



23|24 SEASON

 UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

presents

NICKEL CREEK

CHRIS THILE, mandolin

SARA WATKINS, violin

SEAN WATKINS, guitar

with special guest **AOIFE O'DONOVAN**

FRI, SEPT 8, 7:30 pm

Hodgson Concert Hall

The program will be announced from the stage.

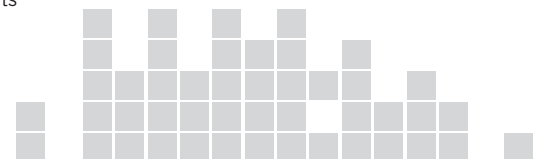
Supported by

DIANNE D. WALL

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Please silence all mobile phones and electronic devices. Photography, video and audio recording, and texting are prohibited during the performance.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

NICKEL CREEK

Nickel Creek is the platinum-selling, internationally renowned roots trio of mandolinist Chris Thile, violinist Sara Watkins and guitarist Sean Watkins. The Grammy-winning band has revolutionized folk and roots music since first performing together as children at a pizza parlor in San Diego in 1989, signing to acclaimed roots label Sugar Hill Records after wowing the bluegrass circuit for a decade. Nickel Creek quickly broke through in 2000 with their Grammy-nominated, Alison Krauss-produced self-titled LP, which showcased not just their instrumental virtuosity but their burgeoning songwriting prowess. The trio quickly followed that effort with the Krauss-produced *This Side*, a landmark release that earned Nickel Creek the Grammy award for Best Contemporary Folk Album and brought their progressive take on acoustic music to a broader audience, greatly influencing the sound and trajectory of roots music in the process. 2005's Grammy-nominated *Why Should the Fire Die?* found the trio pushing genre boundaries even further, incorporating elements of alt-rock and indie pop into their singular brand of acoustic music. Nickel Creek's most recent album, 2014's critically acclaimed and joyously received *A Dotted Line*, ended a seven-year recording and touring hiatus for the band, during which members explored other musical and creative avenues.

Each member of Nickel Creek has taken part in many outside projects over the years, too. Thile is a 2012 recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship and served as the host of the American radio variety show *Live from Here* (formerly *A Prairie Home Companion*) from 2016 to 2020. Over the course of Nickel Creek's career, Thile has released collaborative albums alongside world-renowned musicians like Yo-Yo Ma, Edgar Meyer, Brad Mehldau and Stuart Duncan. His Grammy-winning band Punch Brothers has released six studio albums, the most recent being 2022's *Hell on Church Street*, a re-imagining of the beloved 1983 Tony Rice album *Church Street Blues*. Sean Watkins has kept busy outside of Nickel Creek, too, co-founding Watkins Family Hour alongside Sara, releasing three albums with the collective and maintaining the long-running collaborative show in Los Angeles for a decade.



Sean has also released a string of solo albums, most recently 2020's *This Is Who We Are* with the Bee Eaters. Sara Watkins' extracurricular projects include the aforementioned Watkins Family Hour band, as well as co-founding the Grammy-winning roots trio I'm With Her alongside Aoife O'Donovan and Sarah Jarosz. Sara has released four studio albums, most recently 2021's *Under the Pepper Tree*. She has contributed fiddle to recordings by artists like Phoebe Bridgers, the Killers and John Mayer.

AOIFE O'DONOVAN

Grammy award-winning artist Aoife O'Donovan operates in a thrilling musical world beyond genre. Deemed “a vocalist of unerring instinct” by *The New York Times*, she has released two critically acclaimed and boundary-blurring solo albums including *In the Magic Hour*, which *Rolling Stone* hailed for its “Impressionistic, atmospheric songs [that] relay their narratives against gorgeous pastoral backdrops.” O'Donovan spent the winter and spring of 2021 in the studio with acclaimed producer Joe Henry (Bonnie Raitt, Rhiannon Giddens) recording her third full-length solo album titled *Age of Apathy*, released to critical acclaim in January 2022.

A savvy and generous collaborator, Aoife is one third of the group I'm With Her with bandmates Sara Watkins and Sarah Jarosz. The trio's debut album, *See You Around*, was hailed as “willfully open-hearted” by NPR Music. I'm With Her earned an Americana Music Association Award in 2019 for Duo/Group of the Year, and a Grammy award in 2020 for Best American Roots Song.

O'Donovan spent the preceding decade as co-founder and frontwoman of the string band Crooked Still and is the featured vocalist on The Goat Rodeo Sessions—the group with Yo-Yo Ma, Stuart Duncan, Edgar Meyer, and Chris Thile. She has appeared as a featured vocalist with over a dozen symphonies including the National Symphony Orchestra, written for Alison Krauss, performed with jazz trumpeter Dave Douglas, and spent a decade as a regular contributor to the radio variety shows *Live From Here* and *A Prairie Home Companion*.



Omar-Cruz