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TRIO CON BRIO COPENHAGEN

NOVEMBER 11, 2026



Photo: Nikolaj Lund

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FROM THE BOARD

Welcome to this evening's concert! There is nothing quite like settling into a seat at the Leo Rich with friends, old and new, waiting for that first note. Thank you for being here. Sharing music this way is a gift, and one we never take for granted.

Tonight we are delighted to welcome Trio con Brio Copenhagen, and what a story they bring with them. Two sisters from Korea, violinist Soo-Jin Hong and cellist Soo-Kyung Hong, met Danish pianist Jens Elvekjaer as students in Vienna in 1999 and have been playing together ever since. Along the way Soo-Kyung and Jens married, so tonight you are hearing a family in the truest sense. Jens says that the first time the three played together, "it was immediate." You will hear what he means. Their program is pure pleasure: two luminous miniatures by Lili Boulanger, the Ravel Trio they recorded so beautifully last year, and Mendelssohn's stormy, glorious C minor Trio to send us home.

We are also proud to be collaborating with the Tucson Symphony Orchestra to bring these artists to Tucson. If you love what you hear tonight, you can hear the Trio again this Friday evening, November 13, and Sunday afternoon, November 15, as soloists in Beethoven's Triple Concerto with the TSO under conductor Katharina Wincor.

Evenings like this happen because of you. Ticket sales and grants cover less than half the cost of presenting a concert like this one. Your gifts to the Annual Fund close that gap, bringing artists of this caliber to Tucson, supporting new commissions, and keeping our education and outreach programs alive all year long. If you are able, please consider making your Annual Fund gift tonight or before the year ends. And watch for news of our year-end matching gifts campaign, coming soon, which will make every gift go even further. Every gift, of every size, is received with real gratitude.

Thank you for your support, and enjoy the concert!

ELAINE ROUSSEAU, PHD
Member, Board of Directors
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TRIO CON BRIO COPENHAGEN
NOVEMBER 11, 2026 | 7:30 PM


Photo: Nikolaj Lund

Trio con Brio Copenhagen
Soo-Jin Hong, *violin*
Soo-Kyung Hong, *cello*
Jens Elvekjaer, *piano*

Trio con Brio Copenhagen appears by arrangement with Marianne Schmocker Artists International.
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TRIO CON BRIO COPENHAGEN

Recognized as one of the world's finest piano ensembles, the Trio con Brio Copenhagen's multifaceted members are not only performing artists who tour extensively, but also esteemed recording artists, artistic directors and educators. The Trio appears regularly at the world's leading venues and concert series, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Wigmore Hall, Berlin's Pierre Boulez-Saal, the Concertgebouw and many more. Trio con Brio is a recipient of the Carl Nielsen and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen Award, one of Denmark's most prestigious prizes.

Trio con Brio Copenhagen is a fusion of two overlapping "musical pairs:" two sisters, violinist Soo-Jin Hong and cellist Soo-Kyung Hong, are from South Korea; pianist Jens Elvekjaer, Soo-Kyung's spouse, is from Denmark. Founded at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna in 1999, the Trio is now based in Copenhagen and is recognized for its exceptional musicianship, fresh approach to the core repertoire, adventurous programming and a commitment to bringing music to young people through their highly creative concerts.

The ensemble's recordings have received tremendous critical acclaim. The latest album of Shostakovich and Arensky trios (Orchid Classics) was a Gramophone "Editor's Choice" and also singled out by BBC Music Magazine as a "Chamber Choice" of the month. The disc also just won the German Record Critics' Award (Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik), and was singled out among other winning titles including the Berlin Philharmonic, Frank Peter Zimmermann, and Quatuor Ebène. An album featuring the complete Beethoven piano trios (Orchid Classics) garnered broad, enthusiastic praise from critics and fans alike with the BBC Music Magazine calling it "a triumph." The Trio has also recorded the work of leading Scandinavian composers, including Per Nørgård, Bent Sørensen and Sven-David Sandström, who have written works for the group.

As visionary artistic directors who are known for their insatiable curiosity, inventive programming and engaging children's concerts, Trio con Brio Copenhagen plays a vital role in the cultural life of Denmark. This season they are collaborating with leading Danish actor Søren Sætter-Lassen on their new musical production of "The Little Prince" set to open at The Royal Danish Theatre. A tour is planned the following year.

Trio con Brio Copenhagen serves as artistic directors of the annual festival, Chamber Music at Lundsgaard, and the Hellerup Chamber Music Society in Copenhagen.

Soo-Jin plays an Andrea Guarneri violin, Soo-Kyung plays a Grancino cello, and Jens is Denmark's first Steinway Artist. Both string players are endorsed by Jargar Strings and Thomastik-Infeld Vienna.

EVENING SERIES

This evening's concert is sponsored through the generous support of Larry Herron and Harlow Sires.

PROGRAM

LILI BOULANGER (1893–1918)

D'un matin de printemps (1917–18)

LILI BOULANGER (1893–1918)

D'un soir triste (1917–18)

MAURICE RAVEL (1875–1937)

Piano Trio in A Minor, M. 67

I. Modéré
II. Pantoum: Assez vif
III. Passacaille: Très large
IV. Final: Animé

INTERMISSION

FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809–1847)

Piano Trio No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 66

I. Allegro energico e con fuoco
II. Andante espressivo
III. Scherzo: Molto allegro quasi presto
IV. Finale: Allegro appassionato

Boulanger: *D'un matin de printemps*

Born into a musical family that included her famed teacher-composer sister Nadia, Lili Boulanger (1893-1918) was a child prodigy who achieved early fame as the first woman composer to win the prestigious Prix de Rome. Although chronically ill for much of her life, she created a significant body of vocal and instrumental works that reflect the impressionist influence of Debussy and Faure. After her tragic death at age 24, the grieving Nadia did much to promote Lili's legacy.

The diptych "D'un matin de printemps" (Of a spring morning) and "D'un soir triste" (Of a sad evening) was among Boulanger's last completed works. Composed in 1917-18, the diptych can be heard as a pair of works that stand alone. Boulanger created several versions of both-- first, duets for violin (or flute) and piano; later, trios for violin, cello and piano; and shortly before her death, orchestral scores. Although strongly contrasting in mood, the two works develop with the same triplet rhythm, modal harmonic coloration, and unifying melodic motif.

In the piano trio version heard tonight, "D'un matin de printemps" is a buoyant, dance-like scherzo marked lively, light and cheerful — a mood that differs from the wistful melancholy of much of Boulanger's oeuvre. Airy and transparent, the writing is enlivened by supple, shimmering textures that suggest the influence of Debussy. Playful rhythmic figurations pass among the three players. Yet moments of harmonic ambiguity hint at the darkness of its shadowed twin. Since Boulanger could not fully edit the scores before her death, her sister Nadia supplied dynamics and performance markings for publication.

Lili Boulanger: *D'un soir triste*

Together with its companion, the fervent "D'un soir triste" is among the last works Lili was able to write without dictating material to Nadia. Whereas "D'un matin de printemps" is bright and animated, "D'un soir triste" (initially marked Slow and Sad) is intense yet somber. It develops with widely arched lyrical themes that contrast with subdued passages to create a luminous, classically balanced structure. Their pairing is often heard as a reflection of Lili's dual temperaments — one radiant, the other grieving. The evening piece concludes with two quiet piano chords that convey a somber sense of farewell.

Ravel: *Piano Trio in A minor, M. 67*

In February 1914 Ravel (1875-1937) left Paris to be near his mother in St. Jean-de-Luz, a small Basque village near the Spanish border. He planned to work on two projects—a piano concerto incorporating Basque themes and a piano trio—but abandoned plans for the concerto and incorporated its themes, which he described as "Basque in color," into the trio's first movement.

Composition proceeded well until the outbreak of World War I, which coincided with initial work on the finale. Ravel was eager to serve in the military, and in fact later became an ambulance driver for the French army. Yet he was reluctant to leave his aged mother. He wrote to a friend: "If you only knew how I am suffering. If I leave my poor old mother it will surely kill her. But so as not to think of this, I am working with the sureness and lucidity of a madman." Because of his feverish pace, this work was soon completed. With its brilliant writing, wide range of instrumental color, and refined elegance, the Piano Trio is considered to be one of Ravel's finest compositions.

The first movement explores Spanish rhythms and melodies with French gracefulness. Its two themes are based on a popular Basque folk dance with a persistent 3-2-3 rhythm. After a brief development, the movement concludes as a fragment of the opening theme fades into a rhythmic outline tapped in the piano's low register.

Ravel entitled the scherzo movement Pantoum, a Malay poetic form in which the second and fourth lines of one stanza become the first and third of the next. Its rapid rhythms, pizzicati and harmonics create a dazzling effect. In the middle section the strings continue their brilliant passage work in a fast 3/4 meter while the piano articulates contrasting chorale-like phrases in 4/2 time.

The clear melodic contours, distinct rhythms and lucid structure of the third movement, a passacaglia, suggest Ravel's classical orientation.

Ten variations of its opening theme are arranged in arch form. The statements begin quietly and gradually gain fervor, then calm as the movement approaches its conclusion.

The energetic Animé, following without pause, opens with fortissimo repeated violin arpeggios. The primary theme, related to the principal theme of the first movement, is heard in the piano. Virtuosic trills, arpeggios, and tremolos propel the movement toward its exhilarating conclusion on a high A major chord.

Mendelssohn: Piano Trio No. 2 in C minor, Op. 66

During his brief lifetime, Mendelssohn was widely celebrated as a phenomenal genius. The greatest conductor of his generation and also one of its finest pianists and violinists, he was the idol of composers such as Robert Schumann, who effused, "Mendelssohn is the man to whom I look up as to a high mountain ... a perfect God." A facile and prolific composer who created over 500 works (both large and small, published and unpublished), Mendelssohn produced eleven chamber works, among which are his piano trios. Both were composed because Mendelssohn sensed a need for more piano ensemble literature. He wrote to his sister Fanny: "Sometimes I just want a new thing to play. A very important genre of which I am particularly fond—piano trios and quartets—is quite forgotten now. I should like to do a little towards this."

Mendelssohn wrote his Opus 66, the second of his two piano trios, in 1845. Although less well known than its D minor predecessor, the C minor Trio is a splendidly crafted and serious work that deserves more performances. Opus 66 was dedicated to violinist and composer Louis Spohr, with whom Mendelssohn performed the work on several occasions.

The Allegro energico develops two themes—a darkly restless motive first heard in the piano and a more expansive theme played by the violin. Mendelssohn molds and recapitulates this material to create a classical sonata form. The serene Andante espressivo (E-flat major) also reveals classical proportions in its three-part song form structure. The brilliant and phantasmal Scherzo (G minor) occasionally echoes Mendelssohn's earlier string octet, Opus 20. A G major dance theme in the trio section provides a contrast. The C minor Finale explores two themes. In its development section, the chorale theme "Vor deinen Thron," which Bach had borrowed from 1551 Geneva Psalter, is introduced. The chorale joins the main theme at the massive C major coda.

Notes by Nancy Monsman

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Wednesday, November 11, 2026
7:30 p.m.

Han–Setzer–Finckel Trio
Wednesday, December 9, 2026
7:30 p.m.

Espressivo! Piano Quartet
Wednesday, January 13, 2027
7:30 p.m.

Manhattan Chamber Players
Wednesday, February 3, 2027
7:30 p.m.

Calder String Quartet with Dashon Burton, *bass-baritone*
Wednesday, March 24, 2027
7:30 p.m.

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Ziggy & Miles, *guitar duo*
Sunday, November 22, 2026
3:00 p.m.

Clayton Stephenson, *piano*
Sunday, January 24, 2027
3:00 p.m.

Eric Lu, *piano*
Sunday, March 28, 2027
3:00 p.m.

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Calder String Quartet with Dashon Burton, bass-baritone
Wednesday, March 24, 2027
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Trio con Brio Copenhagen
WEDNESDAY · 7:30 PM · EVENING SERIES

NOV 22
Ziggy & Miles
SUNDAY · 3:00 PM · PIANO & FRIENDS



DEC 9
Wu Han, Philip Setzer, David Finckel
WEDNESDAY · 7:30 PM · EVENING SERIES



JAN 13
Espressivo! Piano Quartet
WEDNESDAY · 7:30 PM · EVENING SERIES



JAN 24
Clayton Stephenson
SUNDAY · 3:00 PM · PIANO & FRIENDS

FEB 3
Manhattan Chamber Players
WEDNESDAY · 7:30 PM · EVENING SERIES

FEB 21–28
Tucson Winter Chamber Music Festival
FIVE CONCERTS · 3:00 & 7:30 PM · WINTER FESTIVAL

MAR 9–12 — JUST ANNOUNCED
The Beethoven Cycle
TUE · WED · FRI · 7:00 PM · SPECIAL SERIES



MAR 24
Calder String Quartet
WEDNESDAY · 7:30 PM · EVENING SERIES

MAR 28
Eric Lu
SUNDAY · 3:00 PM · PIANO & FRIENDS

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TUCSON DESERT SONG FESTIVAL

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