

doudna  
FINE ARTS CENTER

# from Fire to Joy

## BEETHOVEN'S JOURNEY

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2025**  
7:30 PM

THE DVORAK CONCERT HALL

1860 7TH STREET | CHARLESTON, IL 61920 | (217)581-3110 | DOUDNATIX.COM



EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY



# COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES

BARBARA BONNEKESSEN, DEAN

MICHAEL CORNEBISE AND CHRISTOPHER MITCHELL, ASSOCIATE DEANS



EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY™

## Faculty

George Alberti  
Magie Beck  
David G. Boggs  
Stacy Butler  
Michael Campbell  
David Commanday  
Bradley Decker  
Howard Eckdahl,  
Stefan Eckert  
Sam Fagaly  
Matthew Ferrandino  
Connor Frederick  
Molly Frederick  
Shellie Gregorich, Chair  
Jack Helsley  
Scott Hesse  
Rebecca Johnson  
Paul Johnston  
Kevin Michael Jones

Ji-Myung Kim  
Danelle Larson  
Seth Marshall  
Annie Mason  
Janet McCumber  
Rebecca McGuire  
Liza Meyers  
Alicia Neal  
Julie Park  
Jamie Ryan  
Juliane Sharp  
Matthew Talbott  
Yetong Tang  
Rebecca von Kamp  
Shichao Zhang

## Support Staff

Stacy J. Butler  
Michael Campbell  
Ethan Hayward

## Choral Ensembles

Camerata Singers  
Concert Choir  
University Mixed Chorus

## Eastern Symphony Orchestra

## Jazz Ensembles

Jazz Combos  
Jazz Ensemble  
Jazz Lab Band

## Music Theatre/Opera Ensemble

## Percussion Ensemble

## University Bands

Concert Band  
Eastern Symphonic Band  
Panther Marching Band  
Wind Symphony

## DOUDNA FINE ARTS CENTER STAFF

**Dennis Malak**, Director of Programming,  
Publicity, and Promotions  
**Conor Baltz**, Director of Operations  
**Maelee Greenwood**, Asst. Audio Engineer  
**Lex Pope**, Box Office Manager  
**Estela Guzmán**, Asst. Technical Director

## COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES STAFF

**Jennifer Spracklen**, Assistant to the Dean  
**Kim Pope**, Office Manager

# COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES



EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY™

# PROGRAM

Eastern Symphony Orchestra  
David Commanday, Director  
Cameron Craig, Graduate Conductor

Overture to *The Creatures of Prometheus*, Op. 43.....Ludwig van Beethoven  
(1770-1827)

Cameron Craig, Conductor

Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major Op. 58.....Ludwig van Beethoven

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Andante con moto
- III. Rondo

Dr. Shichao Zhang, Piano

—Intermission—

Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125.....Ludwig van Beethoven

- I. Allegro ma non troppo e un poco maestoso
- II. Molto vivace
- III. Adagio molto e cantabile
- IV. Finale: Presto, Vivace, Allegro assai

Miracle Amah, Soprano  
Lauren Bolla, Mezzo Soprano  
Thomas Studebaker, Tenor  
Peter Volpe, Bass

WITH:

The Eastern Illinois University Concert Choir, Dr. Howard Eckdahl, Director  
The Bradley Chorale, Dr. Cory Boulton, Director  
The Illinois Central College Concert Choir, Dr. Ron Kiesewetter, Director

## BIOGRAPHIES



### **David Commanday, Director**

Director of Orchestral Activities and Instructor of Applied Cello at Eastern Illinois University, Professor Commanday is also Artistic Director and Conductor of the Heartland Festival Orchestra, and an active guest conductor. His career combines international accomplishment as professional conductor, national prominence as a leader in the youth orchestra field, and distinction in the Academy of higher education. Among many awards received, the Illinois Council of Orchestras recognized Commanday as Illinois Professional Conductor of the Year.

Professor Commanday has a distinguished record of accomplishment with young musicians. As Music Director of the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras, he received three ASCAP Awards for innovative programming of American music and for works he commissioned and premiered.

Professor Commanday is a cum laude graduate of Harvard College, and was awarded highest honors in his State Diploma of Orchestral Conducting at the University of Vienna. He has taught and conducted at Harvard, MIT, Boston University, Montclair University, Eureka College, and Bradley University, and was tenured Associate Professor on the faculty of Virginia Commonwealth University. At Eastern Illinois University he is the cellist of the Eastern Piano Trio with colleagues Shichao Zhang and Ji Myung Kim.



## BIOGRAPHIES



### **Dr. Shichao Zhang**

Dr. Shichao Zhang Pianist Shichao Zhang is an accomplished performer and educator who currently serves as the Director of the Keyboard Division and the Instructor of Piano at Eastern Illinois University, a position he has held since 2023. His career has spanned prestigious institutions, including the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University as an Instructor, the Music Department of Skidmore College as a Visiting Artist-in-Residence, and Helongjiang University of Technology in China as a Visiting Professor.

Zhang has taught masterclasses and lessons at Euro Music Festival & Academy in Poland, Eastman School of Music, Ithaca College, East Tennessee State University, Morningside College, Wuhan Conservatory, and Tianjin Conservatory, among many others. His students have been accepted by prestigious schools and conservatories across the United States.

In addition to his teaching and performing commitments, Dr. Zhang proudly serves as the Festival Manager of the Amalfi Coast Music & Arts Festival in Italy and the Festival Coordinator of the Gijón International Piano Festival in Spain. These roles reflect his dedication to fostering musical talent and contributing to international cultural exchange.

Dr. Zhang's musical journey has taken him around the world, with solo recitals, chamber music concerts, and concerto performances throughout China, the United States, and Europe. Notable venues include the China National Centre for the Performing Arts, the Forbidden City Concert Hall, the National Library of China Concert Hall, the Rialto Center for the Arts in Atlanta, and the DiMenna Center for Classical Music in New York City. Zhang has premiered compositions by contemporary composers, including Xin Huguang, Xue Jin, and Julian Cochran, showcasing his dedication to expanding the repertoire of modern piano music. His playing has been praised as "Mr. Zhang has excellent technique and is a very probing musician..." "Shichao's performances reflect a great musicality, depth of interpretation, and technical expertise..."

A graduate of the Eastman School of Music, Dr. Zhang earned his Doctor of Musical Arts in Piano Performance and Literature with a minor in Chamber Music and Accompanying. His dedication to teaching and performing was recognized with the Eastman Teaching Assistant Prize in 2013-2014 and induction into the Pi Kappa Lambda National Music Honor Society. Originally from China, Zhang received his early training in Beijing under Madam Yafen Zhu and Ms. Chen Zhang.



## BIOGRAPHIES



### **Miracle Amah, Soprano**

A native of Nigeria, soprano Miracle Amah is known for the lyricism and beauty of her voice and her compelling presence on stage. Presently based in Central Illinois, she performs various genres of music which includes opera, art songs, oratorios, popular music, contemporary music, negro spirituals, and jazz. Amah has played major roles in opera productions, and her staged performances include recitals, masterclasses, scenes and full opera productions in Nigeria, Canada, Russia, Germany, Dubai and the United States.

Amah maintains a professional singing career as she writes lyrics and premieres new compositions by Nigerian and African composers. Appended to her credentials are a doctoral degree in Vocal Performance, Pedagogy and Literature from James Madison University Master's degree in Opera and Vocal performance from the Longy School of Music, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Associate board of the royal school of music (ABRSM) Licentiate in vocal performance (LRSM); which is a Bachelor of Music in vocal performance.

Miracle has given lectures and masterclasses at colleges, institutions, schools and churches, including the Mountain Top Conservatory of Music – where she was Assistant Professor teaching vocal techniques. She has given recitals featuring Nigerian music highlighting several languages and genres.



### **Lauren Bolla, Mezzo Soprano**

Lauren Bolla is a mezzo soprano originally from Chesterton, IN. She is currently pursuing studies in Vocal Performance at Indiana University under the tutelage of Peter Volpe. She has performed many roles spanning opera and musical theatre, including Marcellina (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Beggar Woman (*Sweeney Todd*), and La Zelatrice (*Suor Angelica*). She also performed in the chorus of the world premiere of *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay*, in collaboration with the Metropolitan Opera. Bolla has

performed scenes as Jo March (*Little Women*), Orfeo (*Orfeo ed Euridice*), and Miss Todd (*The Old Maid and the Thief*). She is the 2025 second prize winner of the Indianapolis Matinee Musicale competition. An avid lover of song, Bolla has sung lieder in Graz, Austria with AIMS in 2024. In Graz, she also had the opportunity to sing excerpts from Handel's *Messiah* in the Graz Cathedral. Bolla is currently an alto choral scholar at Trinity Episcopal Church in Bloomington, Indiana.

## BIOGRAPHIES



### **Thomas Studebaker, Tenor**

Thomas Studebaker has established himself as a powerful Heldentenor, having appeared with many of the world's leading orchestras and opera companies since 1995.

Highlights of Mr. Studebaker's orchestral engagements include Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with both the London Philharmonic Orchestra and New York Philharmonic with conductor Kurt Masur, the WDR Orchestra in Cologne under Semyon Bychkov, the New York Philharmonic with Lorin Maazel, the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam with Edo de Waart, as well as with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Symphony, and the Israel Philharmonic. He has sung Waldemar in Schönberg's Gurrelieder with the Nagoya Philharmonic, the Tokyo Symphony and the American Symphony Orchestra at the Bard Festival, Beethoven's Missa Solemnis with the London Philharmonic and Kurt Masur, and Max Bruch's Moses with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra.

Mr. Studebaker made his debut as Siegmund in Die Walküre at New Orleans Opera and has since repeated the role at Lyric Opera of Chicago and at the famed Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires under the direction of Charles Dutoit. His distinguished international opera career has spanned the United States and three continents.



## BIOGRAPHIES



### **Peter Volpe, Bass**

is professor of music in voice at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. Praised for his “stentorian and robust bass” by The New York Times, American bass Volpe continually receives critical and popular acclaim across four continents for his powerful command and rich texture of his timbre. He has performed at leading opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, Washington National Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and San Francisco Opera, among many others.

Possessing a vast repertoire of over 90 roles in six languages in a career spanning more than 35 years, his captivating style and interpretive skills embrace the depth of every historical and fictional character he embodies. Of his portrayal of Prince Gremin in Eugene Onegin, Opera News applauded his ability “to create in his single aria and scene an impressive dignity. His full-bodied bass and great candor of tone, together with his intelligent interpretation, won him a well-deserved ovation.”

Volpe has performed with some of the most celebrated conductors of his time, including James Levine, Seiji Ozawa, Valery Gergiev, Sir John Pritchard, Maurizio Arena, Marco Armiliato, Marcello Viotti, Jacques Lacombe, Jonathan Darlington, Semyon Bychkov, Joseph Rescigno, Vincent La Selva, Richard Buckley, Leon Botstein, and Richard Hickox, among others.

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

 EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

HOLIDAY

FEST

THURSDAY | 12.4.2025  
- SUNDAY | 12.7.2025



KID'S DAY

SATURDAY

NOON-4 PM

SPECIAL PERFORMANCES

FOOD TRUCKS | ART SALE | FACE PAINTING  
SCOVILL ZOO | KID'S CRAFTS

doudna  
FINE ARTS CENTER

 CITY OF  
CHARLESTON  
TOURISM



# EASTERN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

## Violin I

Dr. Ji-Myung Kim,  
(Concertmaster)

Eva Hall  
HyunJin Baek  
Basia Niles-Latawiec  
Laurel Swenson  
Karen Swenson  
Caleb Mackinder

## Violin II

Ezekiel Oyediji  
Jace Kim  
Kaity Parker  
Terry Coulton  
Eun Namkung  
Emellie Schout +  
Matthew Schiermeyer  
Victoria Lim +

## Viola

Dominika Targosz  
Diane Wuthrich  
Isaac Henry  
Quran Woods  
Elaine Fine  
Ruth N. Riegel  
Sarah Schultz  
Tanya Reed

## Cello

Esmé Bryson  
Barbara Hedlund  
William Schultz Jr.  
Kirsten Landowne  
Jennifer Murphy  
Patrick Schout +  
Jeri Matteson Hughes

## Bass

Race Brighton  
Brad Decker  
Margaret Briskin

## Flute

Aiden Payer  
Elizabeth Rickfelder  
Kaity Harr

## Oboe

Ethan Schobernd  
Evan Tammen

## Clarinet

Addie Willis  
Maci Reed  
Magie Beck

## Bassoon

Jay Dawson  
Anne Lyle Mason  
Cathy McGuire

## Horn

Molly Frederick  
Jancie Harris  
Karina Herrera Zambrano  
Alejandro Guzman

## Trumpet

Brian George  
Charles Koprowski-Barr

## Trombone

Ross Oller  
Aidan Gomez  
Colin Lakatos

## Timpani

Megan Garcia

+ Playing in the Symphonic  
Honors Initiative Program  
for exceptionally gifted  
pre-college musicians.

## FOR TICKETS TO FUTURE EVENTS

Call the Doudna Fine Arts Center Box Office at 217-581-3110! The Box Office is open Tuesday - Friday 11:00am - 5:00pm and one hour prior to every ticketed event. You can also visit [www.eiu.edu/doudnatix](http://www.eiu.edu/doudnatix) and purchase/print your tickets at home and skip the line all together!

## EIU CHORUS

### Sopranos

Jemma Allen  
Charlotte Hedberg  
Alexis Highland  
Bella Kokonas  
Addison Martin  
Maria Ochs  
Emily Ritter  
Elaina Sutula  
Olivia Theirl  
Amelia Williams

### Altos

Katie Chumbley  
Madison Colby  
Allison Cooke  
Kayla Fleshner  
Brennah Gerdes  
Grace Kirkpatrick  
Laurie Mueth  
Lia Rigdon  
Sophia Thomas  
Faith Worthington

### Tenors

Chris Andrus  
Johnathan Baker  
Hunter Holaway  
Matthew Moore  
Harrison Hahn  
Carter Davis

### Basses

Tim Anderson  
Nathan Blackwell  
Daniel Garrison  
Owen Hough  
Darek Leschber  
Matt Skelley  
Shawn Stuckey-Clark  
Joaquin Ramirez  
Channing Ratcliff  
Xander Rice

## FRIENDS OF DOUDNA

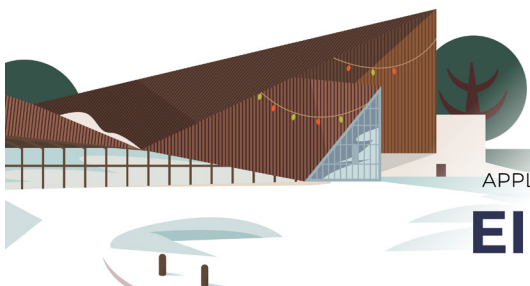
### Concourse Level

Ann Sidwell  
Severson Family  
Tim & Melanie Mills  
Randy & Sue Taylor

### Dvorak Level

Glenna Murphy  
Linda K Keeler  
Barbara & Michael Watts  
Randy Wells  
Bill & Linda Perry

## ARTIST REGISTRATION



Open now!

APPLICATION DEADLINE: MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2025

[EIU.EDU/FESTIVAL](http://EIU.EDU/FESTIVAL)

# DOUDNA FINE ARTS CENTER

## PATRON SERVICES GUIDELINES

### **Usher Staff**

Ushers are located at the entrance of the venue. If you have a question or a problem, please let them know and they will contact the House Manager.

### **Ticket Policies**

Please note that all ticket sales are final, and refunds will not be given.

### **Late Arrival**

During classical concerts, late seating will only take place during the first convenient pause in the program.

During jazz, folk, world, or pop concerts, late seating is more casual, but ushers may ask you to wait to be seated between pieces. Please check with an usher regarding when you may enter the venue.

### **Mobile Devices, Photography and Recording**

Please turn off all light-illuminating or sound-emitting devices. Mobile phone use is strictly prohibited inside all venues. Text-messaging and the taking of photographs or videos by phone are not permitted.

The use of cameras - with or without flash - and recording devices is a violation of copyright law and discourteous to other audience members.

Failure to comply will result in being asked to leave the performance without a refund.

### **Doctor and Parent Emergency Calls**

If you are a medical professional/parent with a sitter at home, please put your phone on silent and wait to take the call until you are out of the performance venue.

### **No Smoking**

Eastern Illinois University is a tobacco-free campus. Smoking of any kind, including electronic cigarettes, is prohibited on all university property.

### **Food and Beverages**

Food is not allowed inside any of the venues. Only beverages in the special Doudna drink cup, with a secured lid, are permitted in the venues.

### **Accessibility**

Special seating areas for wheelchair accessibility are available. Contact the Box Office in advance to secure a seat in these areas. Audio amplification is available for the hearing-impaired free of charge. A driver's license or other identification is all that is required for deposit.

### **In the Event of an Emergency**

Emergency exits may be found outside of the venue and are marked accordingly. The lighted "Exit" sign nearest your seat is the shortest route out of the building.

### **Families**

The Doudna welcomes patrons of all ages to experience and enjoy the arts. Please carefully consider whether a performance is appropriate for children before planning to attend with young people. If you have concerns or questions about a specific event, please call the Box Office at (217) 581-3110.

Please be considerate of others in the audience and your young person's comfort. Children who are disruptive will not be allowed to remain in the venue.

### **Lost and Found**

Found items should be left with an usher. To determine whether a personal item has been turned in, please call the Box Office at (217) 581-3110 or the Programming, Publicity, & Promotions Office at (217) 581-8513.

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- Recognition in program

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- Recognition in program
- Recognition on Lobby Screen
- Backstage Tour

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- 2 Doudna premier season tickets
- 2 reusable Doudna cups
- Recognition in program
- Recognition on Lobby Screen
- Backstage Tour
- Doudna Insider Experience
  - Attend a rehearsal/sound check or join the group for dinner.
  - Arranged by the Doudna Fine Arts Center

