

**NEW ENGLAND  
CONSERVATORY**

290 Huntington Avenue  
Boston MA 02115-5018  
[www.newenglandconservatory.edu](http://www.newenglandconservatory.edu)

Non Profit Org.  
US Postage  
PAID  
N. Reading MA  
Permit No. 44

# Never a dull moment.

Modern marriage on the rocks,  
seances, strippers and  
absolutely fabulous music.  
Join us for our 2009 Opera productions!

**FEBRUARY 20-22** Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti*  
Menotti's *The Medium*

**MARCH 25-26** *Side by Side* by *Sondheim*

NEW ENGLAND  
CONSERVATORY  
*opera*

For details and to get tickets go to [www.newenglandconservatory.edu/opera](http://www.newenglandconservatory.edu/opera)

Vol. 34, No. 2, Spring 2009

# NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY NOTES

## It's about YOU

*New Strategic Plan is  
NEC's roadmap to the future*

**PLUS**

New Continuing Education director  
NEC partner profile: A Far Cry  
Conversation with jazz faculty

Hilary Respass *shepherded New England Conservatory's Strategic Plan through a process that she describes here, with a host of exciting priorities outlined in the resulting document. We've posted the Plan online at [www.newenglandconservatory.edu/strategicplan](http://www.newenglandconservatory.edu/strategicplan) and urge you to engage with it as your guide to NEC's future.*

# NEC's Strategic Plan

2009/10–2015/16

What will a student discover at New England Conservatory in the year 2017, the 150th anniversary of the school's founding? These are among the priorities envisioned in NEC's new Strategic Plan:

- NEC's roster of distinguished faculty and progressive programs will set us apart from our peers in the areas of musical education and career preparation.
- NEC's sparkling campus will boast new jazz and opera venues in addition to performance, study, and practice spaces for students of all ages.
- NEC's technology infrastructure will demonstrate the highest levels of customer service and will have the capacity to meet the ever-growing technological appetite of our students and faculty.

In these times, with great uncertainty in the world at large, it's more important than ever to have a Strategic Plan—a thoughtful roadmap for the future that allows us to move forward, assured of organizational alignment on goals, delivery, and execution.

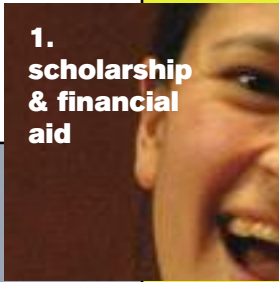
NEC's new plan, which takes us from the current fiscal year to the brink of 2017, is the result of a process that involved the entire institution. More than 200 individuals from all constituencies were consulted. Eight task forces drew participants from College, Preparatory, and Continuing Education faculty; students, alumni, community partners, facilities and technology experts, the NEC management team, and NEC boards.

The resulting plan is anchored in NEC's commitment to our students, who are here "to develop their artistry and set off on their individual creative paths," in the words of President Tony Woodcock. It is divided into five distinct priorities (see graphic) that sustain one another and join together to cement NEC's position as one of the pre-eminent music schools in the world. There are many exciting specifics. Things like the development of a flagship Professional Development Program, the expansion of Preparatory and Continuing Education (see next page), green campus planning, and dissemination of NEC performances through Internet radio and music licensing.

When NEC's Board of Trustees voted in December to approve the Strategic Plan, one Board member described the Vision Statement contained within the Plan as something that "allows NEC to dance forward, that makes us *soar*." The Plan in its entirety is not only a call to marshal resources towards the fulfillment of the identified priorities—but also "to do things that are already in our window of opportunity," in the words of another Trustee.

While some of the Plan can be put into action now, with existing resources, other parts will require incremental funding. Big-ticket items such as the Campus Master Plan and increased scholarship aid must wait upon a new Capital Campaign, which in turn will be informed by the global recovery. We're very excited about all that is in store for us, and can't wait to get started!

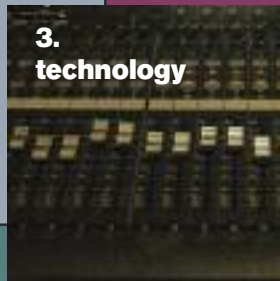
1.  
scholarship  
& financial  
aid



2.  
distinctive  
faculty &  
programs



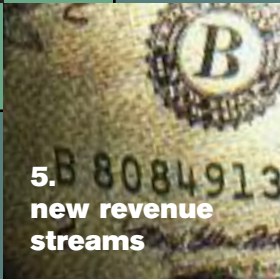
3.  
technology



4.  
student-centric  
campus  
redevelopment



5.  
new revenue  
streams



## TO BE CONTINUED...

NEC's new Strategic Plan speaks of technology, entrepreneurship, new revenue streams. Where in the *current* landscape can you find activity that embodies all these values from NEC's new "roadmap?" Look no farther than the new direction of NEC's Continuing Education program, as mapped out by its new director.

This fall, "the parts of NEC that are not the College" saw some major shifts in administration. NEC staff dynamo Hilary Respass, a self-avowed "generalist," brought her broad organizational imagination to her new position as Executive Director of Preparatory and Continuing Education. Longtime Dean Mark Churchill added "Artistic Director" to his title. And Erik Gregory, completely new to NEC, came on as the new Director of Continuing Education.

NEC President Tony Woodcock gave Respass and Churchill a tripartite charge to attend to:

- 1) infrastructure and strategic growth;
- 2) institutional partnerships;
- 3) joint programs and synergies with the College.

Continuing Education Director Erik Gregory is an "interdisciplinary" whose background has combined positive psychology and social entrepreneurship with a love of music, to produce outcomes ranging from work with refugee children suffering from trauma to founding the Prelude Music Academy. He is prepared to help music lovers "connect or reconnect with their passion" through NEC's continuing education offerings. He is supporting Respass and Churchill's Goal No. 1 by growing new courses, new certificate programs, and new ways of accessing these courses.

Gregory's new ideas for courses include the practical—Sibelius and Finale software, music business—and the dramatic—a class for concertgoers that puts them at the dinner table with a specialist in that evening's music. Performers of piano, orchestral instruments, and Gospel music will have the opportunity to earn a certificate. And "hybrid" courses can be attended in person, or through online distance learning.

Were you aware that NEC makes the resources of one of the world's leading music institutions available through continuing education offerings? If this is news to you (and even if it's not), you're invited to attend an Open House on January 26. You will meet Gregory, Respass, Churchill, and Woodcock over wine and cheese, and learn more about what's new in this vital area of education. Details of courses and the Open House are posted at [www.newenglandconservatory.edu/continuinged](http://www.newenglandconservatory.edu/continuinged). If you've discovered that life is too short not to make music, we hope to see you there!

Continuing Education  
Summer Institutes  
**OPEN HOUSE**  
January 26, 2009  
6 to 7:30pm



Hilary Respass

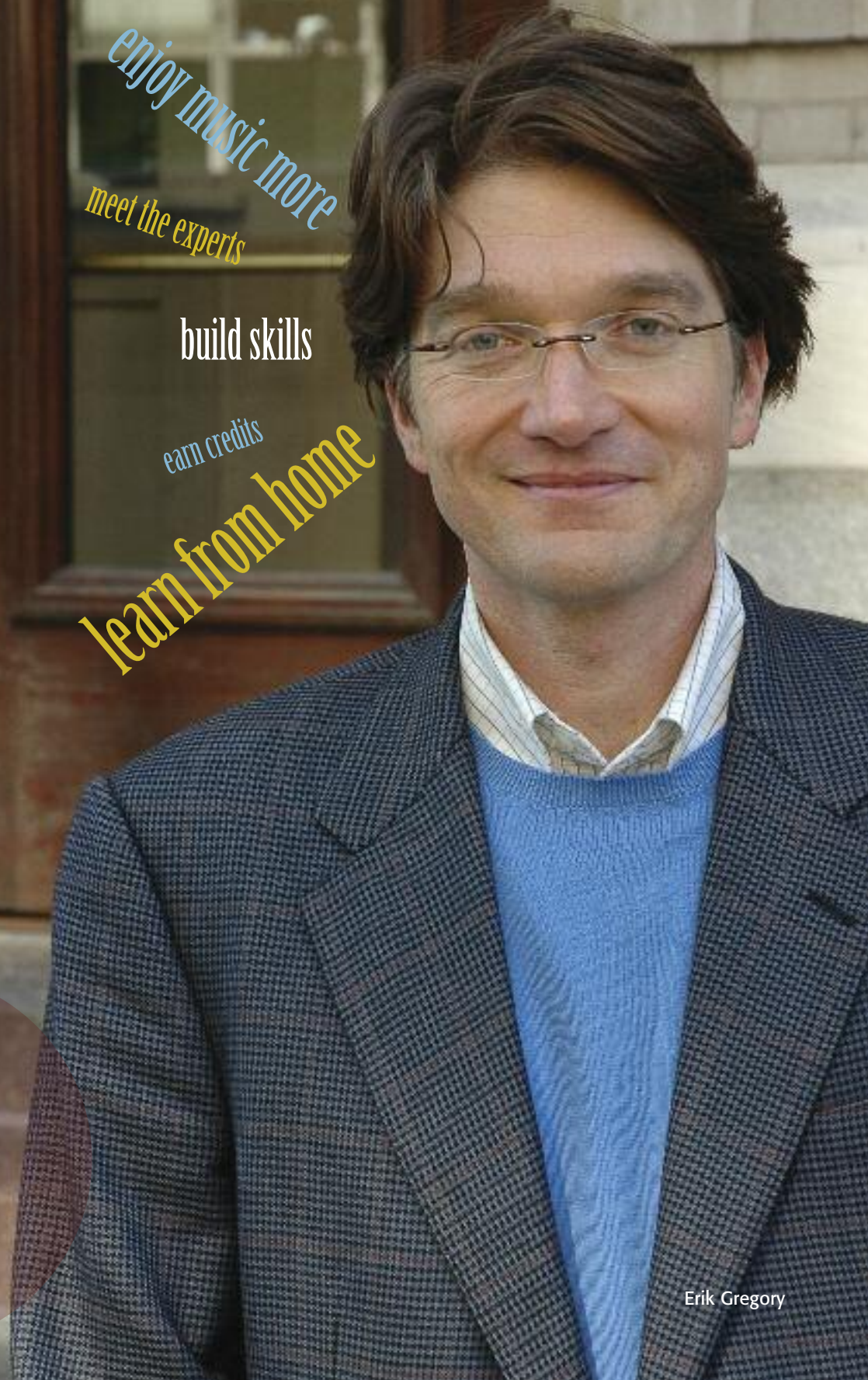


Mark Churchill

enjoy music more  
meet the experts

build skills

earn credits  
learn from home



Erik Gregory

**“In just a year, this proudly uncondacted string orchestra has created a buzz that’s stretched from Symphony Hall to New York City.”**

—The Boston Globe



## ***A Far Cry: Created at NEC***

New England Conservatory is a cauldron of new ideas. Some of them are so big that they become organizations in their own right.

When Donald Palma created the NEC Chamber Orchestra—a conductorless student orchestra built on the model of Palma’s New York-based, Grammy-winning group Orpheus—no other conservatory was empowering students in just this way. Last year some NEC students took the idea out into the world with them, and ***A Far Cry***, “Boston’s uncondacted string orchestra,” was born.

Now in their second season, members of the group, who call themselves “Criers,” have had residencies from Florida to Minnesota, recorded with Orpheus’s clarinetist David Singer, and opened a storefront office/performance space in Boston’s Jamaica Plain neighborhood. While at first glance their mission statement may sound fuzzy—“We are excited to have you be a part of the cries of need and celebration that make up the world in which we live”—the funds their concerts have raised for such organizations as Bikes Not Bombs and the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children are quite concrete.

This season, NEC showcases this enterprising partner in Jordan Hall concerts (catch them on May 21, 2009). Palma notes that this allows ***A Far Cry*** to build their audience beyond the hundred or so who have followed them around to churches and other small venues.

But the partnership goes beyond their own performances. In their May concert, you’ll see NEC Preparatory School students join the Criers onstage—a side-effect of section coachings Prep musicians have received throughout the year. NEC College students are being exposed to the Criers’ leadership skills and “lessons learned” through career seminars and other encounters.

As with most chamber orchestras, this is not a full-time job or a full-blown season. But in a recent blog entry, one Crier noted: “I almost forgot ***A Far Cry*** was not a full-time orchestra! We’ve been working 9 out of these past 10 weeks straight. During this time we have played two Boston cycles of concerts, went on two tours, and recorded two CDs! I am very proud of us to have done all this, and in such little time...”

For more of ***A Far Cry***’s blog and details of their upcoming concerts and recordings, visit [www.afarcry.org](http://www.afarcry.org).

Eyran Katsenelenbogen in a lesson with Robert Petrocelli.

# Piano Shuffle

Since 1996, **Eyran Katsenelenbogen** has taught Preparatory and Continuing Education students like teen wonder Matt Savage, whose national exposure has included Letterman and Marian McPartland's "Piano Jazz." A duo recording with Katsenelenbogen launched Savage's career at a Mozartean single-digit age.

A different piano duo comes to Jordan Hall on May 24, 2009, when Katsenelenbogen joins Andrei Ivanovitch for a reworking of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a project that's already wowed German and Russian audiences. Katsenelenbogen's tenth album, *88 Fingers*, is part of a wave of new releases by NEC's jazz pianists, seen on this page.

The face of faculty member **Danilo Pérez** was on newsstands everywhere with the December *Jazziz*. Also in December, Pérez honored his musical associate Wayne Shorter in a 75th birthday concert. In January, he's back at the Equator for his Sixth Annual Panama Jazz Festival. • **Marilyn Crispell** '68 released her first solo set since joining the ECM roster. • With *Driftwoods*, Contemporary Improvisation faculty scion **Ran Blake** salutes his favorite singers. • A live set from his weekly gig at NY hot spot Smoke by **Mike LeDonne** '78 prompted the AllAboutJazz.com critic to remark, "Man, where the heck was I? ... absolutely one of the must-see jazz artists working in the city today." • Pianist/composer **Satoko Fujii** '96 G.D. runs four jazz orchestras in New York and Japan, and released seven CDs in 2008. This gives her the right to completely abandon the keyboard for a live release conducting her Nagoya orchestra, "the most dangerous and wildest" according to one German critic. • **Roger Kellaway** '59 recieved the French Jazz Academy's Prix du Jazz Classique for his *Heroes* trio album. • **Stanley Sagov** '73, named Massachusetts Family Physician of the Year in 2002, takes time off from his medical practice to perform with top musicians at top clubs like Regattabar (March 4) and produce his own CDs. • **Cecil Taylor** '51 DP launched NYU's Jazz Master Class series in 2004; the sessions have now been released on DVD. • **Fred Hersch** '77 launches the Aha!DVD label with *Let Yourself Go*. This "nonlinear, modular DVD" includes clips of Hersch performing and teaching, along with sheet music and other multimedia extras. • For more news of students, alumni, and faculty, subscribe to NEC Update by selecting "E-News" at [www.newenglandconservatory.edu](http://www.newenglandconservatory.edu).

## all hands on Haydn

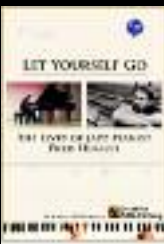
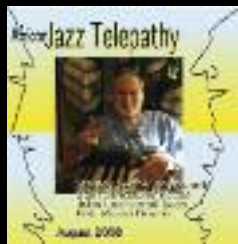
**Franz Joseph Haydn** (1732–1809) was active during the Age of Revolution. Some say he revolutionized the keyboard literature by writing so many sonatas. How many? At least fifty, but no one can agree on the exact number, because he himself didn't always call them sonatas. NEC piano chair Bruce Brubaker notes that they could be titled "partita," "divertimento"—and even, starting in 1771, "sonata." Because Haydn's work preceded the modern piano, that's not all that befuddles modern pianists: what is "open pedal," for example?

Undeterred by these details, almost everyone who takes up the piano plays Haydn sooner or later. And yet, despite his prodigious output, and despite Haydn's solid standing in the world of string quartets and symphonies, most of Haydn's sonatas are rarely heard outside the practice room.

In marking the 200th anniversary of Haydn's death, NEC intends to remedy this situation. Here in Boston, Brubaker has mustered an army of NEC pianists to perform all of Haydn's piano sonatas in a series of concerts. The Los Angeles County Museum of Art has invited this army to invade the West Coast with a similar series. Whichever coast you call home, this is your chance to hear the next generation of great concert pianists as they explore a key turning point in music for their instrument.

At [www.newenglandconservatory.edu/haydn](http://www.newenglandconservatory.edu/haydn), you will find Bruce Brubaker's thoughts on Haydn and details of the Boston and LA concerts.

**Boston Haydn  
concerts dates are**  
**January 22, 27**  
**February 3, 5, 9, 12**  
**March 4**





Ken Schaphorst



Hankus Netsky



David Zoffer

# 3 teacher2teacher

**Ken Schaphorst** chairs NEC's College jazz department, where he is also a studio instructor and leads the NEC Jazz Orchestra. This year, he founded the NEC Youth Jazz Orchestra, where he coaches Preparatory School students.

**Hankus Netsky** chaired NEC's College jazz department from 1986 to 1996. He currently chairs the Contemporary Improvisation department.

**David Zoffer** chairs NEC's Preparatory and Continuing Education jazz department.

**Rob Schmieder** keeps the tape rolling and tries not to interrupt too much.

No lessons. No rehearsals. No interruptions. Three members of the New England Conservatory faculty get together in a room to talk about how they teach the music they love. Coincidentally, Ken and Hankus both grew up in Philadelphia. David is from Pittsburgh. Ken was writing big band arrangements before he knew he wasn't old enough to do that. Hankus was getting paid to accompany a torah procession. David and his brother were driving their parents out of the house playing Santana tunes.

**KS** I understood that, yeah, you could actually make music that had never been made until that moment. So in 8th grade I wrote my first jazz band chart. Now I look back and think, "What made me think that I could do that?"

**HN** As soon as I started playing I was trying to figure out the music I heard around me. It wasn't really about one genre or style. I saw this classical music world, which had concerts and concert halls. Then I saw that if you played for parties, you needed to be able to make the party work. And that to me was so much harder than playing classical music. And then there was the synagogue, where I would go and hear the cantor, and I thought that was amazing. What was interesting about both of these things was—nobody offered to teach me either of them.

And I always found there was a use for musicians. My first job, I was probably in 5th grade, and it was a Torah Procession. When you donate a Torah to a synagogue in Europe they had a procession down the middle of the street.

**DZ** I remember when I was in 4th grade a teacher getting really mad at me for improvising on a written piece. "If you took the time to write down a piece of music wouldn't you be upset if somebody just made up their stuff all over it?" And I remember going "No, that would be nice! Maybe it would be neat to hear what they would do with it."

And my brother and I growing up were just jamming on whatever, Santana tunes, literally driving our parents out of the house. And I was definitely



Ken Schaphorst rehearses the new NEC Youth Jazz Orchestra

playing jazz, sitting in at clubs with these guys I had absolutely no business playing with whatsoever, that were just the real-deal jazz guys.

**KS** Hankus talked about genre—I’ve never really felt that Stravinsky was that different from Ellington. And so I learned things from writing pop songs or classical music that influenced my jazz teaching as much as any jazz curriculum that I studied. And going back to my Philadelphia days, sitting in trumpet sections, I remember just learning a lot by observing. I noticed how they would breathe and the way they would pick up their mutes and be ready for their entrance.

**RS** Is there such a thing as being “not ready” to play jazz?

**DZ** No, music is just like a language, that’s like saying you are not ready to speak French.

**HN** It is, but your ears do open up as you get older. I find young students, say ten or eleven, can *hear* Andrew Lloyd Webber. It’s fine, it makes a lot of sense. But then a couple years later it’s like, “If you like Andrew Lloyd Webber, you’ll *love* Duke Ellington.”

**DZ** Any of these things can be a gateway to anything else. I had this really quiet, straight-A student. And she was doing okay, but she wasn’t really putting her heart into her lessons. So as a last resort I just bust out the wildest stuff. I’ve already tried everything I know, so let’s try this Xenakis and Cecil Taylor. She went nuts for that music. She became a composer.

It’s also really important to say to a student, “Look, this is a thing called the blues, and right now Buddy Guy is trying to convince you that he’s an incredibly psychotic, jealous lover. ‘You’re going to leave my little girl alone’—you’re going to learn a lot by that expression. Then there’s this guy named Miles Davis and he’s chill, and you’re gonna learn this completely other mood. And then do whatever you’re going to do as a composer, but at least you have experienced the *theatre* these artists bring to their music.”

**HN** We *don’t* usually get students who are blank slates, though. They come here saying “Well let’s see here, the saxophone comes with a ‘John Coltrane’ or ‘Wayne Shorter’ preset, and it’s the only way the instrument can sound.” One of the things that I try to do is liberate students from whatever they’re shackled to—what they think the limits are of what they can do musically.

**KS** I had to figure out things myself, and it forced me to learn how to write and play in a way that was somewhat unique. Ultimately, that’s a little closer

**“ I remember just learning a lot by observing.”**

—Ken Schaphorst

to the jazz tradition than this idea that “Okay here’s the right way, don’t play that note, that’s wrong.” I think that one of our struggles at NEC is to teach jazz in this way that I think is closer to the original tradition in jazz. It’s more of a mentoring relationship between faculty and students, less rules based.

**DZ** The thing is, in the classes at NEC, you put the responsibility on the students. The question is, are you going to take responsibility to figure out how this works, or do we just tell you “Apply X, Y, and Z,” like an algebraic formula. Ken doesn’t do that in the College, and we don’t do that in the Prep either, even though we are dealing with younger students.

I remember back when I was a student here myself, Hankus would listen to something and give serious criticism of what we were saying as artists, it wasn’t just the technical thing. Of course you’re playing the changes, of course you’re in time, of course your tone is good, of course the vibe is consistent with the rest of the song. Yeah of course, but what are you *saying*, are you really saying something as a composer in real time. That’s something you can’t get out of a book, but you have to get out of a live human.

**HN** Some of these kids want to turn themselves in to the authorities at various times, but some of the authorities are not the right authorities, you know? And NEC has enough variety so that you can eventually find the person that is going to kick your butt in the right way.

You’re trying to find your own voice—within the tradition. And finding your own voice within the tradition—even if you have been listening, listening, and listening—there’s still a lot of listening to do.

**DZ** It’s also transformative going through those things and exposing your brain to these people who have spent a lifetime developing music as a language. At this point modern jazz is more defined by what it isn’t than what it is. All these genre things eventually go out the window.

**HN** They’re going out the window faster than our retirement money! Be a great musician, learn everything you can, there are so many places to draw from if you want to be a solid, total musician these days.

As a teacher, all you can do is mentor a student. And if you want to mentor students who are creative, it’s really, really exciting because there’s no limits. It’s an amazing community here, and it’s a community that really is open to each other’s music.

I remember convincing a kid to come here who was going to go to Berklee, where they have a bluegrass department, by saying, “You know, you’re right, you’re probably the only one at NEC who is doing what you’re doing, who is really into Celtic music. But that would be good, because you’ll give a lot to the other students and they’ll give a lot to you.”

And she thanks me for that all the time. And I have to go teach her sister right now.

**“ It’s transformative, exposing your brain to these people who have spent a lifetime developing music as a language.”**

—David Zoffer

**“ I try to liberate students from whatever they’re shackled to.”**

—Hankus Netsky

Visit [www.newenglandconservatory.edu/jazz](http://www.newenglandconservatory.edu/jazz) to find a longer version of this conversation along with biographies and links.

## Dennis Sullivan on “remarkable results”

Dennis Sullivan '79 M.M., an active percussionist who also has what it takes to be a vice president at an investment company, says that his NEC education brings value to both of these pursuits. “As NEC students, we develop the ability to make critical judgments in an array of situations, often making split-second decisions to distinguish between the extraordinarily challenging and the merely impossible. We’ve cultivated a can-do attitude that delivers under any circumstances. We produce remarkable results.”

Currently re-engaged with NEC as a member of the Alumni Council, a mentor, an Overseer, a participant in the Network for Alumni in Alternative Careers (NAAC), and Chair of the Annual Fund, Dennis Sullivan sees from a front-row seat how much money it takes for NEC to produce “remarkable results”: the best possible education for tomorrow’s professional musicians. “NEC’s Annual Fund is like the stage manager. It funds all the behind-the-scenes operations at NEC, along with the Conservatory’s hundreds of free concerts and student scholarships. To do all this we need to raise \$3.1 million by June 30, and I’m working with my fellow alumni and others to produce that result.”

NEC invites all alumni to join Dennis by getting involved. Like him, you’ll be glad you did.

### Are you a performing musician? [concerts.newenglandconservatory.edu](http://concerts.newenglandconservatory.edu)

Treat yourself! Come hear the outstanding NEC students who will one day be making music with and for you.

### Enjoying a career outside of music? [www.newenglandconservatory.edu/alumni/naac](http://www.newenglandconservatory.edu/alumni/naac)

Reconnect with your alma mater and others like yourself by attending an event sponsored by NAAC.

### Want to support the future of music? [www.newenglandconservatory.edu/give](http://www.newenglandconservatory.edu/give)

Make a contribution to that future by supporting NEC’s Annual Fund.

*Dennis is currently a senior advisor at Fidelity Investments in Boston, where he runs a management development program.*



The artistry required of an opera singer assumes mastery of many skills beyond simply having a breathtaking voice. And yet NEC’s ultimate finishing school for performers, the Artist Diploma, has never been offered specifically in Opera—until now.

In a new partnership with the professional company Opera Boston, NEC will admit singers to the Artist Diploma in Opera beginning fall 2009. Students will perform principal roles at NEC in addition to an array of performance opportunities at Opera Boston, including secondary roles and outreach performances.

The Opera A.D. will build on the NEC/Opera Boston Fellows program that debuted this year with baritone Paul Brennan and soprano Catherine O’Rourke, seen here in NEC’s December production of Mozart’s *The Marriage of Figaro*.

NEC returns to Boston’s Cutler Majestic Theatre on February 20, 21, 22 with a double bill of Menotti’s *The Medium* and Bernstein’s *Trouble in Tahiti*. Find more at [www.newenglandconservatory.edu/opera](http://www.newenglandconservatory.edu/opera).

**IN MEMORIAM** Elda Angelucci Grilli '36 DP • Theresa Josephine Hickey '47 DP, '48 • Harriet Louise Cowen '48 • Fred DiLucci '48 • Carolyn Babcock '49 • Dr. Bernice Edwards Hall '49 DP • Eileen (Cantwell) Stanbury Macdonald '51 • Athena (Koulouris) Zambara '52 • Leonard Edwin Bearse Sr. '57, '62 M.M. • Mark Weiger '82  
[www.newenglandconservatory.edu/obituaries](http://www.newenglandconservatory.edu/obituaries) contains texts and guest-book links for at least one year after initial Web posting date.