

MUSIC MONDAY CONCERT SERIES

Lauren Pokorzynski, violin
Jennifer Carpenter, cello
Xiting Yang, piano

Monday, November 16, 2026
Stella Boyle Smith Concert Hall
7:30 p.m.

PROGRAM

Soir et matin, Op. 76 — Mel Bonis (1858-1937)

I. Soir (evening)
II. Matin (morning)

Piano Trio No. 7 in Bb Major, Op. 97, "Archduke" — Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

I. Allegro moderato
II. Scherzo (Allegro)
III. Andante cantabile, ma però con moto
IV. Allegro moderato

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PERSONNEL

Dr. Lauren Pokorzynski is a dynamic violinist and dedicated educator, equally at home on stage as a chamber musician, orchestral leader, and soloist. In 2023, she was appointed violinist of the Quapaw Quartet in Little Rock, AR for the 2023–24 season. She currently performs with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and the Symphony of Northwest Arkansas and has performed in the role of Concertmaster and Principal Second with the Conway Symphony Orchestra. Lauren has also appeared as Guest Concertmaster with the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra. In 2026, she was appointed Instructor of Violin and Viola at the University of Arkansas, where she continues her commitment to mentoring the next generation of musicians.

Previously based in Texas, Lauren was Principal Second Violin of the Lubbock Symphony Orchestra from 2019–2023. Her past roles include Concertmaster of the Texas Tech University Symphony Orchestra, Associate Concertmaster of both the Lubbock Chamber Orchestra and the West Texas Symphony, and Principal Second Violin with Chamber Music Amarillo.

As a soloist, Lauren has performed with the Little Rock Camerata, Texas Tech University's New Music Ensemble ("NOW"), the Lubbock Chamber Orchestra, and the Benzie Symphony Orchestra. She won the Texas Tech Concerto Competition with her performance of Korngold's Violin Concerto and has premiered a range of contemporary works, including collaborations with Amusement Park Studios and a multimedia ballet titled *Click*.

Her recording credits include the 2024 album *Shifting Directions* with the Texas Tech Contemporary Ensemble (Navona Records), and a featured performance on Interlochen Public Radio's "In Studio A." She also served as Concertmaster on the MSR Classics recording of the Stephenson Trumpet Concerto.

Lauren spends her summers performing with the Bellingham Music Festival in Washington and has appeared with the L. Mattson Chamber Collective in Colorado. She's also served on the faculty of the Hot Springs Music Festival, Mozart in the Knobs, and the Faulkner Chamber Music Festival.

A passionate teacher and lifelong learner, Lauren holds degrees from the University of Colorado at Boulder (B.M. with high honors) and Texas Tech University (M.M. and D.M.A.). Her doctoral research, A *Holistic Approach to Reframing Tension in Violin Performance*, is already helping violinists reimagine their relationship with tension and technique.

Originally from Michigan, Lauren has a deep love for the water and feels most at peace

near a shoreline. She shares her life with her partner, James, and their two beloved dogs — Eleanor, and Ida — her constant companions and biggest fans.

Cellist **Jennifer Carpenter** is known for her versatility across a broad range of musical styles and ensembles. Carpenter holds faculty positions at University of Arkansas and Point Counterpoint and performs with Fort Smith Symphony and DJ Celli duo. Recent engagements include solo and chamber music performance at SHE Festival of Women in Music, Artosphere, Steinway Salon Chamber Series, Friends of Vienna chamber music series, Nazareth University Women in Music Festival, and Eastman at Washington Square concert series. Her experiences as an orchestral musician include seven seasons as a member of Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, appearances with Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, Cayuga Chamber Orchestra, Finger Lakes Opera, serving as acting associate principal of Symphony of Northwest Arkansas, and serving as principal cellist of Juilliard Orchestra.

Carpenter is committed to bringing to light the works of underappreciated composers, both historical and living. Her presentation "Exploring the Fusion of Cultures in Contemporary Classical Cello Music" at the 2025 ARTs + Change conference and her doctoral lecture recital "Synthesis of Western-Contemporary and Chinese-Traditional Musical Features in Solo Cello Works" reflected her deep interest in blending musical traditions and her commitment to celebrating living composers. In her dedication to fostering an inclusive musical landscape, she and a team of colleagues recently published Resonance: A Multicultural Cello Method: Book 1, which pioneers a graded teaching approach celebrating the diverse cultural influences that have shaped American music over the centuries.

Carpenter's impact extends beyond the stage as a dedicated educator at University of Arkansas and Point Counterpoint. She has held teaching positions at University of Rochester, Nazareth College, Eastman Community Music School, The Hochstein School, Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, Eastman Cello Institute, ROCmusic, Juilliard Pre-College Orchestra, Kneisel Hall Program for Maine Students, and Wyoming Seminary Performing Arts Institute.

Carpenter holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree with Performer's Certificate from the Eastman School of Music, a Master of Music degree from The Juilliard School, and a Bachelor of Music degree from Oberlin Conservatory. In her spare time, she enjoys transcribing and arranging music. jennifercarpentercello.com

Xiting Yang is a pianist who fundamentally values expressivity and communication in performance. An active concert artist, Yang regularly performs a wide range of repertoire as both a soloist and collaborator. She has given gala concerts in Canada and Spain, where

La Nueva España praised her playing for its “strength and momentum,” describing the performance as “masterful” and noting that it “delighted a large audience.”

Her other engagements include performances at Carnegie Hall in New York; the Steinway Series in Tampa, Florida; the Music at Midday Series in New Orleans, Louisiana; the One Voice Music Series in Grosse Pointe, Michigan; the Tutunov Series in Ashland, Oregon; the Resonance Series in Seattle, Washington; the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series in Chicago, Illinois; the Gibson Centre Concert Series in Toronto, Canada; and the Five Hansong Summer Music Festival in Korea. She has collaborated with musicians including Logan Skelton, Peter Takács, Gary Levinson, Leon Buyse, and Michael Webster.

Over the years, Yang has won top prizes in numerous solo piano competitions, including the Schumann International Piano Competition (Southern China Division); the Chong-Sin International Piano Competition in Singapore; the Indianapolis MMC Scholarship Competition; the American Protégé Competition; the Edward Auer Piano Workshop Concerto Competition; various MTNA competitions; and the Indiana University Piano Concerto Competition. She received both the President’s Professional Engagement Prize and the Audience Favorite Prize at the Seattle International Piano Competition, which included return engagements in Oregon and Washington.

Dr. Yang is a frequent adjudicator for competitions such as the Seattle International Piano Competition, the Claudette Sorel International Piano Competition, the Oakland University Piano Competition, the Bowling Green State University Concerto Competition, and MTNA competitions.

A devoted teacher, Dr. Yang has worked with many successful piano students, helping them over time to develop their individual artistic voices. She frequently appears as a guest artist at festivals including the Palmetto International Piano Festival, the Irvine Music Festival, and the Atlantic Music Festival, and has served as Artist Faculty at the Montecito International Music Festival. Dr. Yang has also served as Visiting Faculty at Loyola University New Orleans and the State University of New York at Fredonia. She currently holds the position of Assistant Professor of Piano at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, and is the founder and artistic director of the Florence Price International Piano Competition and eda concert series.