



Aspen Music Festival and School alumna Joyce Yang takes a new stage in March—with the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet.

A CONFLUENCE of Music and Dance

Pianist Joyce Yang will perform onstage with the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet—the first evening of live music for the dance company.

By Dipika Rai

Aspen audiences are in for a true treat this winter when dance and music come together in a spectacular collaboration between the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet and Aspen Music Festival and School—marking the first time in ASFB's 21-year history that dancers are backed by an entire evening of live music. The soundtrack: Robert Schumann's *Carnaval*, performed by world-renowned pianist



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Joyce Yang. The new ballet: a world premiere by legendary Finnish choreographer and ASFB regular Jorma Elo. (The program also features Jiří Kylián’s *Return to a Strange Land* with the music of Leoš Janáček and Nicolo Fonte’s *Where We Left Off* with music by Philip Glass, both also performed by Yang.)

The Elo/Yang project started as Yang’s dream child. “I’ve always imagined things when I practice and perform,” says Yang. “It’s all about colors and shapes, and when I realized I could have that, not just in my imagination, but happening before my eyes, it was like being able to see for the first time.” A Van Cliburn International Piano Competition silver medalist and Avery Fisher Career Grant recipient, Yang, encouraged by AMFS, approached the ballet with the idea, and a collaboration was born. Currently in residence with the Boston Ballet, choreographer Elo was the top choice for the project.

Elo and Yang agreed on Robert Schumann’s *Carnaval*. “There’s madness in it, and there’s freedom for me as a choreographer to feel the music in the moment when I am creating,” says Elo. Yang believes that having dancers interpret Schumann’s complicated music might help audiences understand the composer’s genius and reveal to people what musicians actually feel when they perform. The live-music element adds a dimension by bringing a complicated vocabulary and a different vibration and energy to the dancers, promising attendees a visual and auditory feast. *March 24, 7:30PM, tickets, \$36-\$94, Aspen District Theatre, 235 High School Road, aspensantafeballet.com*