

Thursday
NOV 13
7:30 pm

KU Symphony Orchestra with special guest Xavier Foley, bass

Conducted by Creston Herron



This event is made possible through the generous support of Richard L. and Jeanette Sias.

PROGRAM

Concerto in E-flat, "Dumbarton Oaks".....Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)
Soul Bass..... Xavier Foley (b. 1994)
Xavier Foley, bass

20-Minute Intermission

Symphony No. 5 in E Minor, Op. 64Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)

Program is subject to change.
Please see your pre- and post-performance emails for program notes.

Xavier Foley

A trailblazing artist and recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant, Xavier Foley is redefining the role of the bassist in 21st-century music. He is a double bassist of staggering technical prowess and expressive depth, and a composer who belongs to a rare class of instrumentalists bringing their own voice to the stage in the most literal sense—crafting programs that showcase both his virtuosic playing and his distinct compositional language. With jaw-dropping technique, soulful expression and a bold artistic vision, Foley brings new life to an instrument rarely heard on center stage.

Foley has composed several groundbreaking works. Among them is *Soul Bass*, a concerto commissioned and premiered by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra under Jonathan Heyward. His work *For Justice and Peace* for violin, double bass and string orchestra—co-commissioned by Carnegie Hall, the Sphinx Organization and the New World Symphony—has been praised for its powerful message and genre-blending style. Other concerti include *Victory* for double bass and string orchestra and *Resurrection of Titan* for violin, double bass and orchestra, commissioned by the Cabrillo Festival in association with the Mahler Foundation. These works have been performed by ensembles across the U.S., including the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, Sphinx Virtuosi, Kansas City Symphony, New West Symphony, Orchestra Lumos, Nashville Symphony, Oregon Symphony, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra and the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra.

Foley has collaborated with conductors including Mei-Ann Chen, Cristian Măcelaru, David Danzmayr, Michael Christie, Michael Stern, Xian Zhang, Carlos Kalmar and Thomas Wilkins. Committed to expanding the repertoire for solo double bass and chamber ensembles, his diverse catalog of compositions explores the instrument’s full range of expressive and technical possibilities.

Foley has captivated audiences with critically acclaimed recital appearances at leading venues and series such as New York’s Kaufman Music Center, the Kennedy Center, Shriver Hall, Rockport Music, La Jolla Music Society, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Morgan Library & Museum, the National Gallery of Art and the

Harriman-Jewell Series. A sought-after collaborative artist, he has appeared at the Marlboro Music Festival, Tippet Rise, Bridgehampton and Skaneateles Festivals and with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

Originally from Marietta, GA, Foley is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied with Edgar Meyer and Hal Robinson. He won the 2016 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, is an alumnus of the Perlman Music Program and performs on a custom double bass made by Rumano Solano.

Creston Herron

Creston Herron is an internationally recognized conductor, educator and artistic leader who currently serves as director of orchestral activities at the University of Kansas and as a member of the distinguished faculty at the Interlochen Arts Camp. With a growing reputation for artistic excellence and innovative leadership, Herron has emerged as one of the most sought-after conductors and music educators in the U.S.

He previously served as director of fine arts for the Klein Independent School District in Texas and as conductor of the Campanile Orchestra at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. In addition, he has served as a cover conductor for the Kansas City Symphony.

A versatile collaborator, Herron has recently worked with internationally acclaimed artists such as violinist Blake Pouliot, trombonist Vincent Gardner and double bassist Xavier Foley, to name a few. He has conducted All-State and Honor orchestras in over 20 states, bringing musical inspiration to thousands of young artists across the country.

Under his leadership, the KU orchestral program has experienced unprecedented growth, expanding to three orchestras. The program recently completed a major international tour and is releasing its first professional album featuring newly commissioned works for string orchestra on the internationally recognized Klavier label.

In high demand as an adjudicator and guest lecturer, Herron has presented at many of the country's most prestigious institutions and conferences, including The Midwest Clinic, the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, the Moore School of Music at the University of Houston, Sam Houston State University, Texas Tech University, the American String Teachers Association, the League of American Orchestras and the NAMM *Believe in Music* webinar series.

He is a past president of the Texas Orchestra Directors Association and currently serves on the advisory board for The Midwest Clinic, the artistic team of Perform America TX LLC and the board of directors of the Mid-America Performing Arts Alliance.

Herron's contributions to music education have earned him numerous awards, including the Marjorie Keller Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award from the Texas Chapter of ASTA, the Spec's Charitable Award for Excellence in Music Education from

the Houston Symphony, the 2025 Outstanding Faculty Member Award for Teaching Excellence from the KU School of Music and designation as a KU Docking Scholar.

KU Symphony Orchestra

The University of Kansas Symphony Orchestra (KUSO) provides the highest quality preparation for a professional career in orchestral playing. KUSO offers a comprehensive course of orchestral studies and performs repertoire spanning from the Baroque to the 21st century, including premieres of new works. In addition to large-scale symphonic programming, each season includes performances of major solo works featuring faculty, student and leading international guest artists, who have included PROJECT Trio, Tiempo Libre, Juan-Miguel Hernandez, Blake Pouliot, Joshua Roman and Simone Porter.

KUSO also regularly collaborates with KU Theatre and KU Opera as the resident ensemble for the productions. The orchestra combines with KU Choirs for the immensely popular Holiday Vespers annual concert as well as other choral/orchestral literature throughout the year, and showcases the works of student composers in the KU composition studio. KUSO's concert stage is the 2,000-seat Lied Center of Kansas, and the orchestra also regularly performs at the nationally renowned Kauffman Center in Kansas City.