



DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Thursday, February 5, 2026 • 8:00 PM

DEPAUL CONCERT ORCHESTRA

Michael Lewanski, conductor

Mary Patricia Gannon Concert Hall
2330 North Halsted Street • Chicago

Thursday, February 5, 2026 • 8:00 PM
Gannon Concert Hall

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PROGRAM

Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

Hungarian Sketches (1931)

- I. An Evening in the Village
- II. Bear Dance
- III. Melody
- IV. A Bit Drunk
- V. Swineherd's Dance

Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826)

Symphony No. 1 in C major, Op. 19 (J. 50) (1806-07)

- I. Allegro con fuoco
- II. Andante
- III. Scherzo. Presto
- IV. Finale. Presto

- Intermission -

Thurman Barker (b. 1948)

South Side Suite (2017)

Renée Baker (b. 1957)

By the Quiet (2023)

As a courtesy to those around you, please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices. Flash photography is not permitted.

BIOGRAPHIES

Conductor, curator, educator, and writer **Michael Lewanski** is a champion of new and old musics. He seeks to create engaged connections between audiences, musicians, composers, and the music that is part of their culture, society, and history. His work hopes to be part of collective, systemic change in the classical music industry. He is conductor of Ensemble Dal Niente and Associate Professor of instrumental ensembles at the DePaul University School of Music, where his work focuses on helping the next generation of musicians become thoughtful artistic citizens.

Michael was Curatorial Director of Ear Taxi Festival 2021, a festival of 21st century Chicago music. He was resident conductor of the 2017 and 2019 SoundSCAPE Festivals in Italy. His guest conducting engagements have been wide-ranging and stylistically diverse, working with organizations such as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's MusicNOW Series, the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the Toledo Symphony Orchestra, the State Symphony Orchestra of Turkmenistan, Ensemble CEPROMUSIC (Mexico City), the Seattle Modern Orchestra, and many others. He has led hundreds of world premieres. He was the Conducting Assistant for the Civic Orchestra of Chicago from 2010 to 2014. At the 2012 Darmstadt Summer Courses, Ensemble Dal Niente won the prestigious Kranichstein Music Prize under his direction. Michael has an extensive discography as both a conductor and a producer on US- and Europe-based labels.

A native of Savannah, Georgia, he studied piano and violin in his youth; he made his conducting debut at age 13, leading his own composition. At 16, he was the youngest student ever accepted into the conducting class of the legendary Ilya Musin at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Michael attended Yale University. His post-Yale education included conducting study with Cliff Colnot and Lucas Vis. He is based in Chicago, and respectfully acknowledges the Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Odawa, Ho-Chunk, Myaaamia, Menominee, Peoria, and Illinois Confederacy among other tribal nations as custodians of the traditional Native land on which he lives and works.

PROGRAM NOTES

Béla Bartók (1881–1945)

Hungarian Sketches (1931)

Duration: 11 minutes

An important part of Béla Bartók's early career was spent travelling around the countryside of Eastern Europe with Zoltán Kodály recording Hungarian, Bulgarian, and Romanian folksongs. Just as important a part of his career was spent incorporating elements of these folksongs into his compositions. The *Hungarian Sketches* of 1908 (though not orchestrated until 1931) is precisely one of those pieces. Each of its five very brief movements, whether it features an actual folksong melody or not, uses folksong-like material as the starting point for both its harmonic and melodic structure.

As the titles of the sections themselves are fairly self-explanatory and do not seem to require much elaboration in particular, it is worth pointing out that the work's title isn't *Hungarian Dances* or *Hungarian Portraits* (those being terms that are, in fact, used in other pieces by Bartók). The carefully chosen word "sketches" conveys precisely the attitude that a listener would be well-advised to take. No movement is a unified whole, and the almost studied, forced nature of their brevity implies that the piece should be listened to as a series of impressions and fragments, fleeting and inconclusive.

Notes by Michael Lewanski

Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826)

Symphony No. 1 in C major, Op. 19 (J. 50) (1806–07)

Duration: 25 minutes

While best known for his role as the so-called father of German Romantic opera, Carl Maria von Weber did also produce two symphonies, both in C major, when he was 21 years old and in the employment of Duke Eugen of Württemberg (who apparently played the oboe, hence the prominent role accorded that instrument in the current work). The years were 1806 and 1807, around the time of Beethoven's composition of his 3rd ("Eroica") and 4th symphonies. Weber's 1st symphony, in that context, is striking. While working with a classical-sized orchestra (without even clarinets, so smaller than Beethoven's), the compositional rhetoric and formal experimentation is notably romantic, operatic, dramatic, and forward looking. Beethoven's 3rd and 4th symphonies are, of course, no less experimental; but Weber's works propose completely different directions.

The first movement was apparently thought of by Weber himself as a sort of overture. Its first thematic material is bold and assertive with wide leaps. Its second theme is a pert tune for the aforementioned oboe followed by the rest of the ensemble. Quick movements to distant keys are the norm in this movement, and this theme is no exception. While formally conventional, the development section and recapitulation feature a wide range of strongly contrasting affects; and the overall impression is strikingly dramatic.

The second movement might as well be out of the otherworldly Wolf's Glen scene in *Der Freischütz* (*The Marksman*), Weber's most celebrated and—as much to the point—-influential opera. It is moody and foreboding, and the form is completely unconventional and unstraightforward to analyze. It features foreboding brass; threatening tremolo strings; a long, pleading oboe solo; and surprising harmonic outbursts.

The third movement is the most conventional of the four, more Haydn than Beethoven. Its main section is joyous and jovial, with a few hesitations and surprises. The Trio section is mostly a woodwind choral, with humorous contributions from the strings and brass. The opening section is repeated verbatim.

The *Finale* is celebratory and muscular, beginning with assertive horns. The whole ensemble joins in shortly; its melody features accents that are persistently on the wrong beat, lending it an air that is quirky but confident. As with the first movement, it is in sonata form (its second theme introduced, predictably at this point, by the oboe) and it is replete with its share of harmonic and dynamic surprises. A brief coda brings this youthful, unusual, and forward-looking work to an unambiguously triumphant close.

Notes by Michael Lewanski

Thurman Barker (b. 1948)

South Side Suite (2017)

Duration: 12 minutes

When I decided to write my first score for chamber music, I knew the music had to reflect the vibrant musical scene that I was a part of during 1964 through 1979. Contemporary Classical Music under the direction of Ralph Shapey which I heard and sub for my Prof. many times at Mandel Hall at the University of Chicago. I joined The AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians) at the age

of 16 where my recording career began in 1967. In 1968 I joined the Schubert Theatre Orchestra where I performed Broadway Shows from then to 1979.

I joined the AACM where my recording career began. South Side Suite is a musical journey that weaves in and out of these musical styles. The demand was high for anyone who was willing to work. The score does not stay in one place very long because as a drummer I was active because there was so much demand for live music in this period. I wanted the score to reflect the rich musical scene of Chicago during this period. All this activity played a huge role in my musical development. Enjoy the ride.

Notes by Thurman Barker, Drummer, Composer, Professor Emeritus in Jazz Studies, Bard College

Renée Baker (b. 1957)

By the Quiet (2023)

Duration: 14 minutes

Inspiration for

By the Quiet: Beyond Time

THE MONK AND THE MOON

Life begins tender and sweet

All things, the grass, the trees, the animals in life are soft and pliant

In death they are dry and brittle

An army that cannot yield will suffer defeat

And a tree that cannot bend will break
Soft and supple are the companions of life

Stiff and unyielding are the companions of death

Surrender brings perfection

Embrace emptiness and the whole universe is yours.

The sage becomes nothing and gains everything

Not displaying himself, he shines forth
Not promoting himself, he is distinguished

Not claiming reward, he gains endless
merit
Not seeking glory, his glory endures
Such a being rides upon the clouds and
enters the sun
Passing out of this world with ease and
into the Eternal.
Fear nothing except the failure to
experience your true nature.
Speak nothing, unless you have lived it
first.
The gate of heaven is wide open with
Not a single obstruction before it.
Wake up to find there is truly nothing to
fear
The joy is simply in the being
Not being this or that
What can I say or do that hasn't already
been done?
Watch the sun in the morning
The moon watches over me at night
—AMONGST WHITE CLOUDS

Notes by Renée Baker

PERSONNEL

FLUTE

Ume Hashimoto-Jorgensen
Sho Roash

OBOE

Jose Alvarez
Margeaux Berner

CLARINET

Alainna Pack
Megan Rideout Redecker
Jay Savoy

BASSOON

Angela Hernandez
Chet Rhodes

HORN

Nolan Henckel
John Perez
Eily Polenzani

TRUMPET

Jesse Hamilton
Julian Ramcharan

TROMBONE

Kevin Bressanelli
Charlie Olson

TUBA

Daniel Bulpitt

PIANO

Amarin Wexler

HARP

Eva Anderson

PERCUSSION

Pou I Chao
Leonardo Chiappetti
Tae McLoughlin
Brendan Rich

VIOLIN

Madelyne Garnot, *concertmaster*
Airi Ito

Iwona Augustyn

Cecilia McIntyre

Ella Dodge

Ashley Gomez

Chien Chien Wu

Alirio Chacin-Guerra, *principal 2nd*

Corinne McLeod

Juan Angulo

Ender Miranda-Estrada

Sofia Concha Pinto

Yu-Chia Chiu

Zachary Green

VIOLA

Mallory Welsch, *principal*

Ulzhan Ydrysssova

Catherine Wicker

Rose Skidmore

Elina Kim

CELLO

Emma Foreman, *principal*

Daniel Hotchkiss

Audrey Chen

Grace Raper

Yejeong Lee

Addison Swan

Jesus Avila

Xavier Ip

BASS

Yuyan Wang, *principal*

Adam Blendersmann

Sebastian Sanchez

Jaxen Wilson

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DEPAUL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

February 6 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
Double Bass Studio Recital

February 8 • 2:00 P.M.
Gannon Concert Hall
DePaul Jazz Vocal Showcase

February 10 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
Christopher Basset Bass Trombone Recital

February 14 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
Jeffrey Ray Studio Recital

February 16 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
Viola Studio Recital

February 18 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
Bassoon Studio Recital

HPC PRESENTS SERIES

February 17 • 8:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
Jon Nakamatsu, piano

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES

February 21 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
Ann Marie Brink, viola, Jason Moy, harpsichord, & John Milbauer, piano

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