
The Penguin

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New England Conservatory

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Entrepreneurship finds a leader at NEC

by John Elliott

You're probably used to dealing with the financial aid office, the health services office, and the gig office, but an office you might not be as familiar with is one that might soon be the most important office to you, the office of Rachel Roberts, Director of Entrepreneurial Musicianship. Rachel is one of the newest additions to the administration here at NEC and she's got big things planned for you and your future career.

Rachel started in September as the Director of Entrepreneurial Musicianship and has since been busy creating a totally new department here at NEC. She has taken on the huge task of setting up this program by meeting with over 150 members of the NEC community, traveling across the country to research other music schools in Rochester, Miami, and New York City, participating in conferences in San Diego and Nashville, and doing a great deal of research on the concept of entrepreneurship in schools. Aside from her research, she also has had quite a bit of experience with the concept of music entrepreneurship in music herself. Rachel graduated from the Eastman School of Music with a Bachelor of Music Degree in Flute Performance, where she took part in their Arts Leadership Program. From



there, while continuing to teach and perform, she went on to work in many different roles with orchestras like the Rochester Philharmonic, the Aspen Academy Conducting Orchestra, the Detroit and South Dakota Symphonies, and most recently as the Director of Strategic Planning Engagement with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Among her many duties in Atlanta, Rachel was Project Manager for the grand opening and the ASO's inaugural summer season at the Verizon Wireless Amphitheater at Encore Park (a 12,000 seat outdoor venue that serves as the ASO's new summer home).

With such an impressive résumé, it's no wonder why Rachel was given the task of starting such an ambitious program at our institution. She also has big ideas about this program and it's possibilities. This program could very well influence what a music education is in this country, which has typically been viewed as being strictly performance based. According to Rachel, offering music students the opportunity to learn entrepreneurial skills will help them create new and improved ways of reaching their audiences: "Entrepreneurial musicianship does not necessarily equal starting a business. Entrepreneurial musicianship equals an

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NEC Student Affairs Committee - A Dark Society?

by Dave Tarantino

There is a little-known group at our school that connects students, administrators, and board members. This group, the Student Affairs Committee, meets four times a year in an open discussion between these three groups of people. If you are not familiar or have never heard of the Student Affairs Committee, the mission reads as follows:

"To provide a forum where students, faculty, staff, and members of the board of Trustees and Overseers meet to discuss issues of importance to students. In recent years, the Committee has heard reports from the student government on student programming and events, from the Office of Student Life about wellness programs and residence hall renovation, and from the Dean's Office about diversity planning and innovations in advising. Trustees and Overseers respond with suggestions for improvement, programming ideas, and support within the governing board of the Conservatory."

Although there are other outlets for students to voice their opinions at our school, this one is particularly unique in that it connects student opinions and issues with not only administrators but with board members. A few issues or ideas for improvement are proposed at each meeting, and all three groups engage in an invaluable collaboration. Often times, issues and ideas are left open-ended at the end of the meeting pending further action. At the beginning of the next meeting, there is a follow up on all of the past issues.

However, student issues are not the only things on the agenda for meetings. Last year, when students were developing their ideas for the Musical Diplomacy concert, they attended a meeting and brainstormed with administrators and board members. They received professional, quality advice from committee members at the meeting on how to advertise for the event, amongst other things. At the last meeting of the Student Affairs committee, a wide range of topics was discussed. For

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CD Review: The Flaming Lips w/Starlight & White Dwarfs: “Dark Side of the Moon”

by Neal Markowski



To be completely honest, I hadn't planned to listen to this release. I wasn't blown away by what I heard of “Embryonic” (the album the Lips put out last year) and I really don't care for Pink Floyd - maybe it has something to do with my junior high years, but even today, I can not make it through a full Pink Floyd album without falling asleep or becoming bored. But, over the holidays,

I couldn't find anything new by a group that I enjoy, so here we are, left with this. I must mention that I have not listened to Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* in its entirety, so this review won't compare the two. My objective: A fresh look determining whether or not it is pleasant.

Some important things to note: Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* contained a significant amount of talking. Well, on this Lips re-make, all of that talking has been voiced by a Mr. Henry Lawrence Garfield, or Henry Rollins as you might know him (from Rollins Band and “The Henry Rollins Show” fame). In between tracks like “On the Run” and “Time”, you get to hear the man who was shouting out Black Flag hits like “TV Party” and “Damaged I” coughing. Coughing? You mean to tell me that Wayne Coyne dragged in Henry Rollins to cough over the same sound loop found on the 30 minute hidden track off of “Hit to Death in the Future Head”? Way to go! Ohh! And how about Peaches?! That's right, Peaches is on here. What does she do? Well, when not remixing songs from the most recent B-52s album, she finds time to scream all over “The Great Gig in the Sky”.

And then there are songs like “Money.” This one I've actually heard the Pink Floyd rendition. For fear of a narcoleptic fit, I usually turn it off, but I do know it well enough. This new version sounds completely dead and lifeless. After the groove is looped for a bit, Wayne comes in sounding like he's singing through a vocoder. The song ends with the groove and what sounds like Henry Rollins talking in a cave.

I was surprised to find that I know some other songs on this release. I never knew that “Brain Damage” was a Pink Floyd song. The Lips do a nice job with it, but once again, Henry Rollins laughing? What?! “Eclipse” sounds good, but really, it just made me think “Man, the Flaming Lips need to stop listening to Pink Floyd, get Wayne's brother Mark back in the band, and record some Spacemen 3 covers!”

Okay, we've got to chat about who Starlight & White Dwarfs really are and how they fit into this new release. Turns out, Wayne has a nephew who enjoys playing music and helping build stuff for the Lips' live concerts. He started a band and Wayne, who was presumably preoccupied at the time designing the “Silver Trembling Fetus” Christmas ornament, called on them to help out. Well, call me crazy, but I can't tell who's doing what! It's obvious when Wayne is singing, but as for the instrumental parts, how can I tell who's who? What if I really want to appreciate Steven Drozd? Is Kliph drumming on any of it? From what I've read, PF's *Dark Side of the Moon* is pretty heavy in terms of the bass; How come I can't hear any? What's Michael Ivins doing over there? ...Other than wearing CCCP t-shirts...presumably NOTHING.

So did you hear? There's a new Guided by Voices release – “Suitcase 3”, featuring 100 demo recordings, including a version of “Alright” with lyrics! Let's see how Steven Soderbergh's match up.

OVERALL RATING – Kind of like going to Zuma - play it once, laugh at Rollins, and never listen to it again. Unless you liked “Embryonic” (in the Zuma case, its tex-mex), then you'll be in heaven here.



KEY TRACKS – “Brain Damage”, “Us and Them”, “The Great Gig in the Sky”.

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To read more reviews by Neal or to make requests for more reviews visit recordreviewandtacosalon.blogspot.com

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opportunity for you.”

So why is NEC developing a musical entrepreneurship initiative in the first place? Speaking from personal experience as a music conservatory graduate and professional orchestral musician (as a substitute and as a principal musician), a conservatory education is great, but it doesn't necessarily prepare you for everything the music business has to throw at you. For example, a degree at a conservatory can give you the chance to build up world-class chops, an extensive performance base, and an ‘in’ with some of the people that are best at doing what you want to do. But it doesn't fully prepare you to help your non-profit employer develop a new fundraising base, or teach you how to negotiate that recording contract your career is riding on. In the quickly evolving music business, just having a world class high Eb isn't the only way to “make it” any more. That's where the Entrepreneurial Musicianship initiatives come in. This new program aspires to help you confront those tricky little problems, such as “managing your money” or “getting people to come hear your music,” along with many other topics you might not have realized are extremely important to your career.

Does this sound pretty ambitious for one class to take on? You're right. While some of the work with this program may take place in a classroom, it is far from being just another two-hour block on Tuesday that you'll probably completely forget you took in a few years. This program will most likely take on many shapes, like seminars with successful artists and business professionals, mentorship programs that team you up with someone who knows all about what you're doing and has on-the-job learning experiences, etc. The potential for this initiative is quite extensive. According to Rachel, “There are no limits to what the opportunities are. Finding the ways to match your passion and your ideas with what will be most successful” is what this program is all about. The entrepre-

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Five Ways to Survive the Boston Winter

by Zachary A. Preucil

Welcome back to Boston! As you once again traverse our beloved “campus,” you might be noticing a few changes from last semester: the St. Botolph Gardens are no longer in their glorious full bloom, slush puddles are abound on Gainsborough St., and certain practice rooms are so hot they feel like a sauna. All of this can only mean one thing: we are now in the heart of the Boston Winter, rendering this once beautiful city into a gloomy land of ice and darkness. While our winter season may not be as extreme as it is for our friends over at Eastman (who are forced to hibernate in their practice rooms until March) or as luxurious as it is for our colleagues at Colburn (who spend their February weekends at the beach), the truth remains that we’re in for a frigid and unpleasant couple of months. However, this seasonal dreariness can be easily overcome with a few simple habits to keep up throughout these wintery days.

1. Dress Warmly.

It may seem obvious, but you would be surprised how many students attempt the “St. Botolph Dash.” a.k.a. running to class across the St. Botolph parking lot in order to compensate for lack of proper outerwear. The quick walk across Gainsborough Street from the dorms to the conservatory may make it seem unnecessary to bundle up, but attempting it in a blizzard is less than wise. Scarves, hats, and gloves are a necessity, especially when walking long distances in the city. Above all, wear multiple layers of clothing—a t-shirt underneath a winter coat probably won’t be very comfortable.

2. Take care of yourself.

Germs and viruses are in abundance this time of year, and being conscious of one’s health is more important than ever. Drink plenty of water, maintain a healthy diet, and above all, get lots of rest. Practicing until 1a.m. might be very productive, but catching the swine flu three days before your audition for the Aspen Music Festival would not. Take advantage of the hand sanitizers located throughout the school and the dorms, and if you do get sick, go to the health center to acquire one of those stylish blue masks to prevent others from catching the virus.

3. Take care of your instrument!

Whatever you play, you can guarantee the winter climate will affect it—even composition majors must protect their scores from being blown away in the bitter wind that comes off of the ocean. You can assure yourself that your viola has no problem adapting to the dry conditions of the NEC practice rooms, but you will rue the day your bridge pops off in studio class. Take whatever precautions are necessary to protect your instrument, and be aware of how long it will have to be outside during a commute.

4. Keep ahead of the weather.

Boston is notorious for its rapidly changing weather patterns. Just last year, we experienced a beautiful, spring-like day on the last Friday of February, and NEC cancelled school on the first Monday of March due to a walloping Nor’easter. Don’t get caught wearing a t-shirt in a blizzard, or a parka on a 70-degree day. Being conscious of the climate is another key to staying healthy and comfortable.

5. Get out of the “box”.

It’s not very long before a daily view of the slushy St. Botolph parking lot gets a bit monotonous. Take advantage of weekends and freer days to explore what Boston has to offer during the winter season. Sign up for upcoming student life events (such as the Ski Trip on February 6th-7th), try ice skating at Frog Pond in the Commons, or make a day trip out to Cambridge. If you’re not a fan of the outdoors, explore the cultural offerings close to NEC, such as the Museum of Fine Arts or the Christian Science Center (regrettably, the reflecting pool is not turned into an ice-skating rink in the winter.) Whatever the venue, a change of scenery from the graffitied wall of a practice room will be welcomed as the weeks wear on.

Spring may seem far away, but these frozen months will pass by quickly, and before you know it you’ll be worrying about how to survive your promotional...but that can wait for another article.



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neurship initiative won’t only educate you on how to create opportunities in your career, but it will provide the chance for you to take part in helping to create your own opportunities while you’re still at NEC. Possibly one of the most exciting parts of this program is the potential for it to provide seed money to students with great ideas.

So when can we expect to see the entrepreneurial musicianship initiative really start to take hold in the NEC community? In many ways it already has. The student body at NEC today is in many ways more innovative and entrepreneurial than ever before, with students regularly using new social networking techniques to promote their performances and embracing technology on a level never-before seen. That being said, next fall is when we will really see the curtain lifted on the program, and many of the opportunities discussed earlier will become available for the first time to NEC students. Some time this semester, NEC will be hosting the owner and founder of J.P. Licks for a meeting with the student body on how he took his own ideas to create an entrepreneurial opportunity to build his vast and delicious ice cream empire. Will there be free ice cream? – yes. Don’t miss it. Seriously. IT’S FREE.

Rachel is more than happy to meet with anyone who has ideas about this program and welcomes any thoughts, feedback, or advice you have to offer. As Administrative Liaison for the Student Activities Center, I am also eager to hear what you have to say about this initiative. Feel free to contact either us and welcome back!



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Student Affairs Committee *Continued from page 1*

example, a point was made by one of the board members to see if there was interest amongst NEC students to have any sort of collaboration with other students from Berklee or Boston Conservatory. Also noted at the last meeting was the lack of use of the Museum of Fine Arts by the NEC community. This was seen as a good point of discussion since, every year, NEC pays the MFA a certain amount of money so that anyone with a valid NEC ID can gain access to the museum for free. These topics were left open-ended, and will possibly be discussed again at our next meeting in February.

A committee of this type is dependent upon the ideas and input of its student members. This portion is represented by two members of the NEC student senate. This year they are myself, Dave Tarantino (Classical Percussion BM '12), and Lara Secord-Haid (Classical Voice BM '11). One might think that, if they don't know such a committee exists, then how can their issues and opinions be represented equally? This is not a bad thought. The meetings in the first semester focused on some issues that Lara and I personally added to the agenda. We added them because they were issues that we saw from our experiences and others immediately around us. Of course, we cannot represent the experiences of the entire school.

That being said, the point of this article is to raise awareness that such an outlet exists and that it is a great opportunity for students to be heard. We are asking anyone with an issue or idea that they feel would make a good agenda topic, including any mentioned in this article, to contact one of us. Both Lara and I can be reached at our NEC e-mail addresses. You can also contact either Dean Tom Handel or Dean Suzanne Hegland. Everyone on this committee feels it is important for a wide range of student interest to be represented at these meetings, and the only way we can do that is with your help.



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A Year of Performances

Photo by Jesse Weiner



Nick Saunders
Senior Jazz Piano Performance Major

Want to see your name here?



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@ the SAC: January & February

- 1/21 Thursday Nights **Free Yoga** begins @ 6:30pm, SBG14
- 1/25 **Morning Coffee** Mondays begins @ 8:30am, theSAC
- 2/5-6 **Ski Trip!** Don't miss out on this overnight adventure to Waterville Valley NH. Beginners welcome! Space is Limited. Sign-up by Monday 1/25. NEC Students Only. Only \$65.
- 2/19 **Battle of the Bands** in it's new form - the love of music!
- 2/21 **Home Cookin'!** Do you miss your mom's cooking? Do you miss your country? Do like to cook? Get those recipes out...We need you!



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