



School of Music
University of Missouri

2025-2026 Series | Large Ensemble

University Symphony Orchestra

Ellie Chang, guest conductor

February 22, 2026 | 3:00pm

Missouri Theatre

Program

St. Paul's Suite for Full Orchestra **Gustav Holst**
(1874-1934)

- I. **Vivace**
- II. **Ostinato**
- III. **Dance**
- IV. **Finale**

Shift, Change, Turn **Jessie Montgomery**
(b. 1981)

intermission

Seven Pieces for Small Orchestra **Antonín Dvořák**
(1841-1904)

- I. **Capriccio (allegro risoluto)**
- II. **Andante sostenuto**
- III. **Con molta espressione**
- IV. **Allegro con brio**
- V. **Allegro assai**
- VI. **Serenata (andantino con moto)**
- VII. **Allegro animato**

University Symphony Orchestra Personnel

Flutes

Mattie Neidholdt
Haley Parks

Oboe

Sophia Fasone

Clarinets

Haley Carrier
Maddie Gibbs

Bassoon

Grayson Helsel

Horns

Lauren Griffith
Joseph Rutherford

Trumpets

Jackson Kenney
Douglas Schaedler

Timpani

Tanner Prewitt

Violins

Maya Anand
Emma Bangert
Nathan Bronstein *
Angelina Casey
Lydia Davis
Mary Draxler
Breanne Garstang
Matthew Kim
Drew Lubiewski
Hayden Neally
Abi Richmond
Thomas Robert
Juliana Vieira +
Simon Whitty

Violas

Elaina Maurer
Jojo O *
Aiden Spavale
Rebecca Winters

Cellos

Clara Anderson
Broderick Beebe
Carson Johnson
Sara Lawson
Drake O'Hearn
Jillian Orendain
Henry Rao *
Preston Smith

Basses

Kelsey Atteberry
Sydney Hoynacki *
Trey Rolfes

+ - Concertmaster

* - Principal String

*Names are listed in
alphabetical order, seatings
for the winds and percussion
rotate on each piece*

Biography

Ellie Chang is a conductor currently pursuing a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting at the University of Missouri, where she studies with Dr. John McKeever and serves as a graduate teaching assistant.

Ellie earned her Bachelor of Music in Flute Performance and a Certificate in Orchestral Conducting from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, where she studied conducting with Dr. Kevin Sütterlin and flute with Prof. Deb Harris. During her time at Concordia, she was an active member of various ensembles, including the Concordia Orchestra and the Concordia Band, taking on leadership roles as principal flute, violinist, and orchestra librarian.

As assistant conductor of the Concordia Orchestra and Concordia Opera, Ellie has conducted both groups in rehearsals and performances on numerous occasions. Her work with Concordia Opera was recognized with Second Place in the National Opera Association's Collegiate Opera Competition for the college's production of Jonathan Stinson's *The Three Bears*. She also served as conductor for the Concordia Flute Choir, leading the ensemble in rehearsals and performances. During her senior year of college, she won Concordia's Senior Honors Concerto Competition and performed Aram Khachaturian's Flute Concerto as a soloist with the orchestra. She has also received recognition in the Fargo-Moorhead Symphony Orchestra Young Artists Concerto Competition and the Minnesota MTNA Young Artists Competition.

In addition to her work as a conductor and performer, Ellie is deeply committed to teaching and mentoring young musicians. Her teaching experience includes tutoring music theory, providing private lessons, serving as a clinician for solo and ensemble competitions, and presenting masterclasses.

In 2025, Ellie was selected as an orchestral conducting fellow at the Lutheran Summer Music Festival & Academy, where she worked closely with faculty and student musicians in both rehearsal and performance settings. She has also appeared as a guest conductor and conducting fellow with Sinfonietta Memphis during the 2024 and 2025 seasons.

This performance marks her first concert as conductor at the University of Missouri, a milestone she is excited to share with the ensemble and audience.

Program Notes

Gustav Holst (1874-1934): *St. Paul's Suite for Full Orchestra*, H. 118B (1913, wind parts added ca. 1920)

Gustav Holst was an English composer and teacher, best known for the orchestral suite *The Planets*. Born in Cheltenham, England, he blended a wide range of influences in his music—from English folk songs to the innovations of Wagner and Brahms—and had a lifelong interest in rhythm, melody, and unusual instrumental colors. Holst was also a dedicated educator, serving for nearly 30 years as music master at St. Paul's Girls' School in London, where he inspired generations of young musicians.

The *St. Paul's Suite* was written for his students at the school, originally for string orchestra, with Holst later adding winds and timpani so more of the students could play. Dedicated to the girls themselves, the suite combines charm, energy, and playful invention. Its four movements follow a traditional fast–slow–dance–fast pattern, each with its own personality. The first movement, *Jig*, opens the piece with lively energy; the second movement, *Ostinato*, features a violin solo against a steady rhythmic pattern, punctuated by pizzicato and other string effects. The *Intermezzo* shifts moods, starting quietly with pizzicato in the lower strings before a duet between solo violin and viola leads into a brisk, playful *Vivace*. The finale brings together a 16th-century tune (*The Dargason*) and the familiar *Greensleeves*, weaving the two melodies at different time signatures until they meet in a joyful, energetic conclusion.

Holst plays with rhythm and melody in clever ways, letting the instruments interact like they are having a conversation—sometimes chasing each other, sometimes layering contrasting textures. The added winds and timpani give the suite a fuller, brighter sound, but the charm of the original string writing is still there. This full orchestra version of the *St. Paul's Suite* is rarely performed, and recordings are hard to come by, making today's performance a special opportunity to hear Holst's music in a slightly different light.

Jessie Montgomery (b. 1981): *Shift, Change, Turn* (2019)

Jessie Montgomery is a composer, violinist, and educator whose work has been called “turbulent, wildly colorful, and exploding with life”. She blends classical training with folk, dance, and improvisation, creating music that is both deeply expressive and full of energy. Montgomery performs widely and collaborates with ensembles, choreographers, and poets, and she has been recognized with awards including a GRAMMY and Musical America's Composer of the Year. She's also deeply committed to education and community, mentoring young musicians and helping expand access to classical music

through programs like the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's Young Composers Initiative.

Shift, Change, Turn was written in 2019 for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. Inspired by Tchaikovsky's *The Seasons*, this piece doesn't depict specific months or weather, but explores cycles of change—both in the world around us and within ourselves. The music moves fluidly between grounded, meditative passages and lively, rhythm-driven sections, using repeating patterns, open string drones, and playful textures to create a sense of rotation, energy, and transformation.

Montgomery describes this work as a turning point in her orchestral writing, where she discovered her voice as a composer for full ensemble. Listen for the unique sounds and colors she creates through extended techniques, producing effects and textures that feel fresh and unexpected. Let yourself be absorbed in the atmosphere and experience the music imaginatively, as a reflection of how life—and the seasons—are always shifting, changing, and turning.

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904): *Seven Pieces for Small Orchestra* (1867)

Antonín Dvořák was a Czech composer whose music blends classical forms with the spirit and melodies of his homeland. Born in 1841, he became one of the most celebrated composers of the 19th-century, known for symphonies, chamber music, operas, and choral works that showcase both lyricism and rhythmic vitality. While he is best known today for his symphonies and other large orchestral works, alongside these monumental pieces, Dvořák also wrote a number of smaller, more intimate orchestral works—many of which remain rarely heard in the concert hall.

Seven Pieces for Small Orchestra, composed in 1867, belongs to this lesser-known side of his output. At the time, Dvořák was still early in his career and earning his living as a violist in a theater orchestra in Prague, long before the international recognition he would later receive with the support of Johannes Brahms. Written for a modest ensemble, the seven short movements are sometimes described as “intermezzi,” and each one feels like its own small world. Some movements feel light and playful, others more lyrical or reflective, with frequent shifts in mood and texture. Instead of building a single large argument like a traditional symphony, the music moves in quick, contrasting snapshots, highlighting Dvořák's growing interest in color, rhythm, and expressive melody.

Although these pieces were not published during Dvořák's lifetime and were only rediscovered in the 20th-century, they are far from student exercises. Instead, they reveal a composer already experimenting with orchestral balance and expressive variety, influenced by earlier composers such as Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert, while

beginning to develop a voice that would later become distinctly his own.

Enjoy the changing moods across the seven movements and the intimate scale of the ensemble. This music offers a rare glimpse of Dvořák in the process of becoming Dvořák—full of curiosity, invention, and quiet confidence.

Program notes by Ellie Chang