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Composer: Daixuan Ai
Work title: When It Blooms
Presenter: Bloomington Symphony Orchestra
Performer: Bloomington Symphony Orchestra
Date of premiere: 05/16/2026
Venue: IU Musical Arts Center

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Daixuan Ai
Submitted by

Sept 9 2026
Date

BLOOMINGTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
with RYO HASEGAWA, MUSIC DIRECTOR, presents

resounding
JOY
Beethoven's 9th

Saturday, May 16, 2026
IU Musical Arts Center
6:15pm Pre-concert talk
7:00pm Concert

With a 100+ piece community choir and
a world premiere by Daixuan Ai



 **BLOOMINGTON**
symphony orchestra
56th Season: **BETWEEN FRIENDS**



BROWN COUNTY
Community
Foundation



Resounding Joy: Beethoven 9 at the MAC

Ryo Hasegawa, Music Director

Saturday, May 16, 2026

When it Blooms

Daixuan Ai

An introduction to Beethoven's 9th Symphony

World Premiere, Commissioned by the BSO, 2026

Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125

Ludwig Van Beethoven

- I. Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso
- II. Molto vivace
- III. Adagio molto e cantabile
- IV. Presto - Allegro assai - Recitativo - Allegro assai

Nathalie Friederich, soprano; Esther Jo, alto;

Suro Kim, tenor; Stephen Stavnicky, bass.

With assembled community choir prepared by

Sue Swaney, Caio Lopez, and Betsy Burleigh

This program runs approximately 1 hour 15 minutes with no intermission.

This concert is made possible by the generous support of Markita Price and other anonymous donors.

The vocal soloists are sponsored by Mosaic Wealth Management.

Tonight, we remember the lives of five talented Jacobs School of Music graduate students—Chris Carducci, Garth Eppley, Georgina Joshi, Zachary Novak, and Robert Samels—who lost their lives in an airplane crash on April 20, 2006. Beethoven's 9th Symphony was performed in their memories shortly after their deaths, and again at the 10 year anniversary.

While this concert was scheduled without reference to this anniversary, the BSO wants to acknowledge the legacy of the "Five Friends" and the place they will forever hold in our hearts. Thank you for sharing this moment of joy with us, in their memory.

Program Note by Daixuan Ai, composer

When it Blooms - For Orchestra: an introduction to Beethoven's 9th Symphony.

Commissioned by the Bloomington Symphony Orchestra (2026)

In elementary school, my music teacher taught us to sing Sakura, Sakura ("Cherry blossoms, cherry blossoms"), a traditional Japanese folk song celebrating the arrival of spring. I learned that the cherry blossom holds a special place in Japanese culture precisely because of its brevity: blossoming for only a few weeks each year, its fleeting beauty becomes a quiet meditation on the transience of life - and a reminder to cherish each moment while it lasts.

There was a cherry blossom tree in front of our family home. I spent countless afternoons at the living room window, watching pink petals drift in the breeze, not yet knowing that quiet scene would become one of my most treasured memories. I haven't been back in fifteen years. But when I close my eyes, I can still see it clearly - like the face of a dear old friend.

That image has stayed with me. Now I try to find the "cherry blossom tree" in every situation and every person I meet - even if it blooms only briefly, even if I have to leave it behind. The memory still brings a smile to my face, and for that alone, I am grateful.

There is an Okinawan proverb: Though we meet but once, even by chance, we are friends for life. Beethoven's Ninth was built on a radical idea - that all people are equal, and worthy of joy. Perhaps in 2026, we can hold onto another: that everyone we meet, however briefly our paths have crossed, is already a friend for life.

さくら

Sakura

古歌
Traditional

さくら さくら やよいの そらは
sa ku ra sa ku ra ya yo i no so ra - wa

みわたすかぎり かすみか くもか
mi wa ta su ka gi - ri ka su mi ka ku mo - ka

においぞいずる いざや いざや
ni o i zo i zu - ru i za ya i za ya

みに ゆか ン
mi ni yu - ka n