



Bard College Conservatory of Music

20 Years of Music, Vision, and Excellence

Undergraduate Degree Recital

Danika Dortch, *french horn*

Friday, March 13, 2026 at 3:00 pm
László Z. Bitó '60 Conservatory Building, Performance Space

Fantasie über den Sehnsuchtswalzer von Schubert, op. 2

Franz Strauss
(1822-1905)

Nomin Samdan, *piano*

Adagietto, from Symphony No. 5

Gustav Mahler
(1860-1911)
arr. by Ralph Sauer

Liri Ronen, *piano*

From The Bohemian Forest, op. 68
V. Silent Woods

Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904)
arr. by Patrick Clements

Reid Shriver, *conductor*
Veronika Smid Dortch, *flute*
Kai O'Donnell, *oboe*
Alex Norrenberns, *oboe*
Damon Kirk, *horn*
Katriel Kirk, *bassoon*
Chloe Brill, *bassoon*
Russell Urban-Mead, *clarinet*
Lily Gallegos, *clarinet*

- Intermission -

Fifteen Moravian Folksongs

Leoš Janáček
(1854-1928)
arr. by Ralph Sauer

Nomin Samdan, *piano*

Brahms Horn Trio, op. 40
I. Andante
II. Scherzo

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Jaime Blois, *violin*
Sichen Yang, *piano*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Danika Dortch is currently in her fifth year at Bard College Conservatory, pursuing a Bachelor of Music in French Horn Performance and a Bachelor of Arts in Literature. She recently completed her senior thesis, “Variations on a Theme of *The Voyage Out*: Investigating the Implications and Resonance of Virginia Woolf’s Musical Enthrallment.” She started playing the french horn at the age of 9 in Lindenhurst, Illinois. At 13, she started performing with the Midwest Young Artists Conservatory. She has held positions as principal horn with the Bard College Conservatory Orchestra, Bard College Community Orchestra, Bard College Opera Workshop, and the Up and Coming Theatre Company. Danika was the recipient of the 2021 and 2022 Dennis Taylor Foundation for the Performing Arts Scholarship. She currently studies under the direction of Barbara Jöstlein and Hugo Valverde of the Metropolitan Opera. In the Fall of 2024, she studied with Ignacio García of the Berlin Staatsoper while attending Bard College Berlin.

Born into a family of musicians, pianist **Nomin Samdan** made her first public appearance at the age of 7 in her native country, Mongolia. Since then, she has had an expansive career as a soloist, collaborator, and educator; performing across the continents of Europe, Asia, and North America. Recent professional appointments include a position on the Piano Faculty of the Mongolian State Conservatory, as well as pianist for the Mongolian State Opera and Ballet House. A long-time admirer of contemporary music, Ms. Samdan has premiered vocal works by Juliana Hall, Michael Finnissy, Dennis B athory-Kitz, and Albin Fries. Ms. Samdan received her B.Mus and Graduate Performance Diploma in Piano Performance from Boston Conservatory at Berklee under the guidance of YaFei Chuang; additionally, Ms. Samdan holds a M.M. in Collaborative Piano from Boston University. Nomin is currently a Collaborative Piano Fellow at the Bard Conservatory, working under the mentorship of Erika Switzer and Kayo Iwama.

Liri Ronen is a performer, composer, and arranger currently studying in Germany. His musical and stylistic versatility falls between instrumental performance, composition, accompaniment, studio recording, audio engineering and more. He was awarded the AICF Excellency Scholarship in 2012, scored 2nd place in the Uel Wade Young Musician Competition in 2016 and was given the Bard College Conservatory Excellence in Brass Award in 2021. He studied at the Bard Conservatory of Music in New York between 2016-2023, and in 2025 he began his studies with Andrej Źust and Stefan Jerzierski at the Barenboim Said Akademie in Berlin.

Lily Gallegos is a current sophomore attending Lakes Community High School in Lake Villa, Illinois. She began playing the clarinet at the age of 10. She now regularly performs with the Midwest Young Artists Conservatory Concert Orchestra, Lakes Pit Orchestra, Lakes Marching Band, Illinois District 7 Honors Band, and the Northern Lake County Conference Honor Band. She currently studies under the direction of Tim Graff.

Veronika Smid Dortch currently teaches flute privately in Lake County, Illinois. She started flute in fourth grade, and went on to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in German Business Translation and a Bachelor of Music in Flute Performance from Northern Illinois University, under the direction of Peter Middleton. She has performed as principal flautist with the Rockford Symphony, Kenosha Symphony, and the Waukegan Band.

Russell Urban-Mead: Russell plays clarinet with the Bard College-Community Orchestra and an off-campus woodwind quintet. He also enjoys being part of student recitals like Danika’s wonderful concert, and Bard’s Chinese Ensemble for which he mourns the loss of Shutong Li. For employment, he is a hydrogeologist consultant who designs and tests high-volume groundwater wells, develops water resource planning strategies, and supports remedial projects. Along with clarinet, Russell also plays saxophones, bass clarinet, and flute in community theater pits, recently including for Shrek, Sweeney Todd, Wizard of Oz, Urinetown, Big Fish, and Wedding Singer.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Damon Kirk earned a Bachelor of Music in Horn Performance at Pacific Lutheran University while also serving two years as second horn of Symphony Tacoma. After graduate studies at the New England Conservatory of Music, Mr. Kirk served four years as a hornist in the U.S. Air Force Band of the Golden West and U.S. Air Force Band of Liberty. Damon has performed with the San Diego Symphony, San Diego Opera, Northwest Sinfonietta, Federal Way Symphony, Lake Washington Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Metropolitan Chamber Orchestra, Tacoma Opera, Tacoma City Ballet, Village Theatre, Boston Philharmonic, Boston Civic Orchestra, the York Symphony Orchestra, and, since 2023, resumed services as second horn of Symphony Tacoma.

Katriel Kirk is a fifth year student studying at Bard College and Bard College Conservatory of Music, where she is pursuing two bachelor's degrees in both Bassoon Performance and Environmental and Urban Studies. She has just completed her senior project in the EUS program, "Countermapping Compost on Campus: Exploring Feminist Alternatives to Androcentric Epistemological Practice." Katriel studies bassoon with professor Marc Goldberg at the Bard Conservatory of Music. She grew up in Washington State studying bassoon with Mona Butler, principal bassoonist of the Pacific Northwest Ballet, as well as playing in groups such as the Cascade Youth Symphony and Seattle Youth Symphony organization. Katriel has won placement with ensembles such as the Washington All-State Chamber Orchestra, the All-Northwest Wind Ensemble, and placed first in the regional Solo and Ensemble competition for Snohomish county.

Reid Shriver is a conductor, tenor, and pianist based in Red Hook, New York. This season, he is serving as assistant conductor and librarian of the Bard College Community Orchestra. One of his collaborative enjoyments is working on new repertoire, and while at Bard, he premiered Sam Mutter's *Hast thou yet found solace in an ending?* with members of the Bard College Conservatory of Music. This year, he has served as conductor in recording a new student choral arrangement of Ravel's *Boléro* for a short film by Mona Benyamin with members of the Bard Chamber Singers. He is pursuing a Master of Music degree within the Graduate Conducting Program at the Bard College Conservatory of Music, studying under James Bagwell. This past summer, Reid was a fellow in the International Conducting Training Program at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where he worked with Joe Miller and Brett Scott. As a performer, Reid has sung in numerous engagements with the Philadelphia Orchestra as a member of the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir, singing symphonic choral repertoire under various conductors. Reid holds a Bachelor of Music in Music Education at the Boyer College of Music & Dance at Temple University, studying voice with baritone Marcus DeLoach. Between 2023 and 2024, Reid served as the Vice President and Artistic Director of the Temple University Repertory Orchestra and studied with José Luis Domínguez of the Temple University Symphony Orchestra.

Chloe Brill is a graduate of the Bard Conservatory. Now they are working, playing, and loving life. Happy to be here and happy to be playing, they wish Danika nothing but the best in this world of French Horn.

Alex Norrenberns is a 4th year oboist/English hornist at Bard Conservatory. He studies with Elaine Douvas (former principal of the MET Opera) and Alexandra Knoll (New York Ballet). Before coming to Bard, Alex was a member of the St Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra for 3 years. He played in principal, second, and English horn roles, as well as studied with Xiomara Mass. Additionally at Bard, Alex studies psychology as a second major. He hopes to someday be a member of a symphony orchestra, as well as become a licensed psychotherapist.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Sichen Yang is a solo pianist who earned her Bachelor of Piano Performance from the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest, studying under László Baranyay of the Liszt Academy faculty. She is currently pursuing her Master of Piano Performance at the Bard Conservatory of Music, where she studies with Blair McMillen. Sichen has appeared as a soloist at Esterházy Castle, Budapest Cultural Hall, and Stiftskirche Church in St. Goar, Germany. She has participated in the Cziffra Festival, the Sankt Goar International Music Festival, and advanced training programs at the Leon Fleisher Academy and the Saline Royale Academy in France. Her artistic development has also been shaped by studying masterclasses with Pierre Vallet (The Juilliard School), Douglas Humpherys and Alan Chow (Eastman School of Music), Nina Tichman (Cologne University of Music and Dance). Sichen is a recipient of the Instrumental Arts Fellowship at Bard College, the China Scholarship Council Scholarship, and the Hungarian government's Stipendium Hungaricum Scholarship.

Jaime Blois is a fifth year violinist in the conservatory studying with Erica Kiesewetter. She is also in the sociology program and hopes to continue to graduate school for ethnomusicology. Jaime has been looking forward to playing this piece with Danika since we met our first year during Language and Thinking.

Kai O'Donnell is a fifth-year Bard College Conservatory student pursuing a BM in Oboe Performance and a BA in Philosophy. He began playing the oboe at age 15 in Richmond-Rosenberg, Texas. Kai began studying with Mayu Isom, 2nd oboe and English hornist of the Houston Grand Opera. Prior to Bard, he played in Houston Youth Symphony, Virtuosi of Houston, and frequently performed with the TMEA All State ensembles. Kai now appears frequently with the Bard College Conservatory Orchestra, the Bard College Community Orchestra, and has appeared with The Orchestra Now. He has also been a fellow at Texas Music Festival. He has performed in masterclasses with Anne Leek, Nicholas Stovall, and Melissa Hooper. Kai currently studies with Elaine Douvas, and Alexandra Knoll. In his free time, he enjoys reading or traveling with friends.