



DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Monday, May 11, 2026 • 8:00 PM

**CYNTHIA YEH, IAN DING, &
ERIC MILLSTEIN, PERCUSSION
WITH WINSTON CHOI &
JOHN MILBAUER, PIANOS**

Faculty Artist Series

Mary Patricia Gannon Concert Hall
2330 North Halsted Street • Chicago

Monday, May 11, 2026 • 8:00 PM

Gannon Concert Hall

CYNTHIA YEH, IAN DING, & ERIC MILLSTEIN, PERCUSSION WITH WINSTON CHOI & JOHN MILBAUER, PIANOS

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PROGRAM

George Crumb (1929–2022)

Music for a Summer Evening (Makrokosmos III) (1974)

- I. Nocturnal Sounds (The Awakening): Magical, suspenseful
*I hear ephemeral resonances, oblivion of full night in the
starry water. (Quasimodo)*
- II. Wanderer–Fantasy: Calling, echoing
- III. The Advent: Very slow; majestic, like a larger rhythm of nature
“Hymn for the Nativity of the Star–Child”: Solemn, fateful
*The eternal silence of these infinite spaces frightens me.
(Pascal)*
- IV. Myth: Adagio isoritmico; lonely, bleak
- V. Music of the Starry Night: Fantastic, oracular
“Song of Reconciliation”: Joyous, ecstatic; with a sense of
cosmic time
*And in the nights the heavy earth is falling from all the
stars down into loneliness. We are all falling. This hand
falls. And see the other ones; it is in them all. And yet
there is One, who holds this falling endlessly, gently in his
hands. (Rilke)*

– Intermission –

Béla Bartók (1881–1945)

Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion (1937)

- I. Assai lento; Allegro molto; Vivacissimo
- II. Lento, ma non troppo; Un poco piu andante
- III. Allegro non troppo

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

BIOGRAPHIES

Cynthia Yeh joined the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as principal percussionist in June 2007. She previously served as principal percussionist for the San Diego Symphony Orchestra from 2004 to 2007. She is currently on faculty at DePaul University and the Aspen Music Festival and School. She has served on the faculty of the Pacific Music Festival, National Youth Orchestra–USA as well as the Chosen Vale Percussion Seminar. Yeh has also served on the jury of the ARD international competition and the OSM competition. As an active soloist, Yeh performed recitals and concerts all over the United States, Canada, Mexico, Colombia, Taiwan, and Japan. She gave the world premiere of Jessie Montgomery's *Procession* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in May 2024 and the U.S. premiere of *Eternal Rhythm* by Avner Dorman, also with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in October 2019.

Born in Taipei, Taiwan, Cynthia Yeh received a Bachelor of Music Performance degree from the University of British Columbia and a Master of Music Performance degree from Temple University in Philadelphia, where she studied with Alan Abel.

Ian Ding is a versatile and in-demand percussionist specializing in contemporary & orchestral music. He is a founding member and co-director of New Music Detroit, a member of the Fulcrum Point New Music Project (Chicago), and the Virgil Moorefield Band (Zurich). He serves on the percussion faculty at the DePaul University School of Music.

He is a frequent guest with major orchestras such as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, and Boston Symphony Orchestra, to name a few. He has also performed extensively with new music ensembles Bang on a Can All-Stars and Alarm Will Sound. Ian was Assistant Principal Percussionist of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra from 2003–2011 and served as Lecturer of Percussion at the University of Michigan from 2005–2014. He was previously a member of the Verbier Festival Orchestra in Switzerland and the New World Symphony in Miami, Florida. Ian is a graduate of the University of Illinois and The Juilliard School.

Eric Millstein is a percussionist with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and he frequently performs with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Eric was also principal percussionist and assistant timpanist of the Grant Park Music Festival from 2002–2019. A faculty member of the DePaul University School of Music since 2004, Eric joined the faculty

of the Curtis Institute of Music in 2014. He presented a clinic at the 2021 Percussive Arts Society International Convention and has given classes at a variety of schools and festivals, including Tanglewood Music Center, Interlochen Arts Academy, and the New World Symphony. In 2020 Eric's first book, *The Little Book of Orchestral Percussion*, was published by Pocket Publications. It is a guide to the interpretation and performance of orchestral percussion parts.

Eric received a Bachelor of Music degree from New England Conservatory and a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy from Tufts University. He earned a Master of Music degree from Temple University and subsequently completed his education as a member of the New World Symphony. Eric's primary percussion teachers were Nora Davenport, Will Hudgins, and Alan Abel.

Canadian pianist **Winston Choi** is Professor and Program Director of Piano at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of Performing Arts. Winner of France's "Concours International de Piano 20e siècle d'Orléans" and Laureate of the Honens International Piano Competition, he is internationally recognized for his bold interpretations of the standard repertoire and his unwavering commitment to contemporary music. He appears worldwide as a soloist, chamber musician, and educator. Choi has performed concerti with numerous North American and international orchestras, including the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Calgary Philharmonic, Victoria Symphony, l'Orchestre National de Lille, and Colombia's national orchestra. His solo recitals have brought him to major venues such as Carnegie-Weill Recital Hall, the Kennedy Center, and France's Salle Cortot. A prolific chamber musician, he tours widely as a member of Civitas Ensemble, Duo Diorama (with violinist MingHuan Xu), and Trio Diorama (with Xu and cellist Nick Photinos), and recently performed with Matthias Goerne at the Ravinia Festival. A passionate advocate for new music, Choi has premiered and commissioned over 100 works. His recordings include Elliott Carter's complete piano music, Jacques Lenot's works (winner of the Grand Prix du Disque), and music by Thomas Adès. He appears on labels such as BIS, Cedille, and Naxos, and is a core member of Ensemble Dal Niente.

He earned degrees from Indiana and Northwestern Universities, and studied with Menahem Pressler and Ursula Oppens. A dedicated pedagogue, Choi is also in demand as a masterclass clinician and conference presenter, sharing insights on phrasing, technique, and interpretation.

Dean of the DePaul University School of Music since 2023, **John Milbauer** continues to perform as a Steinway Artist, with recent and upcoming highlights including recitals with cellist Steve Balderston, baritone Randall Scarlata, violinists Janet Sung and Lauren Roth-Gómez, violist Ann Marie Brink, and the Civitas Ensemble. France's *Republique du Centre* called him "a virtuoso of the first magnitude" while *American Record Guide* awarded him an annual "Critic's Choice" for his CD of works by Bartók, Crumb, Debussy, and Adams, writing, "Milbauer employs a full expressive range, performs with astounding delicacy, and conveys unspeakable wonder through an intimate touch and astonishing versatility."

Milbauer studied at Harvard College, Eastman School of Music, The Juilliard School, Manhattan School of Music, and, as recipient of a Fulbright grant, the Liszt Academy in Budapest. He was awarded the Eastman Performer's Certificate and was nominated for the Gina Bachauer prize for outstanding pianist at Juilliard. Twice Artist-in-Residence at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Canada, he maintained a 25-year association with the Chautauqua Institution Piano Program in New York, helping transform it into one of the premier summer piano programs in the Americas. He was named Professor of Piano Emeritus at the University of Arizona after 17 years on the faculty, and was a John F. Kennedy Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School, where he completed an MPA in 2020 with concurrent studies at MIT-Sloan and Harvard Business School. His piano teachers include Jerome Lowenthal, Ferenc Rados, György Sebök, Joan Moffat, and Rebecca Penneys.

PROGRAM NOTES

George Crumb (1929–2022)

Music for a Summer Evening (Makrokosmos III) (1974)

Duration: 35 minutes

Music for a Summer Evening (Makrokosmos III), for two amplified pianos and percussion, was completed in February 1974. The work was commissioned by the Fromm Foundation and was written specifically for (and is dedicated to) Gilbert Kalish, James Freeman, Raymond DesRoches, and Richard Fitz. These four gifted performers premiered the work at Swarthmore College on March 30, 1974. The combination of two pianos and percussion instruments was, of course, first formulated by Béla Bartók in his Sonata of 1937, and it is curious that other composers did not subsequently contribute to the genre. Bartók was one of the very first composers to write truly expressive passages for the percussion instruments; since those days there has been a veritable revolution in percussion technique and idiom and new music has inevitably assimilated these developments. The battery of percussion instruments required for *Summer Evening* is extensive and includes vibraphone, xylophone, glockenspiel, tubular bells, crotales (antique cymbals), bell tree, claves, maracas, sleighbells, wood blocks and temple blocks, triangles, and several varieties of drums, tam-tams, and cymbals. Certain rather exotic (and in some cases, quite ancient) instruments are occasionally employed for their special timbral characteristics, for example: two slide-whistles (in “Wanderer-Fantasy”); a metal thunder-sheet (in “The Advent”); African log drum, quijada del asino (jawbone of an ass), sistrum, Tibetan prayer stones, musical jug, alto recorder, and, in “Myth”, African thumb piano and guiro (played by the pianists). Some of the more ethereal sounds of *Summer Evening* are produced by drawing a contrabass bow over tam-tams, crotales, and vibraphone plates. This kaleidoscopic range of percussion timbre is integrated with a great variety of special sounds produced by the pianists. In “Music of the Starry Night”, for example, the piano strings are covered with sheets of paper, thereby producing a rather surrealistic distortion of the piano tone when the keys are struck.

As in several of my other works, the musical fabric of *Summer Evening* results largely from the elaboration of tiny cells into a sort of mosaic design. This time-hallowed technique seems to function in much new music, irrespective of style, as a primary structural modus. In its overall style, *Summer Evening* might be described as either more or less atonal, or more or less tonal. The more overtly tonal passages can be defined in terms of the basic polarity F#–

D# minor (or, enharmonically, Gb–Eb minor). This (most traditional) polarity is twice stated in “The Advent” — in the opening crescendo passages (“majestic, like a larger rhythm of nature”), and in the concluding “Hymn for the Nativity of the Star–Child”. It is stated once again in “Music of the Starry Night”, with the quotation of passages from Bach’s D# minor fugue (*Well–tempered Clavier*, Book II) and a concluding “Song of Reconciliation” in Gb (overlaid by an intermittently resounding “Fivefold Galactic Bells” in F#). One other structural device which the astute listener may perceive is the isorhythmic construction of “Myth”, which consists of simultaneously performed taleas of 13, 7, and 11 bars.

I feel that *Summer Evening* projects a clearly articulated large expressive curve over its approximately 40–minute duration. The first, third, and fifth movements, which are scored for the full ensemble of instruments and laid out on a large scale, would seem to define the primary import of the work (which might be interpreted as a kind of “cosmic drama”). On the other hand, “Wanderer Fantasy” (mostly for the two pianos alone) and the somewhat atavistic “Myth” (for percussion instruments) were conceived of as dream–like pieces functioning as intermezzos within the overall sequence of movements.

Note by George Crumb

Béla Bartók (1881–1945)

Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion (1937)

Duration: 29 minutes

Béla Bartók’s Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion stands as one of the most audacious experiments in 20th–century chamber music. Commissioned in 1937 by Paul Sacher for the International Society for Contemporary Music, the work reflects Bartók’s fascination with the percussive potential of the piano. By pairing two pianos with an arsenal of percussion—including timpani, xylophone, and tam–tam—Bartók created a sonic landscape that was entirely unprecedented.

The sonata is structured in three movements. The first, *Assai lento* – *Allegro molto*, begins with an ominous, creeping introduction. The percussion enters like a heartbeat before the pianos erupt into a jagged, motoric sonata form. Here, the pianos are rarely lyrical; instead, they strike, ring, and pulse, mirroring the sharp attacks of the mallets.

The second movement, Lento, ma non troppo, is a quintessential example of Bartók's "Night Music." It evokes a nocturnal world filled with chirps, rustles, and sudden flickers of light. The percussionists provide a shimmering backdrop of rolls and glissandi, over which the pianos exchange fragmented, haunting melodies. As the great Hungarian pianist and teacher György Sebök once suggested, "Amid the sounds of nature at night, a solitary figure looks up to the cosmos and sings an ancient tune."

The final Allegro non troppo is a spirited rondo infused with the rhythmic vitality of Hungarian folk dance. It features a jaunty, folk-like tune played on the xylophone and builds to a climax of extraordinary contrapuntal density. In a stroke of genius, the work does not end with a massive roar, but rather fades away into a playful, quiet rhythm on the side drum and cymbals.

"Unlike any other composer, Bartók bridges the past and the future, the East and the West, and the earth and the cosmos." György Sebök

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May 14 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
DePaul Composers Forum

May 19 • 8:00 P.M.
Gannon Concert Hall
DePaul Ensemble 20+

May 22 • 8:00 P.M.
Gannon Concert Hall
DePaul Symphony Orchestra

May 23 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
DePaul Baroque Ensemble

May 24 • 3:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
DePaul Composition Program
Presents: Trio Diorama

May 26 • 7:00 P.M.
Dempsey Corboy Jazz Hall
DePaul Jazz Combos I

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May 18 • 7:00 P.M.
Allen Recital Hall
Jason Moy, harpsichord & Kangwon
Lee Kim, baroque violin

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