

Yixuan Lai is a violinist, violist, educator, and emerging conductor currently pursuing the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Violin Performance at the University of Arizona, where she studies with Dr. Elena Chernova-Davis and minors in orchestral conducting under Dr. Thomas Cockrell. She is also expanding her studies in choral conducting.

As a performer, Yixuan has appeared in solo, chamber, orchestral, Baroque, and contemporary music settings throughout the United States, China, and Germany. She has performed with the Atlantic Music Festival Orchestra, Texas Festival Orchestra, Brevard Music Center Orchestra, Tianjin Juilliard Orchestra. She has appeared professionally with Acadian Symphony Orchestra, Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra and Shenzhen City Symphony Orchestra. In 2024, she performed alongside Midori Goto at the Atlantic Music Festival and served as the festival's Program Coordinator. Her recent festival appearances include the National Music Festival and the Pierre Monteux School and Music Festival.

A specialist in both Baroque and contemporary music, Yixuan has been featured as a soloist with the University of Arizona Baroque Ensemble and has performed at the Asian Classical Music Initiative International Conference. Her artistic interests include historically informed performance, new music, cross-cultural collaboration, and interdisciplinary programming.

Prior to her doctoral studies, Yixuan earned a Master of Music degree from the Mannes School of Music and a double degree in Violin Performance and Communication from South China University of Technology. In addition to her violin and conducting studies, Yixuan currently studies viola with Michael Davis. Yixuan previously studied with Wen Qian, Mingfeng Hsin, Garrett Fischbach, Dan Li, and Dongfang Ouyang. She has participated in masterclasses with distinguished artists including Mark Kaplan, Stefan Jackiw, Jessica Lee, Mann-Wen Lo, Xiao Wang, and Blake Pouliot. Her chamber music studies have included coachings and masterclasses with members of the Kronos Quartet, Ulysses Quartet, and Jasper Quartet.

In addition to her performance career, Yixuan develops educational and community-engaged programs that connect live music with history, visual art, storytelling, and cultural exploration. Recent collaborations include projects with the Center for Creative Photography, Children's Museum Tucson, Cayton Children's Museum, Pima County Public Library, Tempe Public Library, and other cultural organizations throughout the American Southwest.

Highlights of her 2026–2027 season include performances, educational residencies, and community partnerships with Arizona Senior Academy, Music in the Mountains, Cayton Children's Museum, and cultural institutions across Arizona, New Mexico, and California. Through both performance and public engagement, she seeks to create meaningful connections between music, culture, and community.

Programs are available in both English and Mandarin Chinese.