



Department of Music

Presents

**FACULTY & FRIENDS
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA**

7:30 PM | Wednesday, March 5, 2025

Irons Performance Hall

<https://www.uta.edu/academics/schools-colleges/liberal-arts/departments/music/giving>

All your support empowers our program to strive towards excellence.

Faculty and Friends Chamber Orchestra

Clifton Evans, Director

Andrea Ramírez and Chau Hoang, Assistant Conductors and Librarians

Flute

Hannah Chiasson, *principal*
Olivia O'Brien
Jessica Baird
Gerardo Rivera

Oboe/English Horn

Melissa Bosma, *principal*
Andrea Moreno
Matthew Howard
Hyobin Kim

Clarinet

Nola Preston, *principal*
Elizabeth Monzon
Hakeem Davidson
Jason Aguilar

Bassoon

Jacquelyn Martinez-Flores,
principal
Scott Pelland
Mads Barajas

Horn

Jacqui Ruddick, *principal*
Victoria Trevino
Trevor Costello
Christopher Alvarado

Trumpet

Randy Dees, *principal*
Jacob Graham

Trombone

Ryan Tran, *principal*
Derrick Payton
Colin Odum

Tuba

Ed Jones, *principal*

Percussion

Clifton Evans, *principal*

Harp

Alanna Harris, *principal*

Violin I

Min Ishii, *concertmaster*
Brang Aung
Adrienne Leung
Keenan Peet
Katie Omundson
Matthew Gonzales
Ahmed Eltaib
Minh Triet Hoang

Violin II

Joel Cabral, *principal*
Gael Guzman
Victor Snead
Fountain Ray
Avram Williams
Erik Carrizales

Viola

Cathy Forbes, *principal*
Karen Morales
Glori Vela
Abigail Jennings
Emily Brown
Antwan Garcia
Juan Mendez

Cello

Keira Fullerton, *principal*
Holly Burton
Hyunjung Kim
David Le
Jack May
Laurann Sepulveda

Bass

John Hunter, *principal*
Tyler Shepherd
Katie Cash
Ronan Bodisch
Joseph Fisher
Leslie Vasquez

Program Notes

by Andrea Ramírez

Pavane for a Dead Princess (1899, orch. 1910) – Maurice Ravel

Ravel's relationship with this work is admittedly complicated. Originally conceived as an amateur work for piano, he boldly dedicated the work to Winnaretta Singer, the Princesse de Polignac, at one of her musical salons. She graciously accepted the dedication and became one of his most ardent supporters, a calculated risk with high reward on Ravel's part, as she was an influential figure within the Parisian classical music scene. As alluded to previously, despite the work's ability to help launch his career and its subsequent popularity, it became a burden on Ravel (much like the first violin concerto was to Max Bruch). It was often played very badly in solo performances because of its technical accessibility and overshadowed the rest of Ravel's oeuvre. A humorous aside within this tale is the inclusion of "for a Dead Princess" in the work's title, as the original French, "*pour une infante défunte*," has no programmatic significance. Ravel simply liked the alliteration.

The use of pizzicato strings from the work's onset is a deliberate orchestration choice to evoke the lute, a string instrument that is played by plucking with one's fingers or using a plectrum (commonly known as a pick). This is a nod to the pavane's origins, a court dance of the Renaissance period. Even at its most climatic, the work falls softly upon our ears, much like a caress or a brush against silk. The horn's opening melody reappears throughout the piece, either in restatement or allusion, alternated with solos in the oboe and flute and heartfelt swells in the strings. Ravel encourages a sense of indulgence within us by including harp flourishes and accompanimental figures in the latter half of the work.

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73 (1877) – Johannes Brahms

Brahms's Second Symphony is exemplary of his compositional approach. A comparison with Beethoven's Fifth (da-da-da-dum) highlights its unique attributes, while also painting a picture of the musical scene of the time – rich with the history of its predecessors, (especially Beethoven, whose shadow still loomed large enough to scare Brahms away from writing his first symphony for many years), and rife with Romantic values, including virtuosity and the power of the individual. Where Beethoven wields economy of composition by using the first four notes of his Fifth in the melodic content of all four movements, Brahms nurtures the emotional possibility of the first three notes, introduced by the cellos and basses.

The result? A sense of familiarity and perhaps even nostalgia throughout the first movement as those notes (D-C#-D) reappear in different contexts – the first violin melody after the work’s introduction; a *tutti*, rhythmically charged and compressed restatement in the upper strings after the lullaby melody in the cellos, supported by violas; and in the movement’s coda, a combination of allusions and outright restatements, the latter evident in the cellos and basses after the tender horn solo. It is also worth noting that Brahms’s musical intent is clear – composing a work whose innate value is divorced from programmatic concerns. While Beethoven writes his Fifth to make Fate’s inevitable omnipotence felt in every bar, Brahms writes absolute music, an aural experience intended to stand on its own without drawing from existing literature but affecting the listener in a tangible, emotional way.

Brahms trades the constant rhythmic motor of his predecessors, like Haydn and Mozart, for rhythmic “mind games.” There are several examples within the symphony at large but let us focus on one aspect within the second and third movements. For example, when executed as intended, our ears accept the seamless change between meters, or the division of time, as logical and perhaps even without notice. We see this in the second movement where, after a heart-wrenching melody introduced by the cellos and in dialogue with the bassoons, we transition to a light, optimistic dance in the woodwinds, a moment of levity from the inherent darkness of the opening. This is imminently contrasted as the aural softness morphs into rhythmically saturated intensity. In the third movement, the most light-hearted and playful of the four, we alternate between a leisurely stroll and joyous outbursts, achieved by Brahms’s ability to effectively play with our sense of time. This movement was so well-received at the time of the symphony’s premiere that it was played a second time.

The conclusion of our musical journey begins with a reserved sense of triumph, a quiet but spirited murmur by the strings. This moment also serves to punctuate the beginning of each section within the movement much like a plotline – the exposition, the conflict (or musical development), and the resolution (or recapitulation, for our purposes). Brahms balances triumph and conflict with aural reprieve in the form of warm tranquility, at times reflective or invoking homecoming. Like in other moments throughout the work, Brahms’s rhythmic prowess enhances our experience of melodies by weaving increased rhythmic energy in the background and redirects our sense of time with intentionally placed accents and emphases. The work at large is a masterclass in Brahmsian writing, both in its execution and its effect – a natural crowd pleaser from the day it was first performed publicly and an undeniable treat for the musically-informed.

Program

Pavane pour une Infante Défunte
(Pavane for a Dead Princess)

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

- I. Allegro non troppo
- II. Adagio non troppo
- III. Allegretto grazioso (quasi andantino)
- IV. Allegro con spirito

Dr. Francis Ku, Conductor

Artist's Biography

Francis Ku

A native of Hong Kong, Francis Ku holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Orchestral Conducting with a minor in Music Education from Louisiana State University. He also earned a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting and a Certificate in Violin Performance from the University of Texas at Arlington, where he was honored as a Scholar of the College of Liberal Arts for exceptional academic achievement.



Inspired by Francis Kan, Ku began his conducting career under the mentorship of Clifton Evans, Robert Gutter, Ovidiu Balan, Scott Terrell, and Damon Talley. In 2017, he won the fourteenth annual International Conductor's Workshop and Competition in Atlanta.

In 2023, Ku was selected as a Conducting Associate for the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music and as a Conducting Fellow at the Reynolds Conducting Institute at the Midwest Clinic. In 2024, he was awarded second prize in The American Prize in orchestral conducting.

UTA Music Department Calendar of Events

Wednesday	March 19	7:30pm	Student Recital: Justin Sumling and Krys Sias, Percussion
Thursday	March 20	7:30pm	Student Recital: Lorenzo Ozella nd Ges Leon, Percussion
Friday	March 21	12:00pm	2025 UTA Jazz Festival
Friday	March 21	7:30pm	Student Recital: Randy Dees, Trumpet
Sunday	March 23	3:30pm	Student Recital: Colin Odum, Trombone
Sunday	March 23	5:30pm	Student Recital: Olivia O'brien, Flute
Monday	March 24	7:30pm	Student Recital: Jordan Sanchez, Tuba
Tuesday	March 25	7:30pm	Clavier Recital
Wednesday	March 26	7:30pm	Graduate Student Recital: Aaron Milam, Percussion
Thursday	March 27	7:30pm	Student Recital: Ethan Mathews, Tuba

The above are the events scheduled in the Music Department as of press time. More events will be added during the course of the year, and changes may be made to the events listed. For a current listing of upcoming events, check our website at www.uta.edu/music. To confirm an event, please call the UTA Music Office at 817/272-3471.

Unless noted, all events are free and performances will be held in Irons Recital Hall (105 Fine Arts Building). Most concerts and recitals will be streamed live. To check on whether or not a concert or recital will be streamed live, go to www.uta.edu/music/live.php.

*Admission charges of \$10 adults and \$7 students & seniors apply for these events. Tickets for these events can be purchased online at www.utatickets.com

Parking for all Music Department concerts and recitals is available in the West Campus Parking Garage at hourly rates. The West Campus Parking Garage is located at the corner of UTA Boulevard and W. Nedderman Drive.

ADA parking is available on the meters in front of Texas Hall for concert held at Department. More information on ADA parking can be found at www.uta.edu/parking.