College of Music
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

# Symphony Orchestra

## Spring Dawn to American Horizons

Octavio Más-Arocas, conductor
Junting Yi, guest conductor
Zongheng Zhang, guest conductor

Friday, September 25, 2026
Cobb Great Hall, Wharton Center, 7:30 p.m.

# PROGRAM

Overture For A New Season — Kevin Charoensri (b. 2003)

*The Sam and Mary Austin New Fanfares Project*
Zongheng Zhang, conductor

D'un matin de printemps — Lili Boulanger (1893–1918)

Junting Yi, conductor

Symphony No. 3 — Aaron Copland (1900–1990)
- Molto moderato – with simple expression
- Allegro molto
- Andantino quasi allegretto
- Molto deliberato – Fanfare – Allegro risoluto

Octavio Más-Arocas, conductor

# PROGRAM NOTES

**The Sam and Mary Austin New Fanfares Project**
MSU Symphony Orchestra concerts will open with a newly written fanfare composed by a current composition student. The selected students are assigned to write short works for a diverse group of players giving them the opportunity to present their work with the Symphony Orchestra audience. For their continuing support of new music at MSU, we are honored to name the fanfare project after Sam and Mary Austin.

***Overture for A New Season*** by Kevin Charoensri, composed for The Sam and Mary Austin Fanfares Project at Michigan State University, focuses on my Thai-American international identity and the excitement behind being able to share my bi-cultural identity across cultures.

Growing up in Thailand and being a first-generation American to two immigrant parents, much of my childhood involved struggling to fit into both worlds. In music, however, what felt like a disadvantage became a rich cross-culture musical exchange. My time in Los Angeles and the broader Southern California scene put me in collaboration with everyone from contemporary classical artists to hip-hop producers, inspiring me to capture that same creative cross-pollination in this piece.

Additionally, one of the joys I, and many other Asian-Americans, get to experience now is the ability to return to our home countries and share our new perspectives with our people. For me, *Overture for A New Season* represents my new season of life as I have been able to return to Thailand and share my Asian-American perspectives, both musically and beyond.

In this deeply personal work, you will hear my unapologetic fusion of my story and identity. Everything from romantic-era inspired orchestrations, the Los Angeles studio orchestra sound, jazz, and my pop R&B influences, will all be present. Thank you to the MSU Symphony Orchestra, composition faculty, and fellow students for creating a second home where I feel comfortable bringing my story and bi-cultural identity to life**.**

***D'un matin de printemps*** **by Lili Boulanger -** Bronchial pneumonia at age two left Lili Boulanger in fragile health throughout her life, which ended before her twenty-fifth birthday. Born into a musical family, she showed extraordinary talent from an early age. Her parents and her celebrated sister, the teacher and conductor Nadia Boulanger, supported her development. At nineteen, Lili became the first woman to win the Prix de Rome for music, an achievement that made international headlines. Although illness limited her ability to meet the growing demand for her

work, she produced a small but compelling catalog of songs, choral works, chamber and piano music, and orchestral compositions—music that Claude Debussy described as "undulat[ing] with grace".

Boulanger composed the companion pieces *D'un soir triste* (*On a Melancholy Evening*) and *D'un matin de printemps* (*On a Spring Morning*) in 1917 and 1918. Originally written for small ensemble and later orchestrated, they were the final works she completed in her own hand. Their manuscripts, filled with increasingly tiny notes, reveal the severity of her declining health.

The two pieces inhabit sharply contrasting emotional worlds. *D'un soir triste* is dark and nearly funereal, building toward several harsh climaxes and perhaps reflecting Boulanger's awareness of her approaching death. The shorter *D'un matin de printemps*, by contrast, is bright, graceful, playful, and transparently scored. - Don Anderson, LA Phil

***Symphony No.3* by Aaron Copland** – Aaron Copland began his Third Symphony in 1944 in Tepotzlán, Mexico, and completed it in 1946 at the MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire. Commissioned by conductor Serge Koussevitzky and dedicated to the memory of Koussevitzky's wife, Natalie, the symphony was premiered by Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra in October 1946.

The work brings together elements of Copland's earlier styles—including jazz, neoclassicism, and modernism—within his distinctive American sound. Without quoting folk music, it evokes an expansive national character that combines confidence, longing, optimism, and grandeur.

The first movement introduces three themes that grow toward powerful climaxes before ending quietly. The second is a lively, festive scherzo featuring energetic brass writing and a contrasting pastoral dance. The freely structured third movement unfolds as a continuous series of variations, moving through a wide range of moods while recalling material from the opening movement.

The third movement flows directly into the finale, which incorporates Copland's famous *Fanfare for the Common Man*. Originally composed in 1942 to promote confidence and national unity during World War II, the *Fanfare* first appears softly in the woodwinds before emerging triumphantly in brass and percussion. The finale develops its themes in sonata form and concludes by combining its principal idea with music from the first movement and the *Fanfare* bringing the symphony to an exhilarating close. – John Henken, LA Phil

# ARTIST FACULTY BIOS

**Octavio Más-Arocas** is the Director of Orchestras at Michigan State University. He is the Music Director and Conductor of the Mansfield Symphony in Ohio, the Marquette Symphony in Michigan, the Clinton Symphony in New York, and Conductor-in-Residence at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music in California. Previous positions include Principal Conductor of the Green Bay Symphony Orchestra, Resident Conductor of the Unicamp Symphony Orchestra in Brazil, Director of Orchestras at Ithaca College, Lawrence University, Baldwin Wallace University, and at the Interlochen Arts Academy. He has also been Resident-Conductor of the Sewanee Summer Music Festival and Assistant conductor of the National Repertory Orchestra.

An award-winning conductor, Más-Arocas was chosen by Kurt Masur for the Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy Award working as Maestro Masur's assistant with the Leipzig Gewandhaus and Helsinki Radio orchestras. Más-Arocas is the winner of the Robert J. Harth Conducting Prize at the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen, the Thelma A. Robinson Award from the Conductors Guild, Prize Winner of the Third European Conductors Competition, and winner of the National Youth Orchestra of Spain Conductors Competition. He has appeared with orchestras across North and South America and Europe and has taught workshops and masterclasses in the USA, Spain, Portugal, and Brazil.

# STUDENT BIOS

**Kevin Charoensri** is a Thai-American composer, pianist, conductor, and arts advocate from San Diego. Described by The Washington Post for his "bristling musical response," his work centers on AAPI representation and cultural advocacy, appearing on both CNN and NPR. Charoensri made his international composition and conducting debut at the Sydney Opera House at fifteen, receiving recognition from the San Diego Union Tribune. His piece, Rising Light, has also been acquired by the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History for its cultural impact on Asian-American representation. By twenty-three, he has served as guest professor at premiere Thai University, Kasetsart University.

**Junting Yi** is a Chinese conductor pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Orchestral Conducting at Michigan State University, studying with Octavio Más-Arocas. He earned degrees from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, where he studied with Guoyong Zhang and Tongyi Cao, and Bard College, where he studied with James Bagwell. Yi won second prize in the 4th China Choral Conducting Competition and participated in the 2020 national project, *The Long March Suite*. He has worked with The Orchestra Now, Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra, Qingdao Symphony Orchestra, and Guiyang Symphony Orchestra, and received guidance from conductors including Tan Dun and Xiaoying Zheng.

**Zongheng Zhang** is a third-year Doctoral student in Orchestral Conducting at Michigan State University, studying under Professors Octavio Mas-Arocas and Kathrine Kilburn. He holds a Master degree in Orchestral Conducting from UT Austin, where he served as Assistant Conductor for the UT Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of the UT University Orchestra. Zhang has worked with Austin Opera, Butler Opera Center, and Berlin Opera Academy. He has conducted operas such as *La bohème* and *Carmen*, and premiered *Le faucon* by Dmitry Bortniansky in 2024. From 2016 to 2021, Zhang was Concertmaster for The Orchestra Now and Bard Conservatory, collaborating with renowned conductors.

# PERSONNEL

**Violin I**
Hannah Hsu **
Runqi Weng
Paula Sastre
Maria Skidmore
Diya Dong
Layang Ka
Daria Vasileva
Chonghua Zuo
Xingying Hu
Selin Samsar
Tadan Baartz-Bowman
Hengping Lin
Alison Birmingham
Chenghong Yin

**Violin II**
Leonid Tsoy *
Yueyu Liu
Amy Chang
Wenjin Zhang
Yulin Zhou
You-Jung Hsu
Yuxuan Xiao
Fanhong Jiang
Sonja Wautier
Hsin-Jen Yang
Elizabeth Beland
Noah Walter
Dana Hardy
Kieran Venugopal
Lyudmila Gofurova
Mabel Ciske

**Viola**
Yifei Wang *
Xinye Xu
Tirian Cooper
Nia McQuarters
Yu-Chieh Lin
Qiongwen Zhang
Zongheng Zhang
Jian Xiong
Mengyuan Song

**Cello**
Max Yu *
Myeonggyun Charles Noh
Weigen Jiang
Weian Gu
Cheng-Hung Chung
Nolan Wiebenga
Ruiyang Xie
Shaniah Cooper
Jingyuan Zhang
Jiayu Bai

**Bass**
Grant Phillips *
Alyssa Trebat
Parker Duncan
Isabella Denson
Kaden Connell
Otto Krueger
Zach Schoudt
Grace Kovacs
Charles Snyder

**Flute**
Ivana Chacón Ramírez
Henry Bransdorfer
Jazmyn Irons
Yiwen Yuan

**Oboe**
John Medina II
Geordie Nabors
Emily Quintana

**Clarinet**
Jake Basil
Noemi Bender
Matthew Rygelski
Chang Shu
Tingrui Zhang

**Bassoon**
Megan Frederick
Bailey Matherne
Patrick Qiao

# PERSONNEL (cont.)

**Horn**
Madeline Cagle
Tatianna Butte
Cole Hall
Alden Leonard
Jordan Rhodes

**Trumpet**
Austin Cruz
Evan Kozak
Andrew Lasceski
Ethan Peterson

**Trombone**
Rix Barlow
Parker Davies
Jonah Trout

**Tuba**
AJ Johnson

**Percussion**
Jesse Brown
Mackenzie Edick
Samantha Farabee
Katelynn Ferrier
Kayla Meers
Jonah Schertz
Klaire Thomas

**Harp**
Carson Barnes
Serenity Flores

**Piano**
Ye-Eun Hyun

**Orchestra Librarians**
Tadan Baartz-Bowman
Aaron Longuski

**Assistant Conductors**
Junting Yi
Zongheng Zhang

** Denotes Concert Master
* Denotes Principal

**PRIVATE GIFTS** play a vital role in our ability to maintain and enhance the quality of the programs we offer. Donations support student scholarships, fellowships, student travel and performance opportunities, instrument acquisitions, guest artists, outreach activities, operations, and other crucial areas that make the College of Music an exemplary place of learning.

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2026-2027 SPONSORS

- **Sam and Mary Austin Fund for New Music** (Musique 21 concerts)
- **Ken and Sandy Beall** (Cello Plus Chamber Music Festival Series)
- **James and Susan Bonfiglio** (Fall Opera; Symphony Orchestra, Oct. 23)
- **The Estate of John and Virginia Bunnell** (Be Mine: Songbook Serenades, Feb. 14)
- **Joanne and Bill Church** (West Circle Series)
- **April Clobes and Glen Brough** (Beethoven: 200 Years)
- **Trustee Emerita Dee Cook in memory of her husband Byron Cook** (1776-2026: Celebrating 250 Years of American Music)
- **Mrs. Susan Davis** (Spring Opera)
- **Dean Transportation** (Spectrum Festival)
- **Fred and Nancy Dolehanty** (MSU Music on the Road)
- **Barbara and Bill Given** (Holiday Glory)
- **Jim Forger and Deborah Moriarty** (Lunar New Year Celebration Concert)
- **John and Gretchen Forsyth** (Zuber, Oct. 7)
- **Howard and Pam Gourwitz** (Lulloff, Jan. 21)
- **Kevin and Amy Guskiewicz** (Collage Concert- A 20th Anniversary Celebration)
- **Lauren Harris** (Spectrum Festival; Fall and Spring Opera)
- **Anne Hiller** (Spectrum Festival)
- **Stanley and Selma Hollander Endowment for Chamber Music** (Journey of Armenia; Chamber Voices)
- **Mrs. Eileen Houston** (Brass Showcase, Nov. 9; Winter's Light: Johanna Yarbrough, horn, Jan. 31; Trombones at the Movies featuring guest artist Jim Nova, Feb. 2; Tuba and Euphonium Ensemble Concert, Feb. 3; New Works for Low Brass, Mar. 3; Collage Concert, May 1)
- **Taylor Johnston Early Music Series Endowment established by Taylor Johnston** (Taylor Johnston Early Music Series)
- **Hari Kern and the late Ralph R. Edminster, M.D.** (Spectrum Festival; Votapek, Mar. 29)
- **Michael and Paula Koppisch** (Zuber, Oct. 7; Spectrum Festival)
- **Jill Canny and Robert Last** (Jazz Nonets Guest Artist Series)
- **Lansing Chapter of the American Guild of Organists** (Organ Recital Oct. 18 and Mar. 21)
- **Dr. James M. Miller and Dr. Rebecca H. Lehto** (Fall Opera)

- **Eleanor H. and Harold E. Leichenko Opera Endowment established by Lauren Julius Harris** (Fall and Spring Opera)
- **Ann, John and Abby Lindley** (Holiday Glory)
- **Merritt Lutz** (Spectrum Festival)
- **Joseph and Jeanne Maguire** (A Jazzy Little Christmas)
- **Pat and Mary McPharlin** (Collage Concert- A 20th Anniversary Celebration)
- **Dr. Roy and Christine Meland** (Ensemble Affect; French Connection; Tuba and Euphonium Ensemble)
- **Jack W. and Sandra G. Midgley Trust** (Woodward String Quartet; Piano Monster)
- **MSU Federal Credit Union** (Showcase Series; Spartan Spectacular; Spectrum Festival; MSU Music on The Road in Detroit)
- **Office of the Provost** (Spectrum Festival)
- **George Orban and Rae Ramsdell** (Jang/Moriarty, Sept. 20)
- **Liz and Tony Raduazo** (Pass a Good Time, Oct. 4; Sensory Friendly Spartan Concerts, Dec. 6 and Apr. 27)
- **Leonard and Sharon Tabaka** (Jazz Spectacular Finale Concert)
- **Kazuko Thornton** (Lam/Khristenko, Mar. 22)
- **Dr. Robert W. Uphaus and Dr. Lois M. Rosen** (Concert Orchestra, Oct. 8; America at 250, Dec 5; Berlinsky, Feb. 10; Bagratuni, Mar. 17; Lam/Khristenko, Mar. 22; Bagratuni/Zhang, Mar. 30)
- **Linn Van Dyne and Mike Knox** (Happy Birthday Mozart!)
- **Barbara E. Wagner** (Wagner Chamber Music Competition)
- **Anonymous** (Beacon Hill Music Series)
- **Richard Witter** (A Celebration of the Beautiful Voice)
- **Richard and Joan Witter Endowment for MSU Opera Theatre** (Fall and Spring Opera)
- **Worthington Family Foundation** (Opera Season)
- **Dr. Felicia Wu** (Bagratuni/Zhang, Mar. 30)
- **Andrea L. Wulf** (Piano Monster)

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

9/27 Sunday (voice recital)
Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series
**Americana: Gay Nineties, Vaudeville, and Musical Theatre**
Harlan Jennings and Anne Nispel
3:00 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, MSU Auditorium $

9/28 Monday (voice recital)
Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series
**Spotlight: Broadway's Leading Ladies**
Melanie Helton, soprano
7:30 p.m. Fairchild Theatre $

9/30 Wednesday
Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series
**The Art of Verse and Sound: Debussy's Preludes, Book II**
Stanislav Khristenko, piano
7:30 p.m. Cook Recital Hall, Music Building $

10/1 Thursday (piano recital)
Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series
**Votapek and Friends, 6th Edition**
7:30 p.m. Cook Recital Hall, Music Building $

10/2 Friday Oct. 2 (chamber recital)
Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital
**Voices of Latin America: Juan Riveros, harp**
7:30 p.m. Fairchild Theatre $

10/4 Sunday (voice recital)
Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series
**Pass A Good Time: America 250!**
Marc Embree, bass baritone
3:00 p.m. Cook Recital Hall, Music Building $

10/5 Monday
Joanne and Bill Church West Circle Series
**1776 – 2026: Celebrating 250 years of American Music**
7:30 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, MSU Auditorium $$

10/6 Tuesday
Taylor Johnston Early Music Series
**Les Délices: *Bach's Musical Offering***
7:30 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, MSU Auditorium $$

TICKET PRICES
**$** $14 Adults, $12 Seniors (age 60 and older), Students with ID and anyone under age 18 are free but require a ticket for admission.
**$$** $19 Adults, $17 Seniors, $9 Students with ID and anyone under age 18.
**$$$** $24 Adults, $22 Seniors, $14 Students and those under age 18.
Please note: *All events scheduled in Murray Hall are general admission seating.*