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ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES NEW MUSICIANS

ATLANTA – The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) has welcomed four new musicians, who recently began serving with the orchestra.

The musicians joining the ASO this season are:

- Ruoying Pan, Assistant Concertmaster
- Jake Darnell, Principal Timpani
- Patrick Miller, viola
- Charles Zandieh, cello

“This is a season of celebration and renewal, building on the traditions of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra while looking forward to the future,” said Jennifer Barlament, Executive Director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. “With the addition of these gifted musicians, the sound and tradition of the Orchestra continue to evolve, and the ASO continues to grow our impact in the community. We are delighted to welcome these wonderful new players to the Orchestra.”

About the New Musicians: [Artists | Atlanta Symphony Orchestra \(aso.org\)](http://Artists | Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (aso.org))

Jake Darnell, principal timpani

Prior to his appointment in Atlanta, Jake Darnell was the Timpani Fellow of the New World Symphony and Principal Timpani of the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra. Jake has also performed with the Houston Symphony, the Utah Symphony, and the Chattanooga Symphony.

Jake holds an Artist Diploma from Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music, a Master of Music degree from Boston University, and a Bachelor of Music degree from The Juilliard School.

In 2025, Jake was a fellow of the Tanglewood Music Center, where he performed the East Coast premiere of Gabriela Ortiz’s work for string quartet and percussion *Pico-Bite-Beat*; his performance was described by *The Boston Musical Intelligencer* as “spot-on, handling Ortiz’s busy, complex rhythms deftly.” There, he additionally performed the slide whistle solo in Ravel’s opera *L’enfant et les sortilèges*.

Jake is passionate about the performance of new and innovative music. He spent the summers of 2022 and 2023 performing with the Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra as a fellow of the Lucerne Festival Academy. He also performed in the Lucerne Festival's 2023 Forward Festival. In 2019, Jake was a fellow of the Music Academy of the West.

Jake is also an experienced orchestra librarian, having worked as an assistant and substitute librarian for the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Houston Symphony. He also spent four seasons as the librarian of Music Academy of the West and two as the librarian of Spoleto Festival USA.

A native of Emerson, Georgia, Jake was a member of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra. Outside of his musical interests, Jake enjoys being active outdoors and drinking coffee.

Ruoying Pan, Assistant Concertmaster

Ruoying Pan recently joined the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra as the Assistant Concertmaster. In 2025, she was invited to perform at the Pacific Music Festival in Japan and to attend the Stauffer Academy Concertmaster Program in Cremona, Italy.

In 2024, Pan served as concertmaster at the Music Academy of the West Soloist & Leadership Program. Pan has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C., and the China NCPA Orchestra in Beijing. As a soloist, Pan has appeared with the Hangzhou Philharmonic, Harbin Symphony, and Xi'an Symphony Orchestra, and as a chamber musician, she has performed as first violinist of the Proust String Quartet, including a memorable collaboration on Mendelssohn's Octet with members of the Emerson String Quartet.

Pan's recent honors include First Prize at the 2025 Golden Classical Music Awards International Competition, First Prize at the 2024 Vienna International Mozart Competition, and the Gold Prize of the 2024 Berlioz International Music Competition. She is currently completing her Doctor of Musical Arts at Stony Brook University, where she also serves as a teaching assistant. Previously, she studied at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University and the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University.

Patrick Miller, viola

A native of Northern Virginia, violist Patrick Miller joins the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra for the 2025-2026 season. He was recently a member of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic and held a one-year position with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra during the 2022-2023 season. Patrick has regularly performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Columbus Symphony Orchestra (Ohio), and is a former member of the Akron Symphony Orchestra and the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra. As an avid chamber musician, Patrick has had the privilege of performing with artists such as Jinjoo Cho, Jaime Laredo, Sharon Robinson, and members of the Cavani String Quartet.

Patrick spent the summers of 2017 and 2018 as a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center. He has also participated in the National Repertory Orchestra in Breckenridge, Colorado, and the National Orchestral Institute at the University of Maryland. He holds a Bachelor of Music from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music under the tutelage of Edward Gazouleas and a Master of Music from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he studied with Robert Vernon and Mark Jacobs. Patrick was given the Robert Vernon Viola Award in 2018 at his graduation from the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Charles Zandieh, cello

Charles Zandieh began his cello studies at age 4 in New York and holds degrees from The Juilliard School (BM '23) and The Yale School of Music (MM '25). His principal teachers include Alex Croxton, Clara Kim, and Paul Watkins.

Charles is a winner of multiple prizes and awards, including a two-time winner of the Juilliard School's Pre-College Concerto Competition, winner at the YoungArts Foundation, and winner of the Adelphi Orchestra Competition, among others.

As a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral musician, Charles has worked with a number of the world's leading artists, including Emanuel Ax, David Finckel, Augustin Hadelich, Frans Helmerson, Manfred Honeck, Sir Antonio Pappano, and David Shifrin. He has also performed in many venues across the globe, including Carnegie Hall, David Geffen Hall, and most recently, at the Barbican Centre with the London Symphony Orchestra.

Charles currently plays on an 1848 cello made by Mathias Neuner.

About the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Under the leadership of Music Director Nathalie Stutzmann, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) offers live performances, media initiatives, and learning programs that unite, educate and enrich our community through the engaging and transformative power of orchestral music experiences. The ASO engages the city's diverse international community, bringing people together in harmony—including our youngest citizens —through extensive opportunities for youth and families to experience the power of live orchestra music.

The Orchestra's range and depth are showcased in more than 150 concerts each year, including the flagship Delta Classical Series, Movies in Concert Series, Family Concerts, the Coca-Cola Holiday Concerts, and many community and educational concerts. In addition, the ASO presents many vibrant, wide-ranging events and artists through its Delta Atlanta Symphony Hall Live presentations. The ASO also performs regularly with the ASO Chorus, originally founded by Robert Shaw, and currently under the direction of Norman Mackenzie. The Chorus is featured on nine of the ASO's 27 GRAMMY® Award-winning recordings.

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