Kamuela PHILHARMONIC

SEASON OPENER!
MasterWorks *Concert*

Colors of *Scandinavia*

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2026, 2PM
KAHILU THEATRE
Brian Dollinger Artistic Director & Conductor

Guest Pianist
DR. THOMAS YEE



PROGRAM

THIS CONCERT IS GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN BY

Joanne & David Turner
Fred Dosher & Carol Greenwell
Niel Thomas & Hermine Baker

The Kamuela Philharmonic Orchestra is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

Hawai'i Public Radio

2026/27 SEASON

IN MEMORY OF
SUSANELLA NOBLE







This year, we lost a beloved member of our Hawai'i Island music community, Susanella Noble. Susanella moved to Hawai'i in 2002, when she purchased Harmony Farm in Mountain View. During more than two decades as an active member of our music community, she was a stellar performer, mentor, and friend to many musicians in the Kamuela Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hawai'i County Band, and countless other local ensembles.

Susanella earned her Bachelor of Music Education and Master of Arts degrees from the University of Denver on a full scholarship, where she studied with Paul Hockstad. She later studied in France with Jean-Pierre Rampal, Maxence Larrieu, Alain Marion, and Andras Adjoran. Returning to Colorado, Susanella taught at Metropolitan State College and performed throughout the country with classical guitarist Charles Wolzien; their tours included a debut at Carnegie Recital Hall. She was also an active composer and co-founder of Cordillera, a neo-classical ensemble.

In October 2005, Susanella performed the Pergolesi Concerto in G major with the Kamuela Philharmonic Orchestra. *West Hawaii Today* wrote, "The audience clapped endlessly at every pause in the music." With this performance, Susanella became the first non-string player in the Kamuela Philharmonic. She continued as a foundational member of the orchestra, serving on the Board and participating in our educational outreach programs.

Following her Carnegie Hall performance, *The New York Times* described Susanella as "sparkling and entertaining."

We will miss her sparkle and are honored to have played with and learned from her during her time with us.



FROM THE MAESTRO

It. Is. Time! Welcome back to the Kamuela Philharmonic!

It is always a special concert—the first MasterWorks concert of the season. After being away for the summer break, the musicians and I have such a great time with our musical reunion. Hard work and plenty of laughter are what we enjoy each weekend we are together.

But there's something missing from our reunion, and that is YOU! Without you, our music-making just isn't the same. We look forward to sharing the gifts of music with you, your family, and your friends here today.

A ticket to Scandinavia and the beauty of its vastly different landscapes is yours today. Our friend Thomas Yee has returned to Hawai'i Island to bring one of the most iconic piano concertos to life with Edvard Grieg's Piano Concerto in A minor. The first movement has, quite possibly, one of the most famous openings in the concert repertoire. But what I have fallen in love with is the second movement—a brief but incredibly sublime movement that quickly reaches into your soul and connects with you in a very personal way.

The *Divertimento* for String Orchestra will be the first work by Einojuhani Rautavaara performed by the Philharmonic. It is a fun work that was composed while Rautavaara was studying at the Sibelius Academy. Full of pulsing rhythms and Finnish folk influences, this work deserves to become more prevalent in the orchestral repertoire.

And then, the fantastic Symphony No. 2 by Jean Sibelius. One of the first symphonic works by Sibelius that I encountered as a young string bassist, it has always been one of my favorites. Pulsing, emotional, intimate, driving, and grandiose—this piece alone can take you on a musical roller coaster, culminating in a triumphant and grand ending.

I love what I do and that I get to share my love and joy of music with everyone in this theater today. Thank you for coming and for being such an integral part of our performance.



Brian Dollinger
Artistic Director & Conductor
Kamuela Philharmonic



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Practicing Young Students (ages 6 to 18) get a weekly discount.
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COLORS of *Scandinavia*

Thomas Yee, Piano
Brian Dollinger, Artistic Director & Conductor

Einojuhani Rautavaara ..... *Divertimento* for String Orchestra

Edvard Grieg ..... Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16

I. Allegro molto moderato
II. Adagio
III. Allegro moderato molto e marcato

Thomas Yee, piano

— INTERMISSION —

Jean Sibelius ..... Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43

I. Allegretto
II. Andante, ma rubato
III. Vivacissimo

< no break between movements >

IV. Allegro moderato

This concert is generously underwritten by **Joanne & David Turner**
With additional support from **Fred Dosher & Carol Greenwell, Niel Thomas & Hermine Baker**

PROGRAM NOTES

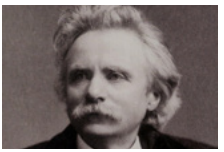


EINOJUHANI RAUTAVAARA (1928–2016)

Divertimento for String Orchestra

Finnish composer Einojuhani Rautavaara wrote his *Divertimento* for String Orchestra in 1953 while studying at Helsinki's Sibelius Academy. An early work from one of Finland's most important musical voices after Sibelius, the *Divertimento* reveals a young Rautavaara exploring the sounds and rhythms of his homeland.

Written in three movements, the work combines rhythmic vitality with striking lyricism. Finnish folk influences emerge through melodic shapes, dance-like rhythms, and a distinctly Nordic character. The energetic outer movements surround a more reflective central movement. Compact and colorful, the *Divertimento* offers an early glimpse of the imagination and expressive range Rautavaara would develop throughout his career.



EDVARD GRIEG (1843–1907)

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16

From its thunderous timpani roll and dramatic cascade of piano chords, Edvard Grieg's Piano Concerto in A minor announces itself with one of classical music's most recognizable openings. Grieg composed his only completed concerto in 1868, at just 25 years old, and it premiered the following year in Copenhagen.

Across three movements, Grieg balances virtuoso brilliance with the warmth and lyricism that became hallmarks of his music. A fiery first movement gives way to a serene *Adagio*, before the finale bursts forth with dance-like energy and rhythms influenced by Norwegian folk traditions. The concerto moves effortlessly between intimacy and grandeur, showcasing both the expressive voice of the piano and Grieg's deep connection to his homeland.



JEAN SIBELIUS (1865–1957)

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43

Jean Sibelius began his Symphony No. 2 in 1901 during a stay in Rapallo, Italy, completing it after returning to Finland. Sibelius conducted the premiere in Helsinki in 1902, where the work was enthusiastically received.

The symphony unfolds across four movements, beginning with simple musical fragments that gradually grow, connect, and gather force. Its emotional journey moves from pastoral warmth and quiet tension to the restless energy of the third movement, which leads directly into the sweeping finale and its triumphant conclusion. The work became closely associated with Finland's struggle for national identity under Russian rule, although Sibelius resisted assigning it a specific political narrative. Its extraordinary progression from intimacy to grandeur remains among his most powerful musical statements.

GUEST ARTIST: THOMAS YEE



Dr. Thomas Yee is a pianist and educator based in Honolulu, Hawai‘i, where he serves on the piano faculty at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. An accomplished soloist, chamber musician, and teacher, Yee has performed extensively throughout Hawai‘i and beyond.

His orchestral appearances include performances of Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* with the Honolulu Symphony and Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra and the Kamuela Philharmonic in 2019.

He returns to the Kamuela Philharmonic for *Colors of Scandinavia* to perform Edvard Grieg’s beloved Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16.

Yee’s contributions extend well beyond the concert stage. In 2025, he was named Hawai‘i Music Teachers Association Teacher of the Year in recognition of his contributions to Hawai‘i’s music and piano community. His students have earned top honors throughout the state and region, including five winners of the Honolulu Symphony Concerto Competition.



MUSIC EDUCATION
PATHWAYS

FROM FIRST NOTES TO LIFELONG MUSIC

KPOS is creating a pathway for young musicians across Hawai‘i Island, bringing professional music education and inspiring performances to students who might otherwise have limited access to the arts.



MUSIC APPRECIATION SPARKING CURIOSITY

Professional KPOS musicians visit elementary and middle schools throughout Hawai‘i Island, introducing students to orchestral instruments, musical concepts, and the excitement of live performance. These engaging, interactive presentations bring music directly into classrooms, including rural and underserved communities where access to arts education may be limited.



APPLIED MUSIC DEVELOPING YOUNG MUSICIANS

At the high school level, KPOS professional musicians provide instrumental coaching, sectionals, and masterclasses that strengthen students’ technique, confidence, and ensemble skills. Working alongside school music directors, our musicians help students prepare for school concerts and performances while encouraging continued participation in community bands and orchestras.



CHILDREN’S CONCERTS
EXPERIENCING THE ORCHESTRA

Each January, KPOS welcomes hundreds of elementary students to Kahilu Theatre for free, professionally performed orchestral concerts. These engaging performances bring classroom learning to life, introducing children to the power and excitement of a full symphony orchestra. For many, it is their first opportunity to experience live orchestral music.



YOUR GIFT KEEPS THE MUSIC PLAYING!

From a child's first encounter with an instrument to the development of a confident young musician, KPOS is building pathways to lifelong musical engagement. Your donation helps bring professional musicians into schools, provide advanced instruction, and keep our Children's Concerts free and accessible.

INVEST IN THE NEXT GENERATION

Support KPOS Music Education Pathways at kamuelaphil.org



SMALL ENSEMBLE
COMMUNITY CONCERTS

BRINGING THE JOY OF LIVE MUSIC TO EVERY CORNER OF HAWAIʻI ISLAND

Music has the power to connect people, lift spirits, and enrich lives. Through its Small Ensemble Community Concerts program, the Kamuela Philharmonic Orchestra Society (KPOS) brings professional musicians directly into communities across Hawai'i Island, making live classical music accessible to everyone.

FREE CONCERTS, CLOSE TO HOME

Each year, KPOS presents 40–50 free small ensemble concerts in public spaces and community gathering places throughout the island.

SERVING SENIORS, VETERANS, AND OUR ISLAND COMMUNITIES

Our musicians perform for seniors, veterans, and residents who may face financial, geographic, or mobility barriers to attending traditional concerts.

STRONGER COMMUNITIES

By bringing music to where people live and gather, KPOS creates opportunities for connection, shared experiences, and the simple joy of live music.

HELP US BRING THE MUSIC TO EVERYONE

Support KPOS Small Ensemble Community Concerts at kamuelaphil.org

ABOUT OUR MAESTRO



Photo by Steven Roby

In 2016, Maestro Dollinger was appointed Artistic Director & Conductor of the Kamuela Philharmonic Orchestra. His charisma, energy, technical clarity, and deep musical passion continue to inspire musicians and audiences alike across the country. He continues into his 23rd season as Conductor and Music Director of the Muscatine Symphony Orchestra and previously served as Music Director and Conductor of the Clinton Symphony Orchestra for more than 18 years.

Whether on the concert stage performing masterworks or pops, or in the orchestra pit conducting opera and ballet, his personable approach and clear conducting technique combine to create a fun, inviting, energetic, and enriching atmosphere at each rehearsal and performance. He has conducted a variety of orchestras, including the Georgia Symphony Orchestra, Kamuela Philharmonic Orchestra, Quad Cities Symphony Orchestra, Northwest Indiana Symphony Orchestra, Marion Philharmonic Orchestra, Idaho Falls Symphony Orchestra, Muncie Symphony Orchestra, and Southwest Symphony Orchestra (IL).

Maestro Dollinger has collaborated with various dance companies in standard and non-traditional performances. He has worked with small, local studios as well as larger regional companies like Peoria Ballet, Gateway Ballet, and the Quad Cities Ballet. Since his appointment to the Philharmonic, he has joined forces with musicians and dancers from the West Hawai'i Dance Theatre (WHDT) and Academy in performances of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*. He has been appointed Music Director and Conductor of the WHDT ballet orchestra.

Among his many interests, conducting staged performances of opera and musicals remains especially meaningful to him. He has conducted productions including *Die Fledermaus, The Tender Land, Show Boat, My Fair Lady*, and *Gianni Schicchi*, among many others.

When on Hawai'i Island, Maestro Dollinger makes it a point to work with young musicians in their school environments. He has spent countless hours with music students across the island and has partnered with the Kailua-Kona Public Library to present a wide variety of music sessions for children of all ages.

For more information about Maestro Dollinger, visit briandollinger.com.

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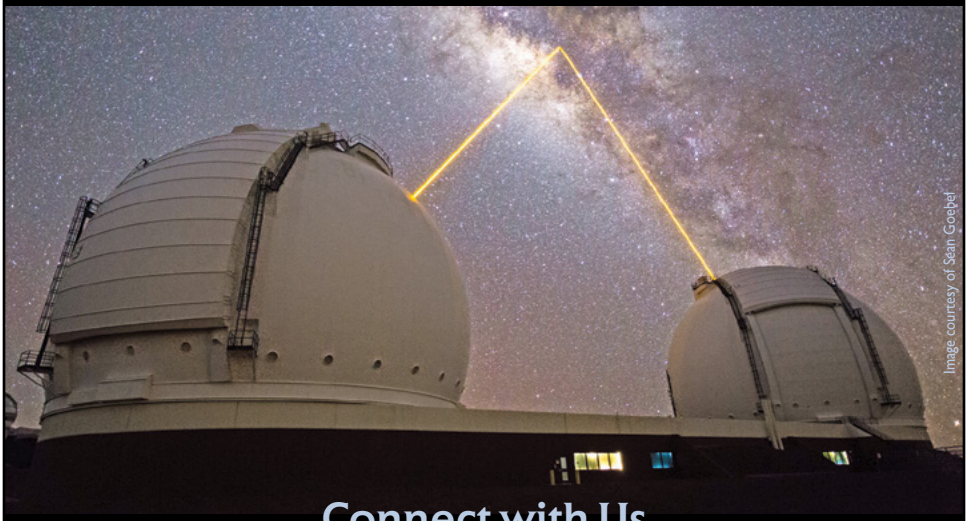
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