro agitato e appassionato assai)**

At first he recalls that sickness of the soul, those intimations of passion, the apparently groundless depression and intoxication he experienced before he met the woman he adores; then the volcanic love that she inspired in him, his delirious anguish, his furious jealousy, his return to tenderness, his religious consolation.

**II. A Ball (Valse. Allegro non troppo)**

He meets his beloved again in the midst of the tumult of a glittering fête.

**III. Scene in the Country (Adagio)**

On a summer evening in the country, he hears two shepherds piping back and forth a *ranz des vaches* (the traditional melody of Swiss shepherds for summoning their flocks); this pastoral duet, the peaceful landscape, the rustling of the trees gently rocked by the wind, some prospects of hope he recently found—all combine to soothe his heart with unusual tranquility and brighten
his thoughts. But she reappears, he feels his heart tighten, he is smitten with sad foreboding: what if she were to prove false?...One of the shepherds resumes his simple tune; the other no longer responds. The sun sets...distant roll of thunder...solitude...silence.

IV. March to the Execution (Allegretto non troppo)
He dreams he has murdered his Beloved, that he has been condemned to death and is being led to the scaffold. The procession advances to the sound of a march that is now somber and agitated, now brilliant and solemn, in which the muffled sound of heavy steps is suddenly juxtaposed with the noisiest clamor. At the end, the idée fixe returns for a moment like a final thought of love, suddenly interrupted by the death blow.

V. Dream of a Witches' Sabbath (Larghetto; Allegro)
He imagines himself at a Witches’ Sabbath, among a hideous throng of ghouls, sorcerers and monsters of every kind, assembled for his funeral. Ominous sounds, groans, bursts of laughter, distant cries that other cries seem to answer. The Beloved’s melody reappears, but it has lost its noble and timid character; it has become a vulgar dance tune, unworthy, trite and grotesque: there she is, coming to join the Sabbath...A roar of joy greets her arrival...She takes part in the infernal orgy...The funeral knell, a burlesque parody of the Dies irae...the witches’ round...the dance and the Dies irae are heard together.

Personnel Lists

Robert Spano
Music Director
The Robert Reid Topping Chair*

Donald Runnicles
Principal Guest Conductor
The Neil and Sue Williams Chair*

Michael Krajewski
Principal Pops Conductor

Jere Flint
Staff Conductor; Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra
The Zeist Foundation Chair*

Norman Mackenzie
Director of Choruses
The Frannie and Bill Graves Chair

FIRST VIOLIN
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Concertmaster
The Mr. and Mrs. Howard R. Peevy Chair*
The Mabel Dorn Reeder Honorary Chair*

William Pu
Associate Concertmaster
The Charles McKenzie Taylor Chair*

Justin Bruns
Assistant Concertmaster

Jun-Ching Lin
Assistant Concertmaster

Anastasia Agapova
Carolyn Toll Hancock
John Meisner
Christopher Pulgram
Carol Ramirez
Juan Ramirez
Olga Shpitko
Denise Berginson Smith
Kenn Wagner
Lisa Wiedman Yancich
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Raymond Leung
Sanford Salzinger

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Sou-Chun Su
Associate Principal
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Jay Christy
Assistant Principal
Sharon Berenson
David Braitberg
Noriko Konno Clift
David Dillard
Eleanor Kosek
Ruth Ann Little
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Paul Murphy
Associate Principal
The Mary and Lawrence Gellerstedt Chair *
Catherine Lynn
Assistant Principal
Marian Kent
Yang-Yoon Kim
Yiyin Li
Lachlan McBane
Jessica Oudin

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Assistant Principal
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Associate Principal
Jane Little
Assistant Principal Emeritus
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Michael Kurth
Joseph McFadden
Douglas Sommer

FLUTE
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The Jill Hertz Chair*
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Associate Principal
C. Todd Skitch •
Carl David Hall

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Carl David Hall

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The Robert Shaw Chair*
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Associate Principal
William Rappaport
Alcides Rodriguez
E-FLAT CLARINET
Ted Gurch

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Alcides Rodriguez

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Principal
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Juan de Gomar

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Associate Principal
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Richard Deane
Bruce Kenney

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The Madeline and Howell Adams Chair*
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Acting Associate Principal/Second
Joseph Walthall
Michael Myers •

TROMBONE
Colin Williams
Principal
Nathan Zgonc
Brian Hecht •

BASS TROMBONE
Brian Hecht •

TUBA
Michael Moore
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Charles Settle

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Elisabeth Remy Johnson
Principal
The Delta Air Lines Chair

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Beverly Gilbert †
Sharon Berenson

LIBRARY
Rebecca Beavers
Principal
Nicole Jordan
Assistant Principal Librarian

‡ rotate between sections
* Chair named in perpetuity
† Regularly engaged musician
• New this season
Players in string sections are listed alphabetically
About the Ensemble

The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, currently in its 69th season, consistently affirms its position as one of America’s leading Orchestras by performing great music, presenting great artists, educating, and engaging.

The Orchestra is known for the excellence of its live performances, presentations, renowned choruses, and its impressive list of GRAMMY® Award-winning recordings. The leading cultural organization in the Southeast, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra serves as the cornerstone for artistic development and music education in the region. Since September 2001, the Orchestra and audiences together explore a creative programming mix, recordings, and visual enhancements, such as the Theater of a Concert, the Orchestra’s continuing exploration of different formats, settings, and enhancements for the musical performance experience. Another example is the Atlanta School of Composers, which reflects Mr. Spano, and the Orchestra’s commitment to nurturing and championing music through multi-year partnerships defining a new generation of American composers. Since the beginning of his tenure (to date), Mr. Spano and the Orchestra have performed over 100 concerts containing contemporary works (composed since 1950), including 15 ASO-commissioned world premieres.

During its 32-year history with Telarc, the Orchestra and Chorus has recorded more than 100 albums and its recordings have won 27 GRAMMY® Awards in categories including Best Classical Album, Best Orchestral Performance, Best Choral Performance, and Best Opera Performance.

The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra performs more than 200 concerts each year for a combined audience of more than a half million in a full schedule of performances which also features educational and community concerts. A recognized leader and supporter of contemporary American music, the Orchestra recently received the 2007 award for Strongest Commitment to New American Music from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers. In addition, Music Director Robert Spano was named Musical America 2008 Conductor of the Year. With the opening of the 12,000-seat Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre at Encore Park (vzwamp.com) in May 2008, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra became the first U.S. orchestra to annually perform and present in its concert hall, and in two amphitheaters. In Summer 2008, the Orchestra celebrated 35 years at legendary Chastain Park Amphitheater, the award-winning 6,500 seat venue in Atlanta, during the Orchestra’s annual Delta Classic Chastain concert series (deltaclassicchastain.com).
Robert Spano, conductor
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Robert Spano, conductor, pianist, composer, and pedagogue, is one of the most imaginative talents of his generation. Serving Atlanta as Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra since 2001, he has created a sense of inclusion, warmth and community that is unique among American orchestras. As Music Director of the Aspen Music Festival and School, he oversees the programming of more than 300 events and educational programs for 630 students, including Aspen’s American Academy of Conducting.

Under Maestro Spano’s guidance, the ASO and audiences explore a creative programming mix. The Atlanta School of Composers reflects his commitment to American contemporary music, thus defining a new generation of American composers. In his 13th season as Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Robert Spano has programmed five world premieres as well as six Atlanta premieres. He has led ASO performances at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and at the Ravinia, Ojai, and Savannah Music Festivals. Guest engagements include the New York and Los Angeles Philharmonics, San Francisco, Boston, Cleveland, Chicago, and Philadelphia Symphony Orchras, as well as Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala, BBC Symphony, and Amsterdam’s Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. He has conducted for Covent Garden, Welsh National Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, and the 2005 and 2009 Seattle Opera Ring cycles.

Robert Spano will make three appearances at New York’s Carnegie Hall this season in varied programming. This is the fourth consecutive season in which Maestro Spano has been presented by the prestigious venue in more than one medium – and will mark the eighth time that Maestro Spano leads his Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in Carnegie Hall’s Isaac Stern Auditorium. Additional guest appearances are with the Minnesota Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony, Orquesta Sinfonia de Galicia, Tampere Philharmonic and two weeks of performances with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Robert Spano is also an artistic curator at the Ojai Festival for a second season in June 2014. In addition to his work on the podium and at the piano, Robert Spano has continued to focus on composition. In November 2013, Mr. Spano will release a digital recording of his solo piano work, under water, and a cycle of five songs written for soprano Jessica Rivera.

With a discography of critically acclaimed recordings for Telarc, Deutsche Grammophon, and ASO Media recorded over nine years, Spano has won six Grammy™ Awards with the Atlanta Symphony. Musical America’s 2008 Conductor of the Year, Spano is on the faculty of Oberlin Conservatory, and has received honorary doctorates from Bowling Green State University, the Curtis Institute of Music, Emory University, and Oberlin. Robert Spano was inducted into the Georgia Music Hall of Fame in 2012 and is proud to live in Atlanta.
Wu Han, pianist, ranks among the most esteemed and influential classical musicians in the world today. Leading an unusually multifaceted artistic career, she has risen to international prominence through her wide-ranging activities as a concert performer, recording artist, educator, arts administrator, and cultural entrepreneur.

In high demand as a recitalist, concerto soloist, and chamber musician, Wu Han has appeared at many of the world’s most prestigious concert series and venues across the United States and around the world. She is a frequent collaborator with many of today’s finest musicians and ensembles. Named Musical America’s 2012 Musicians of the Year, Wu Han appears extensively each season as duo pianist with cellist David Finckel. London’s Musical Opinion said of the duo’s Wigmore Hall debut: “They enthralled both myself and the audience with performances whose idiomatic command, technical mastery and unsullied integrity of vision made me think right back to the days of Schnabel and Fournier, Solomon and Piatigorsky.”

In addition to her distinction as one of classical music’s most accomplished performers, Wu Han has established a reputation for her dynamic and innovative approach to the recording studio. In 1997, Wu Han and David Finckel launched ArtistLed, classical music’s first musician-directed and Internet-based recording company, whose catalogue of sixteen albums has won widespread critical acclaim. The duo’s recording for the ArtistLed label of the Rachmaninov, Shostakovich, and Prokofiev sonatas for cello and piano received BBC Music Magazine’s coveted “Editor’s Choice” award.

Now in their third term as Artistic Directors of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, David Finckel and Wu Han hold the longest tenure since Charles Wadsworth, the founding Artistic Director. They are the founding Artistic Directors of Music@Menlo, a chamber music festival and institute in Silicon Valley that has garnered international acclaim, soon to celebrate its twelfth. David Finckel and Wu Han also serve as Artistic Directors of Chamber Music Today, an annual festival held in Seoul, Korea. The festival, now celebrating it’s third anniversary, is at the forefront of expanding the presence of chamber music in the Far East.

Wu Han has achieved universal renown for her passionate commitment to nurturing the careers of countless young artists through a wide array of education initiatives. For many years, she taught alongside the late Isaac Stern at Carnegie Hall and the Jerusalem Music Center. Under the auspices of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Wu Han and David Finckel direct the LG Chamber Music School, which provides workshops for young artists in Korea. In 2013, Wu Han and David Finckel established a chamber music studio at Aspen Music Festival.

For more information, please visit www.davidfinckelandwuhuan.com.
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Mary Akerman, Classical Guitar
Trey Wright, Jazz Guitar
Marc Miller, Jazz Bass

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Alison Mann, Choral Activities
Oral Moses, Gospel Choir
Eileen Moremen, Opera
Michael Alexander, Orchestras
Charles Laux, Orchestras
John Culvahouse, Wind Ensembles
David T. Keeler, Wind Ensembles
Wes Funderburk, Jazz Ensembles
Sam Skelton, Jazz Ensembles
Justin Chesarek, Jazz Combos
Marc Miller, Jazz Combos
Trey Wright, Jazz Combos

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Eileen Moremen
Oral Moses
Leah Partridge
Valerie Walters
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John Marsh, Class Piano
David Watkins
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Bernard Flythe
Charae Krueger
Catherine Lynn
Joseph McFadden
Harry Price
Kenn Wagner
John Warren
Soohyun Yun

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Georgia Youth Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
KSU Faculty Chamber Players
KSU Faculty String Trio

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We welcome you to attend a concert, meet our faculty and staff, and feel the energy and excitement that our students exude. We are fully committed to our purpose as educators, performers, and scholars. We hope that you will find as much enjoyment in our product as we do in producing it.

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Upcoming Events

Unless otherwise noted, all events will take place at 8:00 pm in Morgan Concert Hall.

Monday, February 3
Faculty String Trio

Saturday, February 8
School of Music Collage Concert

Monday, February 10
Faculty Recital: Trey Wright, jazz guitar

Tuesday, February 11
Faculty Recital: Leah Partridge, soprano

Tuesday, February 18
KSFNM: Wind Ensemble

Wednesday, February 19
KSFNM: Symphony Orchestra and Choirs

Thursday, February 20
KSFNM: Jazz Ensembles

Friday, February 21
KSFNM: Night: an evening with Simone Dinnerstein and Tift Merritt

Monday, February 24
Faculty Recital: Charae Krueger, cello and Robert Henry, piano

We welcome all guests with special needs and offer the following services: easy access, companion seating locations, accessible restrooms, and assisted listening devices. Please contact a patron services representative at 770-423-6650 to request services.