



UArkMusic

2026-2027 Season

Music Monday Concert Series

Blue Thread

Monday, September 28, 2026
Stella Boyle Smith Concert Hall
7:30 p.m.

PROGRAM

Las Estrellas de Los Cielos

Sephardic traditional tune

Dialogue

Persian traditional tune

Chasing the Horizon

Varijashree Venugopal
arr. Nikola Radan

Get Down and Shruti

Shakti
arr. Nikola Radan

Avaz e Dashti

Persian traditional tune

Satie - Gnossienne

Erik Satie
arr. Nikola Radan

Zyryab

Paco de Lucia
arr. Nikola Radan

Kojak Cocek

Romani traditional dance tune

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PROGRAM NOTES

Blue Thread

Presents

Caravan

A journey of melodies, rhythms, and stories across borders.

Welcome aboard!

A caravan is never simply a journey from one place to another. It is the people who travel together and meet other people along the way, the instruments they carry, the stories exchanged around the fire, the melodies remembered from home and transformed along the way. A caravan is the mystery of what waits beyond the horizon and the unexpected things that happen when different worlds meet.

Kartik Balachandran - Carnatic violin

Mohammad Javad Khorsravi - Iranian kamancheh and setar

Patrick Griffin - Middle Eastern - doumbek

Robin Bibeau - guitars

Nikola Radan – flutes

Blue Thread brings together musicians whose traditions stem from Iran, India, the Balkans, the Iberian Peninsula, and the folk traditions of the Americas.

These musical worlds are not presented as isolated destinations. Instead, the various music pieces become travelers of the same caravan.

In this concert, ancient modes meet contemporary arrangements, intricate rhythms find unexpected companions, melodies cross borders and return transformed. A Persian phrase may find an echo in India; a Balkan rhythm may encounter a Middle Eastern pulse; a folk melody from the Americas may suddenly feel at home beside an ancient musical language from across the ocean.

Some of the music is familiar. Some of it is ancient. Some of it may feel completely unknown. And that is part of the journey.

Caravan is an invitation into the unknown—a place where cultural boundaries become meeting places, where musical traditions converse, and where something new can emerge from the encounter.

Blue Thread group traces music migration and shared stories with a focus on Portuguese, Sephardic, Celtic, and American ballads intertwined with Persian, Indian, Balkans, and other global traditions. The thread is blue, colored by the melancholy “blues” that haunt their tunes and by the sea that both inspire the lyrics of many of their songs and provide passageways between cultures. The group debuted in 2017 with a tour of Portugal followed by ongoing performances and residencies at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville and in the New England Area.

“Blue Thread revealed a vibrant and playful music that transported us to the rich and varied musical experience of medieval time without abandoning the present.” Evora News (Portugal)