

THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE, AND DANCE PRESENTS

VIRTUOSO SERIES CONCERT:

DR. SARAH HETRICK, SAXOPHONE  
AND DR. JOOYEON CHANG, PIANO

# Duo Oenomei

CON AMORE: A LOVE LETTER IN SOUND

SEPTEMBER 17, 2025 • 7:30 P.M. • ORGAN RECITAL HALL



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**Duo Oenomei**, featuring saxophonist Sarah Hetrick, Assistant Professor of Saxophone at the University of Arkansas, and pianist Jooyeon Chang, Lecturer in Collaborative Piano at Colorado State University, presents a program shaped by connection, memory, and love; a musical letter written not in ink, but in sound. The name Oenomei comes from an ancient Greek word meaning “a mixture of wine and honey,” or more poetically, “something combining strength with sweetness.” This reflects the duo’s artistic identity: music that balances emotional depth with warmth, intimacy, and sincerity.

The program opens with *Time Unfolding* (2024), a concerto for alto saxophone and wind ensemble by Alexander Gardner. Inspired by imagery from space, the piece explores the vastness of time and the invisible threads that bind souls across distances. Next is *Three Apartments in Houston* (2024), composed by Nicky Sohn. This piece is a reflection on personal spaces and shared memories and a love song to the homes we’ve lived in, especially in Texas, where our story began. The program concludes with César Franck’s *Violin Sonata* (arranged for saxophone and piano), originally composed in 1886 as a wedding gift for violinist Eugène Ysaÿe. A masterwork of cyclical form and emotional resonance, it carries this spirit in every phrase. Its themes return and transform throughout.

Each work in this concert is performed *con amore*, and in the spirit of Oenomei.

### **Alexandra Gardner (1967)**

*Time Unfolding* (2024)

- I. Abundance Ratio
- II. Infrared
- III. Metallacity

### **Nicky Sohn (1992)**

*Three Apartments in Houston* (2024)

- I. Introduction
- II. 2512 Bissonnet Street
- III. 1904 Addison Road
- IV. 2512 Shakespeare Street

### **Sonata in A major for Violin and Piano**

*Composed by César Franck, arranged by Jean-Yves Fourmeau*

- I. Allegretto ben moderato
- II. Allegro
- III. Ben moderato: Recitativo-Fantasia
- IV. Allegretto poco mosso

**Time Unfolding** is inspired by the captivating images of galaxy and star formation from NASA's James Webb Telescope. The composition explores the profound implications of the nature of time, considering that the images, captured using infrared light, traveled billions of light years and provide glimpses into the early stages of the universe.

Each of the three movements is named for a method to capture information about the substance of stars and galaxies. The exuberant, bubbling opening movement, "Abundance Ratio," quantifies the amounts of individual elements in stars. In the slower, ethereal middle movement, "Infrared," I imagine the saxophone as a laser beam illuminating its surroundings as it sweeps through its full sonic range. "Metallicity" tracks the heavier metal elements in stars and nebulae; the final movement is a forceful, driving groove with racing passages for the saxophone and an explosive finish.

This music is dedicated to my father, who transitioned to stardust during the composition of this work.

## **ABOUT THE COMPOSER**

Praised as "highly lyrical and provocative of thought" (*San Francisco Classical Voice*) and "mesmerizing" (*The New York Times*), the music of composer **Alexandra Gardner** is thrilling audiences and performers with a "particular alchemy of craft, whimsy, and sensual appeal" (*The New Yorker*). She blends acoustic instruments with field recordings, electronic textures, and elements of improvisation, building vivid sonic worlds residing on the edge of structure and spontaneity. Influenced by ideas of myth and ritual, scientific discovery, and the healing properties of sound, her music is known for its brightness, rhythmic vitality, and conceptual depth.

Gardner's portfolio includes works for symphony orchestra, wind ensemble, chamber ensembles, solo instruments, and electronic media. She has created large-scale orchestral pieces for major U.S. symphonies, as well as intimate, interdisciplinary collaborations with choreographers, animators, and poets. Her music is commissioned and performed by leading organizations, ensembles, and soloists worldwide. She spent two years as a visiting composer at the Institut Universitari de l'Audiovisual in Barcelona, Spain, and served as Composer-In-Residence for the Seattle Symphony. Her music is recorded on the Innova, Ars Harmonica, Naxos, and Neuma labels.

Among Gardner's awards and fellowships are recognitions from ASCAP, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Smithsonian Institution, and MacDowell. She lives in Baltimore, Maryland. For more information visit [www.alexandragardner.net](http://www.alexandragardner.net).

**Three Apartments in Houston**, written for saxophonist Nicholas Bissen, reflects my journey over the past five years, a narrative woven from the addresses I've called home in this vibrant city. With just two suitcases and no preconceptions, I ventured into the unknown of Texas,

finding an unexpected home in Houston. Despite initial uncertainties, the city provided a profound sense of belonging.

In Houston, amidst its warm climate, I found not only sunny days but also a supportive community that believed in my abilities, providing an environment where I could thrive as a composer. The inspiration for “Three Apartments in Houston” stemmed from my personal experiences living in these addresses over the past five years. Each relocation brought a mix of excitement and nervousness, especially during the challenges of the pandemic. These experiences, both productive and tumultuous, served as the driving force behind each movement in the composition. Through this work, I have found a meaningful way to reminisce on my time in Houston and reflect on the journey I have undertaken.

## **ABOUT THE COMPOSER**

Selected as one of the “Cool 100” by *Houston CityBook Magazine*, alongside icons like Simone Biles and Megan Thee Stallion, composer **Nicky Sohn** is a versatile and sought-after voice in contemporary classical music. With a distinctive style characterized by jazz-inspired, rhythmically driven themes, her work has been praised internationally for being “undoubtedly the crowd pleaser of the evening” (*YourObserver*), “dynamic and full of vitality” (*The Korea Defense Daily*), showcasing “colorful orchestration” (*NewsBrite*), and evoking “elegant wonder” (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*).

Sohn has received commissions and performances from major institutions, including the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Luke’s, Minnesota Orchestra, Annapolis Symphony, Albany Symphony, Sarasota Orchestra, and National Orchestra of Korea. Her work has also been featured by the New York Choreographic Institute, Stuttgart Ballet, and Dogs of Desire reflecting her broad artistic range across orchestral, vocal, ballet, and socially driven music projects.

A passionate advocate for interdisciplinary collaboration, Sohn says, “I’m obsessed with the collaborative aspects of it—working with artists across disciplines. Hearing my work meld with someone else’s imagination is incredibly fulfilling.” A notable example is her violin concerto commissioned by Kinetic Ensemble and violinist Mary Grace Johnson in partnership with The Women’s Home in Houston, an organization supporting women overcoming addiction and homelessness. The project provided a platform for these women’s stories, reinforcing Sohn’s commitment to using music as a vehicle for advocacy and connection.

Recent highlights include the premiere of Nicky Sohn’s guitar concerto with the Albany Symphony, featuring world-renowned guitarist Bokyoung Byun. The performances received rave reviews and sold-out shows, with the chamber orchestra version set to be featured in the 2025 Tanglewood Music Festival season. Sohn also worked with the Balourdet Quartet

on *Galaxy Back to You*, a piece commissioned following their Avery Fisher Career Grant win, which will be included on their debut CD. Looking ahead to the 2025-26 season, Sohn is composing a large-scale ballet for BalletCollective, in collaboration with celebrated choreographer Alysa Pires and acclaimed visual artist Linn Meyers. Additionally, she is writing a new concert opener for the Atlanta Symphony.

Nicky Sohn was recently a composition fellow at Tanglewood, one of the world's most prestigious music festivals, and has held fellowships with the DACAMERA Young Artist Program, MUSIQA Houston, the Hambidge Center, and the UCross Foundation. A recipient of the Druckman Prize, Sohn has also been commissioned by Robert Spano and the Aspen Music Festival. Her work spans collaborations with a diverse range of notable ensembles, including WindSync, the Isidore Quartet, Kinetic Ensemble, Stuttgart Ballet, Lucia Lin (Boston Symphony), the Carpe Diem String Quartet, the Bergamot String Quartet, the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra, the Kodan Quintet, the Cavani String Quartet, and the Green Mountain Music Festival. She has composed for leading orchestras such as the Atlanta Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony, and Annapolis Symphony, along with working on innovative projects that blend classical music with other art forms. From orchestral works to chamber pieces and ballet commissions, her music has been celebrated for its energy, richness, and versatility across multiple performance contexts.

Sohn holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from The Shepherd School of Music at Rice University and holds a Master of Music from The Juilliard School. A dedicated musician from a young age, she graduated from high school at 14 and earned her Bachelor of Music from Mannes College of Music. Her mentors include Gabriela Lena Frank, Anthony Brandt, Anna Clyne, Chris Theofanidis, Richard Lavenda, and Richard Danielpour.

## **ABOUT FRANCK'S SONATA**

The marriage of violinist Eugène Ysaÿe and Louise Bourdeau in 1886 inspired Franck's lone Violin Sonata. Like Franck, Ysaÿe (1858-1931) was born in Liège. A composer himself, he became a champion of the newest French music. (In addition to Franck's Sonata, the Concerto and Poème by Chausson and Debussy's String Quartet are dedicated to him.) Although 64 years old in 1886, Franck was still known primarily as an organist – at the important church St. Clotilde and the lavish public arts palace the Trocadéro, as well as professor of organ at the Conservatory. The recognition that he gained in the last years of his life, and then increasingly afterwards, was due in large part to the fervent missionary work of supporters such as Ysaÿe. The violinist played Franck's Sonata many times on his wide-ranging tours, telling his listeners that he played it “con amore” since it was a wedding present.

Franck originally intended the opening movement to be slow and reflective, but Ysaÿe persuaded him that it worked best at a quicker tempo, so Franck marked it *Allegretto*, though with the qualifier “ben moderato.” The movement juxtaposes rather than develops two themes, the first given almost exclusively to the violin, the second to the piano. These themes, particularly the violin’s, will return in the following movements, a sort of cyclical recontextualizing that Franck picked up from Liszt.

The second movement is a dramatic scherzo in D minor, opening as a turbulent piano toccata, then with a surging, offbeat violin line laid over it. There are lyrical or pensive interludes, working like trio sections, but the roiling toccata always reasserts itself, ending with a final sweep to D-major triumph.

The voice-led chromaticism that Franck absorbed from Wagner is apparent in the piano’s almost Tristanesque introduction to the third movement, a *Recitativo-Fantasia*. This introduction is also a reference to the opening of the Sonata, and much of this free-form movement is devoted to reflection on the previous movements. As the heading of the movement clearly indicates, there is a pronounced personality split midway through, as the improvisatory *Recitativo* yields to the more insistently directed *Fantasia*, which picks up some of the rumbling power of the second movement. The violin has a freshly configured dramatic theme in this section, which will come back in the finale.

That finale begins in a state of pure lyric grace, with a lovely optimistic theme that is played in canon, the violin following the piano’s lead a bar later. This is developed against stormier energies from the second movement in a section that shifts from five flats to six sharps and back. The opening theme of the movement sneaks back into A major with all of its original sweetness – and in canon again – before swelling into exultant joy.

— John Henken for the LA Phil

## **ABOUT THE COMPOSER**

Due to his understanding of fugue, Bach, and his relationship with the organ, **César Franck’s** inspiration from these sources can be seen throughout his compositions. The pieces that are considered to embody his full genius include a String Quartet (1889), Piano Quintet (1879), Violin Sonata (1886), and Symphony (1886-8). These pieces use the concept of thematic transformation and are also cyclic in structure. With themes frequently centering on a single note, his development gives the effect of yearning and incompleteness and he utilizes chromaticism, frequent free modulations, and a tendency to blur the lines between modes.

César Franck, born in Belgium in 1822, was a French composer whose musical career was spearheaded by the ambitions of his father, who arranged for his first concert tour when

he was only eleven. In 1836, Franck's father moved the family to Paris with the goal of him being accepted to study at a conservatory. The following year, Franck began attending the Conservatoire de Paris studying both composition and the piano as well as gaining recognition as a writer of fugues. In 1842, Franck's father removed him from the Conservatoire with the aim of Franck becoming a virtuoso at the piano. It was at this time that Franck composed his first piano trios. Frustrated with the lack of success, Franck earned his living by teaching and giving recitals. In 1848, Franck married and was appointed as the organist at Notre Dame de Lorette. He remained there until moving to St Jean-Françoise-du-Marais in 1853 and finally the St Clotilde in 1858. Franck, despite his long tenure as organist, is considered to have been more of a "Bach player" and improviser rather than virtuoso. His Mass for three voices and Six pieces pour grand orgue achieved him success and gained the attention of piano virtuoso and composer Liszt.

In 1872, Franck was appointed as the professor of organ at the Conservatoire and produced a steady stream of compositions throughout the remainder of his life. Students included d'Indy, Vierne, Lekeu, and, for a short time, both Debussy and Bizet. Franck died in 1890 after being tragically trampled by a horse-bus.

— Seattle Chamber Music Society

## **ABOUT THE PERFORMERS**

**Dr. Jooyeon Chang** is a passionate and accomplished collaborative pianist who has actively performed across South Korea, France, the United Kingdom, Austria, Italy, Luxembourg, and the United States. Her extensive international experience has broadened her repertoire and deepened her artistry, allowing her to collaborate with a diverse range of soloists, chamber musicians, and ensembles.

She has appeared with world-renowned brass musicians, including tuba virtuosos Øystein Baadsvik and Roland Szentpali, as well as euphonium legend Steven Mead. Her collaborations also include performances with esteemed clarinetist Mark Nuccio and horn player Katy Woolley, showcasing her versatility and expressive range.

Dr. Chang has been a regular participant in the Jeju International Wind Ensemble Festival for over a decade and has performed at prestigious events such as the International Tuba Euphonium Conference (ITEC), ClarinetFest, and the International Horn Symposium. She

is also a frequent performer at the Colorado Kodály Institute—where she serves as both a collaborative pianist and administrator—and the International Keyboard Odyssey® & Festival (IKOF), where she has been invited as a performer and competition judge.

A dedicated educator, Dr. Chang is on the faculty of Colorado State University, where she teaches piano classes and coaches chamber music. Each semester, she collaborates on multiple faculty and guest artist recitals, numerous student recitals, and works closely with the University Chorus. She partners with 30 to 40 students per term, preparing them for juries and guiding their artistic growth through individualized coaching. She also engages CSU students by emphasizing the importance of ensemble collaboration, teaching them how to discover musical meaning within the score, and guiding them in crafting compelling musical narratives. Prior to CSU, she taught applied lessons to master's students in Collaborative Piano at Chung-Ang University and Sungshin Women's University in South Korea.

She actively performs with Hsin-Hsuan Lin as part of The Lin and Chang Piano Duo, presenting diverse and innovative programs to audiences worldwide. The duo has received enthusiastic support from the community each year, earning warm acclaim for their expressive performances. In recent seasons, they have appeared as invited artists at Jeju National University.

Dr. Chang also collaborates with Sarah Hetrick as Duo Oenamel, with past performances at the University of Arkansas, University of Central Arkansas, Duquesne University, Sam Houston State University, and Texas A&M International University. In 2025, Duo Oenamel will embark on a Northern Colorado tour, including performances at CU Boulder, CSU, and the University of Wyoming, followed by a regional tour in Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Kansas.

Beyond her teaching and performing, Dr. Chang is deeply engaged in the musical community, organizing and participating in concerts and events that connect students, faculty, guest artists, and audiences. She is committed to fostering a dynamic and collaborative musical environment, delivering high-quality artistic experiences both on and off campus.

**Dr. Sarah Hetrick** (she/her) is a saxophonist and educator based in Northwest Arkansas. A fierce advocate for her students and their interests, Hetrick serves as Assistant Professor of Saxophone at the University of Arkansas, where she engages with the Saxophone Studio in applied instruction, saxophone pedagogy, chamber music, and more. Hetrick is frequently invited to teach and perform at schools and workshops throughout the United States, North America, and Central America, including the University of Iowa, the University of Minnesota,

Baylor University, the Great Plains Saxophone Workshop, the Festival Internacional de Música Académica Alfredo de Saint Malo (ASMF), and others.

In her collaborations and programming, Hetrick often curates narratives that focus on the work and lives of women at the intersection of music and art. Hetrick maintains an active schedule as a solo and chamber musician, performing as a member of the sjel duo, Duo Oenamel, the Lyrique Quintette, and more. Hetrick is an avid performer of new music and has commissioned over 40 new works by composers Alexandra Gardner, Katahji Copley, Viet Cuong, and others. Hetrick has performed as a soloist with the University of Arkansas Wind Ensemble, the University of Central Arkansas Wind Ensemble, The University of Texas Wind Ensemble, and the Pacific Symphony Youth Wind Ensemble. She performs regularly with the Symphony of Northwest Arkansas and the Fort Smith Symphony.

Hetrick's research explores gender, iconography of the saxophone, and the effects of both on practicing saxophonists. Hetrick's research is published in *Contemporary Perspectives on the Legacy of Elise Hall (1853-1924)* by Cornell University Press (US) and Leuven University Press (Belgium). She has also lectured throughout the United States on her paper, "He puts the pep in the party": Gender and the Saxophone in Early-Twentieth-Century American Advertisements. Hetrick enjoys engaging with the innovative work of saxophonists as a reviewer for the Saxophone Symposium Journal.

Hetrick has been awarded a Presser Grant, PEO Scholar Award, and a Rainwater Grant for Innovation. Hetrick previously served as Assistant Professor of Music at Texas A&M International University and holds both a Doctor of Musical Arts degree and a Master of Music degree in Saxophone Performance from The University of Texas at Austin. She has completed additional study at Université Européenne de Saxophone in Gap, France.

Hetrick performs exclusively on Yamaha Custom EX soprano and alto saxophones, D'Addario Reserve Reeds, and a Rousseau NC4 mouthpiece. Hetrick is proud to be both a Yamaha and Rousseau Artist.

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