

Trio  Oriens

亚悦三重奏

The Stars Resonate

Sunday, March 29th, 2026 • 3:00 pm at St. John's Presbyterian Church

Aija Izaks, guest violinist

Olive Chen, cellist

I-Ling Chen, pianist

PROGRAM

Four Seasons of Buenos Aires

Verano Porteño

Otoño Porteño

Invierno Porteño

Primavera Porteña

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)

arr. José Bragato

And the Remnants of a Temple for Piano Trio (World Premiere) Jenny Xiong

“And the Remnants of a Temple, my first attempt to explore the musicality of silence, was inspired by several Asian philosophical concepts. Foremost, the Japanese concept of ma taught me of the power latent in the negative space between notes: I learned how such spaces were as significant, as meaningful, as notes themselves, and this prompted me to embrace silence as an indispensable part of music. Moreover, the Chinese concept of wu wei encouraged me to intuit the flow of sound and silence, to let sound emerge organically from silence and silence organically from sound. I composed the piece with these philosophies in mind, endeavoring also to deviate from a Western sense of drama and progression by creating a placid, dormant space in which musical gestures appeared and disappeared as if at will. The piece paints the ruins of a temple but points as well to the trauma shared by victims of Western imperialism—how we have been left to rebuild our cultures from the remnants of our temples, pagodas, and shrines. There occurs at the piece's conclusion a sudden consonance, the miraculous ringing of the ruined temple's bell, but also a gesture of hope for a more consonant future.”

by Jenny Xiong, winner of the 2025 Oriens Composition Competition

The Planets

Mars - The Bringer of War

Venus - The Bringer of Peace

Jupiter - The Bringer of Jollity

Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

arr. Olive Chen for piano trio

featuring visual art by Mark Chen

We seek to expand human experience through new and diverse repertoire and devote efforts to the public through youth mentorship and live performances.

TrioOriens.org

Biographies

Trio Oriens

Trio Oriens drew together three outstanding musicians from Taiwan. After launching a successful inaugural season in the spring of 2010, the trio quickly became one of the most prolific chamber music ensembles in the Houston area. Recognized for their intellectual artistry, Trio Oriens brings to their audience innovative programs and a diverse repertoire including classical works, Taiwanese/Chinese music, Latin American, and contemporary compositions. Over the years, Trio Oriens has collaborated with virtuosic instrumentalists such as Richard Nunemaker, Rodica Oancea-Gonzalez, and Wei Jiang, as well as artist Hsiao-Nan Chen, in a live Chinese watercolor painting. They are devoted to community outreach in local schools, nursing homes, and churches, gaining a wide and dedicated following, and have appeared as featured guests on Houston Public Radio's Front Row. Trio Oriens has premiered new compositions by Robert Nelson, Joe LoCasio, Stephen Yip, J. Todd Frazier, and Joel Love. Their recording of Olivier Messiaen's Quartet for the End of Time is the soundtrack of the documentary film *Age of Iron* and is collected by the Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix, Arizona.

Aija Izaks, Guest Violinist

Aija Izaks, a native of the Republic of Latvia in Europe, is a distinguished Latvian-American violinist and model. With a Master's Degree in Violin Performance, she has earned recognition as "The Best Graduate of the Year" and has graced many prestigious stages around the world, receiving accolades for performing both as a soloist and member of various groups. In the USA, she served as First Violinist at the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra, as featured Violinist at Houston's Stages Repertoire Theatre, and as the Concertmaster of Houston Civic Symphony. Besides performing, Aija also owns a music studio in Richmond, Texas, where she teaches violin, piano, and music theory. Beyond her musical prowess, she also excels as a fashion model and linguist, translating books from her native Latgalian and Latvian languages into English. Notably, Aija earned the Latvian Academy Award "Boņuks 2018" for her double-CD Album "*Dviesēlis Steigys*," celebrating the Latvian Centennial, and a gold medal at a beauty contest in 2016, where she represented Texas. This award was sent to her from the White House for serving the communities of elderly people living in nursing homes. Her multifaceted talents reflect a truly remarkable, diverse career. Aija's success is rooted in her strong Christian faith. She gives glory to God for all her accomplishments.

Jenny Xiong, winner of the 2025 Oriens Composition Competition in the age 18-25 category, writer, flutist, and pianist, seeks beauty in the ephemeral. Captivated by the relationship between sound and silence, bloom and decay, color and space, death and memory, Jenny creates art to explore the evanescence of life and the four seasons, drawing special inspiration from its portrayal in East Asian art, literature, and video games. She is currently on a Berkeley Fellowship pursuing an M.A./Ph.D. in Music with a concentration in Composition at the University of California, Berkeley, where she studies composition with Ken Ueno, Carmine-Emanuele Cella, Myra Melford, and Edmund Campion, takes lessons with flutist Stacey Pelinka, and plays flute in the UC Berkeley Symphony Orchestra. A native of Bothell, Washington, Jenny has been playing the piano since she was five years old and the flute since she was ten. She received a B.A. with Distinction in Music with Honors, with a concentration in Composition, and in English with Honors, with an emphasis in Creative Writing, from Stanford University, where she studied composition with François Rose and Erik Ulman, flute with Alexandra Hawley, and piano with Laura Dahl. In addition to playing flute in the Stanford Symphony Orchestra, Stanford Philharmonia, and Stanford Summer Symphony, Jenny won Stanford's 2024 Marie Louise Rosenberg Honors Award for Outstanding Honors Thesis Writing, 2023 Friends of Music Undergraduate Composition Award, 2023 Concerto Competition, and 2021 and 2022 Humanities and Sciences Undergraduate Prize in Music. Jenny has also composed for and conducted research on traditional Chinese, Japanese, and Ainu instruments as a recipient of UC Berkeley's 2025 Mikumo Student Support Fund for Research in Japan and Stanford's 2022–2023 Major Grant and 2021–2022 Chappell Lougee Scholarship. Her compositions have been premiered in Seattle, Boston, Stanford, Kyoto, and Vienna.

Mark Chen, Visual Artist

Mark Chen centers his practice on photography. He invents and repurposes tools as he pushes media boundaries, devising new processes that make possible the execution of his concepts. For his latest series, *Pilgrimage of Light*, which explores the mysterious coexistence of the universe, Earth, and people, Mark Chen travels to remote wildernesses to project galactic images, altering landscapes as he photographs them. The production of this series received a boost from his residency at Grand Canyon National Park in 2023 and 2024. Chen's 2025 engagements include the artist in residence at Music@Menlo, California, exhibitions in Write Gallery, Texas A and M University, Hong Kong Art Week, International Art and Science Museum, Texas, and a feature article Where Space and Time Merge in National Geographic Magazine's March 2025 issue.