NEC Wind Ensemble
Conductors Concert

Weizhe Bai ’24 MM
Rachel Brake ’24 MM

Students of William Drury

with
members of the NEC wind ensembles and orchestras

Thursday, December 14, 2023
6:15 p.m.
Brown Hall
PROGRAM

Anthony Plog
(b. 1947)

Music for Brass Octet (1987)
Allegro vivace
Very slowly
Theme and variations

Rachel Brake ’24 MM, conductor

Gustav Mahler
(1860–1911)
arr. for soprano and chamber orchestra by Klaus Simon (2007)

from Symphony No. 4
I. Bedächtig, nicht eilen
IV. Sehr behaglich

Zhengying Yan, soprano
Weizhe Bai ’24 MM, conductor

Gabriel Fauré
(1845–1924)

Pelléas et Mélisande Suite
Prélude
Fileuse
Sicilienne
Mort de Mélisande

Rachel Brake ’24 MM, conductor

The conductors of this program would like to thank the musicians for their time and dedication in putting this program together.
Plog     Music for Brass Octet
Written in 1987, Plog’s Music for Brass Octet is now a staple of the brass repertoire. Recalling the antiphonal music of Giovanni Gabrielli, Plog divides four trumpets and four trombones into two separate choirs of two trumpets and two trombones. Each of the three movements highlights a unique characteristic of the brass instruments’ sound and capabilities.

The first movement emphasizes rhythmic precision. It is in ternary form and the trumpets of choir I introduce the A theme while the choir II trumpets play the B theme. As theme B develops in the trombones of both choirs, trumpets recall motifs of theme A until it returns in its entirety in both choirs at the conclusion of the movement.

The second movement blends the timbres of the two choirs with unisons, dissonances, and colorful chords, evoking the sound of an organ. Like the preceding movement, it is in ternary form, providing structural cohesion for both performers and listeners. A lyrical theme A is introduced by the first trumpet of choir II, answered by the second trumpet, and then carried between the instrument groups within their respective choirs. This thematic grouping according to instruments contrasts with the first and third movements where choirs respond antiphonally.

The third movement is a theme and variations based on a characteristic brass fanfare introduced by choir II. Variation I is passed between the instrument groups of each choir until they play in unison before variation II. Here, four trombones carry this triple meter variation while the trumpets layer the fanfare above them. Variation III transitions back to duple meter and utilizes a compositional technique called hocket where a complete melody is piece together in a musical game of “catch” where notes are tossed between two or more instruments. Variation IV recalls the rhythms of theme I in the first movement and again groups the instruments according to their separate choirs. The work concludes with a flourish in the trumpets to a final triumphant C major chord with an added D for color.

– Rachel Brake

Mahler     Symphony No. 4

Fourth movement:

Wir genießen die himmlischen Freuden,    We revel in heavenly pleasures,
D’rum tun wir das Irrische meiden.         Leaving all that is earthly behind us.
Kein weltlich’ Getümmel                     No worldly turmoil
Hört man nicht im Himmel!                   Is heard in heaven;
Lebt alles in sanftester Ruh’!              We all live in sweetest peace.
Wir führen ein englisches Leben!            We lead an angelic existence,
Sind dennoch ganz lustig daneben!          And so we are perfectly happy.
Wir tanzen und springen,                   We dance and leap,
Wir hüpfen und singen!                     And skip and sing;
Sankt Peter im Himmel sieht zu!            Saint Peter in Heaven looks on.
Johannes das Lämmlein auslasset,  
Der Metzger Herodes d'rauf passet!  
Wir führen ein geduldig's,  
Unschuldig's, geduldig's,  
Ein liebliches Lämmlein zu Tod!  
Sankt Lucas den Ochsen tät schlachten  
Ohn' einig's Bedenken und Achten;  
Der Wein kost' kein Heller  
Im himmlischen Keller;  
Die Engllein, die backen das Brot.

Saint John has lost his lambkin,  
And butcher Herod is lurking:  
We lead a patient,  
Guiltless, patient,  
Darling lambkin to death.  
Saint Luke is slaying the oxen,  
Without the least hesitation;  
Wine costs not a farthing  
In the Heavenly tavern;  
The angels bake the bread.

Gut' Kräuter von allerhand Arten,  
Die wachsen im himmlischen Garten!  
Gut’ Spargel, Fisolen  
Und was wir nur wollen,  
Ganze Schüsseln voll sind uns bereit!  
Gut’ Äpfel, gut’ Birn’ und gut’ Trauben;  
Die Gärtner, die alles erlauben!  
Willst Rehbock, willst Hasen?  
Auf offener Straßen  
Sie laufen herbei!

Fine sprouts of every description,  
Are growing in Heaven's garden.  
Fine asparagus, fine herbs,  
And all we desire,  
Huge platefuls for us are prepared.  
Fine apples, fine pears and fine grapes,  
The gardeners let us pick freely.  
You want venison, hare?  
In the open streets  
They go running around.

Sollt’ ein Fasttag etwa kommen,  
Alle Fische gleich mit Freuden angeschwomme!  
Dort läuft schon Sankt Peter  
Mit Netz und mit Köder,  
Zum himmlischen Weiher hinein.  
Sankt Martha die Köchin muß sein!

And when there’s a holiday near,  
All the fishes come joyfully swimming;  
And off runs Saint Peter  
With net and with bait,  
Towards the celestial pond.  
Saint Martha will have to be cook!

Kein’ Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,  
Die unsrer verglichen kann werden.  
Elftausend Jungfrauen  
Zu tanzen sich trauen!  
Sankt Ursula selbst dazu lacht!  
Cäcilia mit ihren Verwandten  
Sind treffliche Hofmusikanten!  
Die englischen Stimmen  
Ermuntern die Sinne!  
Daß alles für Freuden erwacht.

There’s no music at all on the earth  
Which can ever compare with ours.  
Eleven thousand virgins  
Are set dancing.  
Saint Ursula herself laughs to see it!  
Cecilia with her companions  
Are splendid court musicians.  
The angelic voices  
Delight the senses,  
For all things awake to joy.

Des Knaben Wunderhorn  

Translated by Deryck Cooke (Wikipedia)
Fauré  *Pelléas et Mélisande Suite*

Fauré composed his *Pelléas et Mélisande* Suite in 1898 as incidental music to Maurice Maeterlinck’s play *Pelléas et Mélisande*. The project was directed by English actress Mrs. Patrick Campbell who originally asked Claude Debussy to repurpose music from the first edition of the opera he composed in 1895 based on the same play. After five years of little compositional progress, Debussy finally refused Campbell’s offer and she then turned to Fauré.

Now with less than two months before the first scheduled performance, Fauré worked with his former student, Charles Koechlin, who efficiently orchestrated his drafts. Each movement is in cyclic form where themes are introduced and return throughout the piece in separate movements. This effective use of motifs like the voice of Mélisande illustrated by the flute provides symmetry to the work without being overly repetitive.

The first movement serves as a prelude to Act I with a slow introduction in the strings. As the winds gradually join, the anguish of forbidden love is portrayed by dynamic swells and fluid tempo changes. The strings return to the beginning phrase at the end of the section as if recalling a distant memory.

The second movement begins with triplets in the violins, creating an image of Mélisande at her spinning wheel. A duet between the oboe and bassoon carries her thoughts while she works when suddenly the tone darkens as violas and second violins carry the triplets. The funeral motif from the fourth movement is played by the clarinet and horn in a low register, foreshadowing the death of Mélisande. The first violins assume the triplets again and the movement concludes with a sustained and serene G major chord in the upper winds.

The third movement is a sicilienne, a triple meter dance characterized by the dotted eighth and sixteenth note rhythm first presented in the flute and later carried by the violins and upper woodwinds. In the middle of the dance, Pelléas’ voice enters in the solo cello and a conversation takes place between flute, clarinet, cello, and horn solos. The section then comes full circle, ending how it began as the flute completes the melody one last time.

The fourth and final movement portrays the death of Mélisande. The upper woodwinds that once represented the young woman’s innocence now play a rhythmic heartbeat in their lower tessituras. A lyrical line of mourning people around Mélisande’s death bed is played by the violins. As more instruments join, the mourning continues among the heartbeat motif. The dynamic grows and tempo quickens as if Mélisande might resume a normal pulse when suddenly, hope fades. The heartbeat stops and the mourners’ motif is all that remains as the flute softly carries Mélisande’s spirit heavenward.

— Rachel Brake
Members of NEC Wind Ensembles and Orchestras

**Plog**

*Trumpet*
Matthew Dao
Alexandra Richmond
Justin Park
Ko Te Chen

*Trombone*
Becca Bertekap
Devin Drinan

*Bass Trombone*
David Paligora
Shin Tanaka

**Mahler**

*Violin*
David Carreon
Yeji Lim

*Viola*
Dylan Cohen

*Cello*
Isaac Pagano-Toub

*Bass*
Dennis McIntyre

*Flute*
Yechan Min

*Oboe*
Corinne Foley

*Bassoon*
Abigail Heyrich

*Percussion*
Ross Jarrell
Rohan Zakharia

*Keyboard*
Lingbo Ma, harmonium
Boyuan Chen, piano

**Fauré**

*Violin 1*
Ravani Loushy Kay
David Carreon
Yeji Lim
Isabella Sun
Audrey Weizer

*Violin 2*
Sofia Skoldberg
Ava Kenney
Minkyung Kang
HyoJeong Hwang

*Viola*
Man To Kwong
Ru-Yao Van der Ploeg
John Turner

*Cello*
Jonathan Fuller
Isaac Pagano-Toub
Eric Schindler

*Bass*
Luke Tsuchiya
Lawrence Hall

*Flute*
Anna Ridenour
Sadie Goodman

*Trumpet*
Matthew Dao
Justin Park

*Oboe*
Kelley Osterberg
Kian Hirayama

*Timpani*
Doyeon Kim

*Clarinet*
Evan Chu
Adlemi A. Zambrano

*French horn*
Elijah Bardlift
Mattias Bengtsson
Xiaoran Xu

*Harp*
Jingtong Zhang
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