

The Penguin

April 2011

New England Conservatory

Issue XXXIII

NEC Composers Lab Ensemble Continues to Search for New Sounds

by Ryan Krause

Earlier this semester, with the aid of an NEC Entrepreneurial Grant, Vanessa Wheeler founded and organized an exciting new organization with the prospect of expanding the depth of composer-performer relations and edifying and enlightening its participants and attendees. This organization, the New England Conservatory Composers Lab Ensemble (stylized as NEC CLÉ), aims to create a setting for composers to hear their music, be it a completed piece or a work in progress, in a workshop setting. Each composer gets the chance to work one-on-one with the ensemble, and to get feedback from each of its players, as well as from the two distinguished guest composers who are chosen as headliners for each event. CLÉ had its first session March 27th, and the second will be held on April 24th.

Vanessa, a senior studying Composition, said that the idea for something like the Composers Lab Ensemble “came to me after having conceived of some sonic events, but not having any practical means to test their collective generation within the larger sonic context. For many of today’s composers,” says Vanessa, “it is no longer sufficient to transcribe pitch and rhythm, but to also conceptualize texture, the capabilities of each instruments, and the ensemble that contains them. This close, tactile approach towards the ensemble is akin to an instrumentalist’s understanding of their instrument, for which there is



CLÉ members Aaron Likness, Daniel Temkin, Lautaro Mantilla, and Ceceilia Allwein rehearsing for the workshop.

no substitute but practice.” In this, the workshop acts as a sort of composer’s playground, in which they are able to try things out and make adjustments in things such as balance and orchestration on the fly.

At the beginning of the year, CLÉ sent out a mailing to a dozen or so music schools on the east coast, asking their composers to send scores. They then selected four of these works to be included in the first session. We heard new pieces for groups ranging from three to seven players by Shuying Li from Hartt School of Music, Camila Cano from Brooklyn College Conservatory, and from Hainu Tan and myself, both of NEC.

The format of the sessions allows about forty-five minutes for each of the submitted scores, in which time, the ensemble runs the piece a few times, works on problem areas, and provides feedback regarding notation, technique, and instrument capabilities. In this time, the visiting guest composers also offer their insight and critiques as to what works or doesn’t in the piece, and how the composer could better go about achieving their aims. The instrumentalists Vanessa has found to participate in the Ensemble are technically proficient, experienced, and highly musical, and

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Success: What’s *Your* Definition?

by Zach Preucil

*“Success is counted sweetest
by those who ne’er succeed.”*

-Emily Dickinson

What do we think of when we consider the word, “success?” Mile-long resumes? Flawless performances? A prestigious, well-paying job? These are the common connotations associated with the word in its musical context - but its real definition, courtesy of the ever-reliable dictionary.com, is in fact quite general:

“suc·cess [suhk-ses]—**noun**: the favorable or prosperous termination attempts of endeavors.”

On the outset, this definition makes sense when applied to the classical music world: after *attempting* a challenging piece, *endeavoring* to win a concerto competition, and performing with an orchestra to *favorable* reviews resulting in a *prosperous* future, one is surely considered to be successful. But it is also possible to *attempt* to put a small chamber music ensemble together, *endeavor* to perform in a nursing home, and invoke a *favorable* and joyful reaction from its residents - a surely *prosperous* experience for all involved. Success is manifested in multiple and often diverse ways in our field - but yet we find ourselves aspiring to that high standard only achieved by a few talented (and often rather lucky) individuals. It even stretches beyond our world into the currents of popular culture. Everyone may agree that a group who tours retirement homes is very successful in what they are doing; but who is going to be asked to play in Jordan Hall, them or Yo-Yo Ma?

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A Twelve-Tone System for Curing Addiction to New Music

by Beth Blitzer

As a former new music addict myself, I know how debilitating it can be. The countless hours I spent immersed in listening to abrasively loud, non-toe-tapping tunes, the unnerving obsession with graphic notation, simultaneously scoffing simplicity while embracing minimalism... I would listen to sine tones for 45 minutes at a time, not understanding the emotional toll it took on my friends and family. Now that I've reformed, I'd like to help the rest of humanity. Do you know someone who suffers from a similar addiction to the avant garde? Here's a twelve-tone row that can help you help others!



(Ab) Purge Firestone of all the "good" "new music" recordings. Using the same call numbers, replace them with recordings of music that is either: 1) dated 1856 or earlier or 2) Enya/Ke\$ha.

(F) Did your friend know that avant garde music was actually part of a Soviet plot to subvert American freedom and make musicians look silly?

That doesn't look like a real instrument to me, Mister Capri pants!

(C#) Consider hiring John Heiss to talk to your addicted friend—tell him or her that Mr. Heiss wants to talk about Schoenberg, but instead, he talks to them about the beauty of Bach chorales for a few hours. No one can resist his persuasive, friendly charms!

(G) Distract them with coupons to Urban Outfitters, thrift stores, and vegan eateries. Filthy hipsters.

(F#) FUN FACT: When the U.S. ousted Saddam Hussein from power, troops discovered his collection of the complete works of Harry Partch. MORAL OF THE STORY: True-blooded Americans don't trust Harry "Hobo" Partch and his microscopic tones.

(E) Autotune the electronic music studio. This will either cause MAX/MSP patches to generate music of unerring Bb major tonality, or cause your friend to go into an angry rant about T-Pain and Rebecca Black, distracting them from their silly computer music.

(Bb) You know what cures everyone? A good ol' fashioned Rachmaninoff marathon!!!

(C) It's a slippery slope. Was establishing a jazz department at NEC 41 years ago *really* a good idea? Let's reconsider that.

(D) If you actually listen through the whole of Feldman's Second String Quartet, you learn that it's nothing more than a note-by-note reproduction of Schumann's *Dichterliebe* slowed down to 1/12 the normal speed.

(B) John Cage wrote a piece about silence. Silence can be awkward. Awkward is uncomfortable, which is bad. Therefore, silence is bad. Check and mate, compadré.

(Eb) Did you know that "my kid could paint that" is actually a phrase coined in the 80s, during a shocking exposé of John Cage's methodology. Cage, that most notorious avant gardner, actually employed dozens of illegal child laborers, paying them only in candy and promises of unicorn dreams. Children were forced to sit in rooms for up to 12 hours a day, endlessly flipping coins for Cage's dastardly "chance" pieces.

(A) Answer this question, fashionista: Why would someone wear blue jeans *and* a jean shirt?



Beth Blitzer is an incoming Doctoral candidate pursuing a degree in Tanya Kalmanovitch. The Penguin strives to keep this column free of factual accuracy. If you notice any truthful statements, please send an e-mail to bethblitzer@gmail.com

Entrepreneurial Musicianship

NEC NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY

Calling all NEC entrepreneurs! Do you have a great idea for a new project or venture? Do you need seed money to get it off the ground? Apply for an Entrepreneurial Student Grant. All current NEC students are eligible to apply. The summer application deadline is Monday, April 25, 2011.

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For more information, visit

necmusic.edu/entrepreneurship or contact Eva Heinstein at eva.heinstein@necmusic.edu, 617-585-1112, or drop by SB106.

MARK PRINDLE – MY WIFE LEFT ME BECAUSE THESE SONGS ARE TERRIBLE

by Neal Markowski

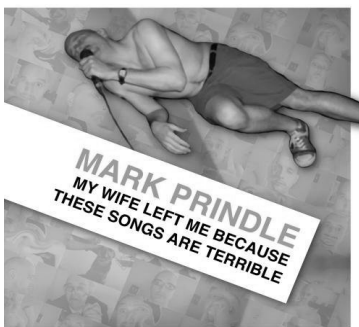
When I was a young man, I learned about Mark Prindle. Mark is a gentleman who runs a record review site (MarkPrindle.com) that reviews just about everything by an innumerable amount of bands. When a new album comes out, some people turn to All Music Guide or Pitchfork or some other magazine, but me and all the other cool kids? – we just hop on down to Mark Prindle’s record review site. There, the cool kids and I hang out and read review after profanity-laced review, with a sense of humor and familiarity that’s missing in too many of today’s reviews.

So imagine my surprise when I was 15 years young to learn that Mark was not only a prolific reviewer and interviewer, but is also quite the musician (take that, Lester Bangs and Jim DeRogatis!!) I can remember the day at Garret Kriston’s house when he whipped out a mailer filled with some CD-Rs whose content was stylistically all over the place. I think one CD had, like, 4 different versions of Crass’s “Do They Owe Us a Living?” and there was another song that had a dog barking and it was just all kinds of wild stuff happening. Sadly, I never got around to buying any of the CDs from Prindle himself (I mean, \$4 per CD, multiplied by 6 CDs equals \$24! I could eat multiple meals with that money!) So imagine my excitement when some label called Nute Records was releasing *My Wife Left Me Because These Songs Are Terrible* – a “greatest hits” disc of selections from Prindle’s solo albums.

On this little disc here (I’m lying, I downloaded it), you’ve got 8 songs from each of his 5 solo albums. Sure, you can complain that “XYLODARK” isn’t on there like that guy on Amazon.com did, but who cares?! Instead, from that same album, you get “12345” and “FASTCLEANS” and “ANGST” and 5 others that wouldn’t be on there if “XYLODARK” was. And really, the fact that there’s an album with songs such as “Disco Jaws,” “Jogging is the Bestest” and “Honey Child, You Ain’t Lived Until You’ve Drafted A Press Release Announcing That GameSpy Industries Has Received An Equity Investment From Michael Ovitz And The Yucaipa Companies” on it, should leave you with NO reason to complain.

As for the music - huh? You want to know about the music? Well, Eddie Vedder once said that Peter Dinklage played the guitar like someone who worked in a record store would – Prindle writes music like a record reviewer would. His songs all have their obvious influences that you could trace to band A or B, and he’s able to put bands A and B into the same song! I mean, look at “Disco Jaws,” which starts with a drum machine and a throbbing bass line that sounds vaguely like Big Black meets the Bee Gees with lyrics about a shark at a disco club (I think?) Genius! Big Black never wrote songs about sharks! Granted, they did have that one about a dog, but Mark has one that FEATURES his dog on lead vocals. And let’s not forget about the classic “Pinhead+Diver Down=Aah! (Rounded To The Nearest Decimal, Of Course),” which explains, in detail, non-musical aspects of the song “Pinhead” by the Ramones and *Diver Down* by Van Halen that make them hard to listen to. The other 37 songs I won’t bother describing are all good and worth your time. What’s even

better is that most of the songs weren’t written before they were recorded! So you mean to tell me that Prindle just has these melodies floating around his noggin? Good. Granted, there are some songs I didn’t like at first listen, but that’s the joy of having 40 songs to listen to, spanning some 10 years or something like that.



Prindle’s solo album *Stop, Drop And Roll: A Musical Celebration of Death by Smoke Inhalation* features 55 songs that, according to his website, “...present, in chronological order, the entire history of rock and roll as funneled through my poor sense of humor.” I guess you could say that, while not the concept for this, this compilation does roughly the same thing. So, if you like you music to sound like a hilariously over the top KISS rip-off (“Hot Rockin 2Nite (Live)”) or just solid catchy rock numbers (“ANGST”), then this is the place for you. It’s a shame there’s no Sparks covers on here.

OVERALL RATING – More sandwiches.

KEY TRACKS – “ANGST”, “Lefties, Righties, We’re All One In The Pearly Gates Of Hellfire”, “Hurting You In A Malicious Manner”, “FASTCLEANS”

Saturday, April 16th is once again Record Store Day. How can you participate? Simple – just go to any independent record store in the area and buy records. Personally, I’d recommend Weirdo Records in Cambridge, In Your Ear which is located by B.U. (right next to Raising Cane’s, nonetheless), Cheapo Records in Cambridge, Tres Gatos (formerly Rhythm & Muse) in J.P., and of course, any one of the countless Newbury Comics in the area. Make sure to visit RecordStoreDay.com for more information regarding special releases and all sorts of other good stuff.



Neal Markowski is a sophomore composition major. Send comments and questions about this article to Neal.Markowski@necmusic.edu. Visit his blog at <http://recordreviewandtacosalon.blogspot.com>.

FEEDING PEOPLE | NOURISHING HOPE



Project Bread’s Walk for Hunger is Sunday, May 1, 2011. The 20-mile route, weaving through Boston, Brookline, Newton, Watertown, to Cambridge, will include entertainment and free snacks along the way. On May 1st, over 40,000 Walkers will step out and raise \$4 million to help fund over 400 food pantries, soup kitchens, food banks, and food salvage programs across Massachusetts. Registration is from 7:00 to 9:00 A.M. on Boston Common. For more information, visit www.projectbread.org or call 617-723-5000. If you or someone you know is struggling to put food on the table, please call Project Bread’s Food-Source Hotline at 1-800-645-8333.

This myth of ultimate success in classical music may stem from the fact that musicians are held to higher standards than virtually any other field. We are expected to achieve near-perfection in any given performance situation, and even a minor mistake tarnishes that golden goal. Baseball players can have two strikes and three or four foul balls, but if they hit a home run, nobody cares anymore. Yet, if a violinist falls off the fingerboard a couple times, and misses three or four shifts, most listeners won't think too highly of him even if he nails his octaves afterwards. One may argue that baseball players cannot prepare exactly for the moment in which they are expected to do well; but in a sense, neither can we, because although we may know a piece intimately, nothing can replicate the moment of performance, with thousands of ears trained on every sound we are producing. The addition of the audience heightens the difficulty of perfection. At least medical surgeons, whose work bears a similar necessity for perfection, do not have to perform open heart surgery on the stage of Symphony Hall. (Though it is a curious thought to wonder how many people would come to see it if they did.) In fact, the only other real comparison to performing is public speaking, and a speech is still considered to be successful even if it is punctuated with multiple "uh"s. A popular statistic holds that a certain percentage of Americans would rather die than speak in front of an audience - to which I can only say, try sitting in front of an orchestra attempting to manipulate an awkward instrument made of an odd assortment of metal, wood, and ivory whilst dealing with nervous adrenaline that hampers your ability to do so.

The likelihood of performing an absolutely ideal performance is certainly narrow; yet, even narrower is the likelihood of securing a stable job in the music world, and thus we have an added dimension to the myth of success. In a time period of economic uncertainty, we feel our stomachs contract at stories of financially struggling orchestras and music institutions, or of hundreds of people showing up to audition for a single orchestra position. We feel compelled to present ourselves as being extremely successful when facing the job market, and with each year, it seems, the standards are raised exponentially higher. Thirty years ago, it was perfectly feasible to secure a teaching position at a college with no more than a Bachelors degree; now, you won't even be considered unless you at least have some form of post-graduate education. With the increasing growth of summer festivals and other institutes, educational opportunities outside of the conservatory have become more numerous, but many of these places have turned into highly competitive institutions that serve afterwards as fodder for resumes.

Thus, we encounter what one might call B.B.S. - Biography Brag Syndrome. We've all seen them - long, flowery written bios continued over three pages, leaving you not in awe of the person's accomplishments but rather wondering if there's anything else possible to know about them. Although many musicians use their biographies to introduce themselves and detail their journeys as an artist, others tend to stretch the truth and use impressive-sounding words such as "prestigious" and "competitive" to make it sound as though they have had unprecedented amounts of success. Sure, a person may write that they attended the *prestigious* Aspen Music Festival, but they're not going to tell you that they got last chair in the orchestra. Yet nevertheless, an aspiring musician reading a B.B.S. bio in the audience subconsciously associates those details of success with the quality of performance they hear onstage - and if it is a quality they aspire to achieve, they may begin to feel that they need to accomplish similar feats. But we must remember that

while certain accomplishments are representative of a direct influence on a person's playing, many may have happened by chance or have had their merits exaggerated by the bio-writer in question, and we should not assume that a person has not had as many rejections or negative results as we have. Everyone puts their best foot first when writing their bios and resumes; but everyone has two feet.

With the advent of social media such as Facebook and Twitter, the myth of success has continued to be redefined. This time of year witnesses an enormous domination of one's newsfeed by exclamatory status updates detailing a person's acceptance to a conservatory or summer program. While there is certainly nothing wrong with sharing your success with your friends, your post may appear in another person's feed as the latest in a long line of similar virtual shouts of joy, and the result can have a unique psychological effect. Imagine getting rejected from a competitive summer festival, and then having twenty or so people run into your bedroom and shout

'Everyone puts their best foot first when writing their bios and resumes; but everyone has two feet.'

that they got in and just couldn't wait to go. You would probably feel some degree of failure. Yet, in the days before social media, you would be left to lick your wounds in private and move on. Although most of us probably don't compare our successes to others, the cyber world of status updates contributes significantly to the concept

started by B.B.S. - that one must achieve a certain amount of such accomplishments in order to be *considered* successful, merely because everyone else who is observed to be successful has achieved those things.

But the key word here is *considered*. The myth of success is fueled by the traditional expectations of classical musicians; narrowing job opportunities; and the ever-numerous and increasingly present examples of what is perceived to be successful. But absolutely none of those things are what performing is all about. A performance is where any artist - regardless of quality or credentials - walks on stage and figuratively says, "Hey, I've studied one of the greatest works of art ever written, and here is what I think of it." And after it's over, the audience figuratively says, "Thank you, you have just done something great for all of us" - and then they leave, and the performer leaves, and everyone goes and has a nice dinner. That's all that it is - so simple, yet so incredible, and when it comes down to it nobody really cares what the performer was doing twenty years ago. They just care about the experience that they just participated in.

It is interesting to think that, if we have reached a point where so many people can play near-perfectly, so many people are playing music, and there are so many opportunities to do so, we have all surely transcended the original boundaries of success set hundreds of years ago when traditional performance practices began. If we can keep that simple, wonderful goal of a performance in mind, then I think we can be successful no matter what curves life throws at us. In the end, perhaps, it is not those who never succeed who count success sweetest; it is those who don't *think* that they have.



Zach Preucil is a junior cello performance major. Send comments and questions about this article to Zachary.Preucil@necmusic.edu.

possess a great deal of eloquence with which they are able to offer helpful and insightful comments to the composer.

In addition to working on the submitted pieces, the two visiting composers also get a chance to present their own pieces, in a longer ninety minute session, which acts as an interactive master-class.

The featured composers from the first session were Sivan Cohen-Elias from Harvard, and NEC's own Anthony Coleman. Sivan is an Israeli composer, currently studying with Chaya Czernowin, whose piece, *How Long Is Now*, offered a swirl of colors and waves, flowing and fluttering through ever-evolving timbral and instrumental combinations. The piece, scored for soprano, flute, sax, trombone, electric guitar, piano, percussion, and bass, conducted by senior Joan Arnau Pàmies, demonstrated a number of extended techniques and subtle textures for the ensemble to work on, from the low-end collisions of detuned bass and whammy-dropping guitar, to the upper extremes of the female voice, where NEC alum Ceceilia Allwein displayed phenomenal control as she squeaked and chirped nonsense syllables against the piccolo and soprano sax. More than just a simple masterclass, in which a composer introduces themselves, talks about their life and work, and answers questions (all of which she did in a professional and personable manner), the NEC CLÉ session allowed Sivan the chance to demonstrate, with the live ensemble, certain passages as she was discussing them, and to close with a complete performance of the work.

After lunch, we heard from Anthony Coleman of the CI department, whom Vanessa had commissioned to write a piece which would feature the remainder of ensemble's instrumental forces. This piece, for bassoon, violin, and cello, bore the working title of "Quodlibet – And Proud of It, Man!," and was a crisp and twisty little game of hockets and interlocking, whose stuck machines and juicy intervals served to create both tension and levity as the piece moved on. Anthony, in his typical folksy, philosophical manner, analogized his use of "pitches flying around in the air" to watching an army of ants in an anthill, quipped on new wave cinema and packs of wild dogs, and spoke of his interest in "sad things that are funny." (There is a great video of him talking about this on the NEC CLÉ Facebook page.)

The next CLÉ session will be on April 24th, in Williams Hall, from 9-4. Submissions are still being accepted. CLÉ will be choosing select pieces to be worked on that day. These composers will have the opportunity to receive feedback from guest composers Ann Cleare, Ph.D. candidate at Harvard, and NEC Theory Faculty Katarina Miljkovic, who will both be presenting their own works, as well.

The ensemble for the coming session will include sax(es), bassoon, trumpet, trombone, tuba, soprano, percussion, piano, violin, cello, and bass. All are invited to submit their proposals. Works will be chosen based upon the quality and clarity of the submitted score, the perceived efficacy of having the piece worked on in such a manner, and their utilization of the ensemble's instrumental forces. Proposals will be accepted until April 18th. And potential submitters needn't fear that their works are either too avant-garde, or too conventional, nor should they worry about submitting a piece that isn't quite done. Works in progress are preferred, as these stand to have the most potential benefit. These works can range from the commonplace to the complex, from a graphic or aleatoric score to a simple exercise in orchestration; so long as the composer is clear in their application and in their means of communicating with the ensemble, the work will have a good chance of being selected. (For more information on submissions, and to download the application form, visit necce.blogspot.com or the NEC CLÉ Facebook page.)

Already off to a successful pilot season, NEC CLÉ plans to continue the program into the next year, as Vanessa returns to pursue her Master's studies. Active participation from the student body in the upcoming, final session of the semester will help make the project as fruitful and productive as can be, and will help to further the organization's successes going forward. As Vanessa puts it, "my primary goals are that this pilot program continues for the ongoing benefit of the school, the NEC Composition Department, and the music community at large."



Ryan Krause is a second-year graduate composition major currently studying with John Mallia. Send comments and questions about this article to Ryan.Krause@necmusic.edu.

Entrepreneurial Grants—Everything You Ever Wanted to Know

Q & A with Eva Heinstejn and Elizabeth Erenberg

Eva: Liz, can you give us the inside scoop on your Sounding the Stories grant project? What should we be looking out for in the next few months?

Liz: I am creating a concert that combines music and literature, specifically through the lens of Greek Mythology. It takes music written based on stories of Greek Mythology (the flute repertoire = in particular is quite large), plus the poems, and prose written on the same myths. Then I put them in a blender and voila! For example, as I play Debussy's *Syrinx* for solo flute, an orator will simultaneously recite John Lyly's poem entitled *Syrinx*. With the addition of things like lighting and visual art, the audience (which ideally will consist of students in elementary and high school learning about Greek Mythology) should be taken into a different world in which they are absorbed in both the music and the stories in a new way; a way that is not normally experienced when the literature and the music are presented separately.

In the coming weeks and months you can stay tuned for the release of my personal website, a blog specifically about this project, and information about performance dates.

Eva: I don't want to further fan the controversy surrounding the grant initiative, but do you know whether or not any animals were harmed in the process of reviewing your application?

Liz: I was not physically there when my application was reviewed, but rumor has it that Tony Woodcock has a pet penguin in his office. That AND the fact that Rachel Roberts brought her cat to work recently have caused me moments of suspicion. However, I'm sure that whatever kind of animal testing is happening will result in high scores. After all, these animals are learning entrepreneurial skills!

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Eva: Entrepreneurial Musicianship - it's hard to say, nearly impossible to spell, and not the easiest to define. In the grant application, we asked you to share your understanding of entrepreneurial musicianship. What did you come up with?

Liz: I have many thoughts on this subject, but for me a lot of it comes down to attitude. The reality is that the world is changing every day, and I think that the relationship between you and your art needs to be open to adapting to that change. I think that we should be looking for more ways to give back. To me, entrepreneurial musicianship means taking your musical skills and using them in a way that is current. In other words, you need a few NON-musical skills such as marketing, communications, and some knowledge of business. That way, not only will you increase your chances of success (whether it be financial or not), but you can also gain more respect for being an artist in a challenging market. You can use these skills to find success doing what you love.

Eva: One of your grant advisors is President Tony Woodcock - what is it like working with him?

What have you taken away from your meetings so far? Is he really as British as he seems on stage?

Liz: It has been great working with Tony Woodcock because I feel that he understands what I'm trying to do and believes in it. He clearly has his finger on the pulse not only with what's happening in the music world, but also on ways to adapt. So the fact that he is interested in my project is a big honor and vote of confidence for me. He has offered me advice that fresh and thought provoking. Rather than going with a typical "model" like selling my project to a particular venue, he is making me get inside the head of the presenter to tell them why they in particular need me to do this project for them. Additionally, he has suggested to me that I meet with people in person rather than cold-calling or e-mailing. So I am learning about the power of persuasion and ways of making connections that really work. President Woodcock has also educated himself a little bit on American sports, so in that way he is a good combination of both nationalities.

Eva: If you were on the grant review panel, what would you be looking for in an application?

Liz: I think that a large misconception about these projects is that they need to be all about the money. The first time I applied earlier this year, I did not receive the grant, but was told that the committee still really liked the idea. The "entrepreneurial" element is what was lacking. It was the re-application process that helped me define what entrepreneurial musicianship means. Not only does this project represent me artistically, but with a few additions like targeting a specific audience, selling tickets, and presenting other concerts in the future on different themes, I was able to make my project come to life. So if I were on the committee, I would look for a project that seems original, well-thought out, and something that the person really believes in. The idea itself is not enough. What it will do for the community and your personal development is also really important.

Eva: Let's be honest, launching a new project isn't all sunshine and rainbows. What challenges have you met and how have you moved past them? Dish, girlfriend.

Liz: Girlfriend, let me tell you. This is definitely a challenge. I have planned and executed many recitals for myself over the years, and in doing that I've learned that just an hour or two of your life can require months of intense preparation musically and logistically. This project is uncharted waters for me. There are new challenges on almost every level. Believe it or not, I consider myself a bit of a technological novice. Designing a website has presented me with several new learning curves from content to the actual process of getting it out into the world. Then there is perhaps the most challenging element - marketing. While it is easy to market yourself within a school environment, it is a bit scarier out in public. Similarly, my timeline keeps changing because certain factors are still fluid. So basically, I am learning how to plan on a whole new level. It is a little bit of a race against time, and trying to judge what is better to do now versus later on, what to market now versus later, etc. After those logistics are figured out comes the challenge of making the product the best it can be. Even then, this is so new that I am not sure how people will respond to it. However, I am learning a lot by looking to my fellow grant recipients and all the support I have from the faculty, my teacher Paula Robison, and my advisors.

Eva: The Entrepreneurial Grant initiative has funded twenty two projects this year. That's a serious chunk-of-change. What do you think the return on investment is? What kind of mark is this initiative making at NEC and out there in the (shudder) "real world"?

Liz: I suppose only time will tell! But I think that NEC is leading the way into the future with this initiative because it is telling the "real world" that artists really can chart their own paths in music. Also, it provides a bit of needed positivity by

setting an example of artists being entrepreneurial in the midst of so many depressing things happening to music. I think it is time that the "real" world and the "ideal" world acknowledge one another and make a few adjustments so we as the next generation of musicians can keep thriving.

Eva: If students are interested in getting a piece of this grant action, what can they do to get involved (Ahem, the next deadline is April 25)?

Liz: Apply for the grant! But first, go talk to Eva Heinsteins or Rachel Roberts in the Entrepreneurial Musicianship department (SB106). They are not only very nice but also extremely knowledgeable and supportive. Without their help and support I would not have done what I have so far. They are true assets to this



Rachel Roberts and Eva Heinsteins, bright eyed and busy tailed before the madness began.



Elizabeth Erenberg is a second-year graduate student in flute performance. Send questions and comments about this article to Elizabeth.Erenberg@necmusic.edu

Unempty Places

A short story by Wesley Chu

Human eyes are not grown for the immaterial. And what we cannot see we label the 'unseen', our hubris deciding that the invisible is tantamount to the nonexistent.

Of course, it is not so.

The ravages of time inflict more than just experience and age. As the years pass, a veil, like a thin film of skin, creeps over our vision and our hearing, obscuring that which once we too, could observe. The sensitivity of our ears is blunted, dulling us to what we once could hear freely.

Remember the closets in your bedrooms. Remember the spaces beyond your windows. You may have retained some sense of the abnormal, the unusual, and the unnatural. When next you are alone and are gazing into a mirror, watch your reflection closely, and look behind yourself. Do not seek slumber immediately after resting your head – wait, and listen, with your eyes tightly shut. Eyelids will not protect you from what you once may have seen.

Marvel at every door whose secrets are unknown to you. As a child, nothing was hidden. If you find yourself sleepless in the dead of night, do not force yourself. Dreams are useless if you walk the darkest hour, furthest from the sun in any direction, an anti-noon and anti-afternoon of sorts. The moon and the streetlamps may reveal things to which daylight is blind. Just be wary, for if you peer hard enough into the darkness, you may yet find it leering back.

Shun not the touch of ethereality. Our bodies themselves know better than our minds. With every hair they tell us we are not alone, though our doors are locked and our windows bolted. Fear not and turn around! Stare into the face of it that looms behind you. Dismiss not the noise from the other room, in which there is (hopefully) no-one. Let not the wraiths wait unheeded; seek them out!

Arm yourself. You are hardly helpless. For we feared what lurked behind our closet-doors and unseen rooms ignorant of our greatest weapon against the darkness. We dread what later we deem to be products of an errant mind, not knowing that its flaws can yet be harnessed. Arm yourself! The denizens of the dark fear your sword. A sharper mind bewails no feeble ghoulish or goblin. And search for the beauty that bides in shadows. It will aid you when nothing else can be sought.

Above all, do not fear the night. As we grew older, the day took on enough horrors of its own. We can afford no rest during the brighter hours, but the darker clock-turns need not be harsher. If you wish to speak to the indefinite, step out into the twilight and stare at an unblemished sky, whose soundless summoning beckons you to fall up into a void. Embrace the chill of a sudden suspicion. Delight in a derelict passageway, an abandoned hall, and dream of those who live there still, and saw you as you passed. And if you catch a fleeting glimpse – the merest image – of a wayward figure on a distant street, of something that ought not to exist in daylight, rejoice!

Magic, after all, has not died.



Wesley Chu is a sophomore in piano performance. Send questions and comments about this article to Wesley.Chu@necmusic.edu

N.E.W.E.N.G.L.A.N.D.C.O.N.S.E.R.V.A.T.O.R.Y.O.F.M.U.S.I.C!

A poem by Julia Partyka

N.eedless to say it's quite elite
E.veryone knows how to tap with their feet
W.hen there's a "do", a "mi" may follow
E.ven such cases, there is a 5th "so"
N.ever again to miss a cue
G.ladly humming a melody on doodoodoodoodoo
L.iving endlessly in a practice room
A.lthough their smell can cause some doom
N.ot a bow out of place
D.uring rehearsal with grace
C.annot compare
O.h how the timpani blare
N.either a rest or 16th missed
S.ince 1867 the halls boomed bliss
E.xcellent resonance is what they say
R.adiant Jordan Hall saves the day
V.ery exact is said to be
A. way a musician is aught to see
Today we play from gregorian to contemporary
O.vertones and microtonality
R.eally, this is something to hear
Y.ou reading this, I hope I've been clear.
O.nward we go
F.or to and fro
M.ay you continue to clank
U.nder a conductor's rank
S.imple is but a word.
I.ntense, another heard.
C.an you hear the music?!
! That's an exclamation, suchlike the strike of a baton stick.



Julia Partyka is a sophomore in vocal performance. Send questions and comments about this article to Julia.Partyka@necmusic.edu

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Co-Editor	Neal Markowski	Neal.Markowski@necmusic.edu
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Staff Writer	Ryan Krause	Ryan.Krause@necmusic.edu
Staff Writer	Julia Partyka	Julia.Partyka@necmusic.edu
Staff Writer	Beth Blitzer	Beth.Blitzer@gmail.com
Staff Writer	Wesley Chu	Wesley.Chu@necmusic.edu
Staff Photographer	Jesse Weiner	Jesse.Weiner@necmusic.edu
Faculty Advisor	Thomas Handel	Thomas.Handel@necmusic.edu
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