

A Faculty Recital by

Kenneth Radnofsky
saxophone

with guest artists

Francine Trester, Klaudia Szlachta, violin

Scott Woolweaver, viola

Leo Eguchi, cello

Thomas Weaver, piano

Ziang Yin '25 MM, piano

Monday, March 25, 2024

7:30 p.m.

NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

Lingbo Ma '24 DMA

Fantasy on Kurt Weill's 'Youkali' (2024)

**World Premiere*

Thomas Weaver, piano

Yangfan Xu '25 DMA

Turn Me Into Ocean (2023)

**World Premiere*

Ziang Yin '25 MM, piano

Intermission

Lera Auerbach

(b. 1973)

Prayer for alto saxophone solo (1996, 2009)

Francine Trester

(b. 1969)

All Points (2023)

**World Premiere*

North

South

East

West

Francine Trester, Klaudia Szlachta

Scott Woolweaver, viola

Leo Eguchi, cello

Thomas Weaver, piano

** commissioned by Kenneth Radnofsky*

Ma *Fantasy on Kurt Weill's 'Youkali'* (2024)

Youkali Fantasy is a reimagination of Kurt Weill's song *Youkali* for alto saxophone and piano. "Youkali" is a small utopian island that exists at the end of the world where happiness and dreams lie. In the *Fantasy*, I give freedom to both parts by writing a quasi-improvisatory introduction and an interlude for the piano and a cadenza for the saxophone. While the original habanera rhythm is preserved, the use of melodic variations, contrapuntal interactions, colorful harmonies, and expanded registers enriches the tango. The piece is commissioned by and dedicated to saxophonist Kenneth Radnofsky.

– *Lingbo Ma '24 DMA*

Lingbo Ma is a Chinese-born, US-based composer and pianist whose work has been performed in the USA, China, and Europe. She strives for unique ways of reaching the ultimate simplicity and clarity while unfolding diverse narratives in her music. She has been commissioned twice (in 2020 and 2022) by the Dutch National Opera who premiered her works as part of their opera projects in Amsterdam. In the 2022-23 season, she was a Blueprint Fellow at National Sawdust in Brooklyn, NY, and a Collage Fellow at Collage New Music in Boston, MA, where her two commissioned pieces received premiere performances. In addition to composing, Lingbo enjoys arranging music of all genres and performs frequently as a collaborative pianist.

Lingbo obtained her Master of Music degree from the Juilliard School, and is now pursuing a doctorate at New England Conservatory. Her composition mentors are Kati Gócs, Robert Beaser, and Michael Gandolfi.

Xu *Turn Me Into Ocean* (2023)

Turn Me Into Ocean was commissioned by Kenneth Radnofsky and draws inspiration from a poem written by the composer about a nocturnal journey through a cityscape leading to a personal transformation and a discovery of solitude.

– *Yangfan Xu '25 DMA*

Turn Me Into Ocean

I walk down the street at the witching hour,
The night sky looks like an endless abyss of Coca-Cola.
Fizzing, sparkling, bubbling,
So deep as if to devour everything.
I can smell midsummer in the air.

I walk on the sidewalk to the right.
Streetlights are shaking and blurring,
And it makes me dizzy in a sober way
Street lamps are gradually morphing into moons
Many different moons above my head.

I walk down the hill on the sidewalk to the right,
Many moons are ramping by.
I fell headlong into a mass of soft shadows.
While the waves hit my soles hard,

The world turns upside down,
Many moons below my feet.

My limbs are melting away.
I float in the middle of the ocean.
Falling into unconsciousness.
My mind turns into an ocean.

Yangfan Xu, April, 2023

Yangfan Xu holds a deep passion and love for cats. Whenever she hears a string player glissando in the upper registers, she can't help but think of a cat's meow. In addition to her feline obsession, Xu is a Chinese-born US-based composer who comes from a musical family in Lanzhou, Gansu province, with a spoiled cat who eats better than everyone else. Xu is the winner of the 2023 Boston New Music Initiative Commission Competition and the winner of Society for New Music's 2021 Israel/Pellman Award. Xu was awarded the first Prize of the 2020 Hausmann Quartet Quarantine Composition Competition. She won the 2021 New Juilliard Ensemble Composition Competition, and her commissioned work *Fantastic Creatures of the Mountains and Seas* premiered at the Lincoln Center in a concert by NJE in 2022. Xu has received major commissions from the Impulse New Music Festival, Boston New Music Initiative, saxophonist Kenneth Radnofsky and the New York Choreographic Institute affiliated with the New York City Ballet. Her music has been enjoyed by audiences in cities such as New York, San Francisco, Boston, San Diego, Sydney, Beijing, Paris and more. Her compositions have been performed by many professionals including the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Contemporary Orchestra, New Juilliard Ensemble, Friction Quartet, Hausmann Quartet, SFCM New Music Ensemble, Choral Chameleon, Keyed Kontraptions and Ravel Virtual Studios. Her orchestral work *Bya* was premiered by the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra in July 2023, and then received its Australian premiere by the Sydney Contemporary Orchestra in Australia in October 2023. The same work will be featured again by the New England Philharmonic in June 2024.

Xu studied musicology at the high school affiliated with the Central Conservatory of Music in China. She received a bachelor's degree in composition at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music studying with Mason Bates. Xu earned her master's degree in composition at the Juilliard School, studying under Robert Beaser. She is a current DMA student at the New England Conservatory of Music with studio teacher Kati Agócs.

Trester *All Points* (2023)

My poetry and music to *All Points* describes four directions in which I've traveled, narratives defined by the past, present, future, and the in-between. Each movement takes its title and content from the four cardinal directions on the compass rose:

i. NORTH is in three parts: a childhood trip to Canada (memories of dessert, mini golf, my grandmother's hand-crocheted sweater); two years living in England (that

green and pleasant land" of Blake's imagining, London's soot, an earlier nightfall); what North is to me in the present-day.

ii. SOUTH references my time in Sherman, TX on the Oklahoma border (I taught at Austin College for 3 years). Some indelible experiences from that time - some ambivalence about how they're remembered.

iii. EAST is Boston and New York - traveling between them, homes past and present. (The "Sound" at the poem's conclusion, references the Long Island Sound and the view across it).

iv. WEST starts with a childhood summer spent in Pasadena, CA (my Dad was working at Jet Propulsion Laboratories on sabbatical). A weird, solitary summer (with a lot of time to practice violin - too much time maybe...) The poem then segues to a broader definition of "West," what it promises.

Praised as "compelling" and "thought-provoking" by the *Boston Musical Intelligencer*, **Francine Trester's** *A Walk In Her Shoes* was premiered by Boston Landmarks Orchestra at the Hatch Memorial Shell. Most recently, Trester's *In Her Element* was premiered at Sanders Theater by the Kendall Square Orchestra.

Trester's libretto and score to the chamber opera *Florence Comes Home*, about composer Florence Price, was commissioned by Shelter Music Boston and described by the *Intelligencer* as "meaningful...wide and comprehensive." Trester has had the honor of being commissioned by Kenneth Radnofsky to write *Street Views* for the Amram Ensemble. World-Wide Concurrent Premieres commissioned Trester's *Reminiscence: 3 Meditations on Friendship*, which was also premiered by Kenneth Radnofsky.

Trester is a Professor of Composition at Berklee College of Music and a 2023 Berklee Faculty Fellowship recipient. Trester's music is recorded on Affetto/Naxos, Albany, Crystal and Stone Records labels and is available through the American Composers Alliance. www.francinetrester.com

NORTH

Cold (At least
It used to be...)
Decades
Past a
Family trip
To Canada
Oh Canada
Quebec, Montreal
A tall parfait
And mini golf
Small
Under
Open sky
Lavender and light
Hand knit
A shawl
Warm enough
For North
Even so
Years ago

Then
Suddenly
Adult and
In that "Green and
Pleasant land,"
With its London hours
Shorter
Days
Damp and
Deepening
December greys

A different
North now,
By bone and breeze
A freeze that creeps with
Time and latitude
By degrees

SOUTH

Aerial
And descending
Into
DFW

"Where
Are the trees?"
A desolate,
Desiccated view

Quilt
Of flat squares
Brush
And brown

Alien
Landing
Lowering
Down, and down south

Three years
In the
Lone Star
State

Lone
Alone
A solitary
Waiting

For return
Home
Where oak and pine
Dark, thicket

Reduce this
Parched scrub
To a dust
And yet-

Who can
Forget
Regret
Long and low

That wind of
Highway
Where prairie clover
Grow

By the Red River
Ringing
And remembering
Bend

Beneath
Staggering
Breathless blue
Without end

EAST

A seagull
Hangs
In the
Balance
Over Boylston,
The Prudential

Angles
With the wind
Then
Abrupt
A blast
Providential

Salted
Taste of
Ocean
Reminder
Of how
Near

It is
Above the traffic
Sirens
Calling
Can almost
Hear

The Atlantic
Bracing
The Northeast
Corridor
Howling
A train racing

Tracks
Interlacing
Boston
To
New
York

Two hundred
Miles
Could the seagull
Wing its
Way?
Beating, work

Against
The current
Tossed
Turned
By chasing
Sea

The Verrazzano
Whitestone
Throgs Neck
Bridging
Connecting
What is
,
What was,
A singularity
Of skyline
Dreams in the firmament
Pulsing,
Bright

Across the
Sound
A thousand
Distant sunS,
Blinking
In the night.

WEST

Saw tumbleweed
That summer
On the hottest walk
Ever
Taken, baking

One hundred
And ten
In the shade
Scorching,
Forsaken strip

Led to the
Mall
All day munching
Yogurt
Covered raisins

Discovering
That, and trippy
Old seasons
Of "Space 1999,"
"The Twilight Zone"

We'd landed
On the Moon
Jet Propulsion
Laboratories
Our new home

For three
Months
In unknown
Pasadena
Made the best

Of hours practicing
Nothing else
To do...)
Nothing ...but to go
Out West

Now
Would you
Consider it?
Dig for your gold
Out there?

Stake
Your claim
Adventure
Cross the country
Who knows where

It's sure
To be all changed
The pasted
Polaroid
Soon faded

An August tan
Come September
Vanished
And if remembered
Dated,

Distorted
By memory
Decay
Make your way
Out West

Points
Pacific
Near
And
Far

Go
With compass shining
All above you
Sun and
Star

- From "All Points". Francine Trester © 2022

About the artists

Saxophonist **Kenneth Radnofsky** has appeared as soloist with leading orchestras and ensembles throughout the world, including the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and New York Philharmonic under the direction of Maestro Kurt Masur, Jerusalem Symphony, Dresden Staatskapelle, Taipei and Taiwan Symphonies, New World Symphony, BBC Concert Orchestra, Marlboro Festival, and Portland String Quartet. Mr. Radnofsky made his Carnegie Hall debut with the New York premiere of Gunther Schuller's *Concerto* with the National Orchestral Association. The world premiere of the Schuller was also given by Radnofsky with the Pittsburgh Symphony, with both of the performances conducted by the composer. David Amram's concerto, *Ode to Lord Buckley*, is also dedicated to Radnofsky, who premiered the work with the Portland Symphony under Bruce Hangen's direction. Radnofsky has performed on numerous occasions for the Boston Symphony, was thrice soloist with Boston Modern Orchestra Project (Hovhaness, Olivero, Gandolfi concerti), with conductor Gil Rose, and twice with Boston Classical Orchestra, with conductor Steven Lipsitt. He has been a frequent soloist with conductors John Mauceri and John Williams with the Boston Pops in Franz Waxman's suite for saxophone, *A Place in the Sun*.

Of his more than 100 commissions, the American composers who have written for Radnofsky include Schuller, Amram, James Yannatos, Michael Gandolfi, Michael Colgrass, Donald Martino, Ezra Sims, Chris Theofanidis, Michael Horvit, John McDonald, Larry Bell, Roger Bourland, Allen Johnson, Elliott Schwartz, Pasquale Tassone, and Armand Qualliotine. On Dec. 3, 1995 an innovative commission of a sonata by Pulitzer Prize winning composer John Harbison was premiered by forty-three saxophonists in different locations around the globe in an effort organized by Radnofsky, entitled World-Wide Concurrent Premieres, Inc. (WWCP). Mr. Radnofsky is Founder of WWCP, and has created a network of musicians commissioning today's finest composers including Yang Yong, Christian Yufra, Juan Ruiz, Jaime Fatas, Shih-Hui Chen, Andy Vores, Lei Liang, Vincent Plush, Baris Perker and Jakov Jakoulov.

Ken Radnofsky celebrates over forty years of teaching and performances which have included concerts in Istanbul, Rome, Taipei, Havana, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, Mexico City, Montreal, Caracas, Manchester, UK, Beijing, Shanghai, and elsewhere. His most recent 2023 tour 'Looking for Higher Ground, Music of Emigres and Refugees,' was seen in 10 cities across US and Canada; 2022 also included the world premiere of Rufus Reid's *Crosscurrents for Saxophone, Bass and Piano*. Just pre-pandemic, Radnofsky premiered new solo works by John Heiss. Joan Tower and Francine Trester, performed as soloist at the second Asia Saxophone Congress and with violinist Elmira Darvarova and Steven Lipsitt's Bach, Beethoven and Brahms Society Orchestra, and gave recitals in New York, Boston, Vancouver, San Francisco, Calgary, and Guangzhou. In 2017-18 he premiered Osnat Netzer's *Concerto* with the Bach, Beethoven and Brahms Society Orchestra and the orchestral version of David Amram's *Greenwich Village Portraits* with The Orchestra of Indian Hill under Bruce Hangen. In the years just prior, Radnofsky, violinist Elmira Darvarova and Thomas Weaver premiered David Amram's *Three Lost Loves*, new

works by Jakov Jakoulov and Yang Yong, and gave performances on the New York Philharmonic Chamber Series.

Concurrent with his US performing and teaching, Radnofsky designed and implemented a saxophone program for Venezuela with saxophone professor Claudio Dioguardi, and taught in Brazil, Turkey, and frequently in Israel, Taiwan and China. Radnofsky is committed to outreach on an international scale. He is also President of the Boston Woodwind Society, an organization dedicated to fostering the development of talented young woodwind players, a founding member with Charles Peltz of the Gunther Schuller Society, and co-founder with Michael Couper, of RC Editions (woodwind music publishing house). He is Professor of Saxophone and Chamber Music at New England Conservatory, and Lecturer at Boston University, where he also directs the Summer Tanglewood Institute.

His current solo CD releases include David Amram's *So in America* (Affetto 1801); *Ode to Lord Buckley* (NewportClassic Recordings); Debussy *Rhapsody* with the New York Philharmonic (Teldec13133/Apex); *Radnofsky.com* (Boston Records 1043); *Fascinatin' Rhythms* (Boston Records 1044); Gandolfi *Fantasia, From the Institutes of Groove*, (BMOP/sound 1028); Donald Martino's *Saxophone Concerto* (New World 80529-2) and Elliott Schwartz *Mehitabel's Serenade* (Albany-Troy 646), both with NEC orchestra and conductor Richard Hoenich; Michael Colgrass' *Dream Dancer* (Mode 125) with NEC Wind Ensemble and conductor Charles Peltz; and as soloist with the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, in Franz Waxman's *A Place in the Sun*, under John Mauceri's direction (Philips 4321092). He has many 'free' recordings on Sound Cloud and Youtube.

Described as "copiously skilled and confident" by the *New York Times*, **Leo Eguchi** has performed extensively across North America, Europe, Australia and Asia. An active soloist and chamber musician who believes in the power of music for social change, he is the co-founder and co-artistic director of two institutions which are helping to reshape the classical concert model: Sheffield Chamber Players, which builds community by bringing world-class chamber music out of the concert hall and into intimate spaces, and the Willamette Valley Chamber Music Festival which pairs music and wine to provide new inroads into the artistic experience. Additionally, Leo has recently launched a nationally acclaimed immigration-themed solo cello project titled *Unaccompanied*, which brings together immigrant and first-generation American composers to use music to explore shared experiences of American identity and displacement in society.

Leo is on the music faculty of Boston College, and is the Assistant Conductor of the MIT Symphony Orchestra. He holds degrees in physics and music from the University of Michigan and Boston University.

Klaudia Szlachta is an award-winning violinist from Poland, who attended Boston Conservatory on a scholarship where she earned her Bachelor of Music degree, graduating summa cum laude. Her Master of Music and Doctorate of Musical Arts degrees were achieved at Boston University, where she won both the Bach Prize and

the Concerto Competition. Upon graduation, Ms. Szlachta was invited by the Institute and Festival of Contemporary Performance in New York City to perform Luciano Berio's *Sequenza* and Elliott Carter's *Triple Duo*. She has also had the privilege of collaborating on stage with Menahem Pressler, Joseph Silverstein and Lucia Lin. Recently, she showcased a new composition by Ketty Nez at the Festival of New Music in Florida. Locally, she performs regularly with the Cantata Singers, Bach, Beethoven and Brahms Society, the Odyssey Opera, Alea III and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, the latter of which recently invited her to perform as concertmaster when they played at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Currently, Ms. Szlachta is on the faculty of Boston University's School of Music, New England Conservatory's Preparatory School, the Intensive Community Program, Rivers School Conservatory and BUTI's summer program at Tanglewood, where she is the Director of the Violin Workshop.

Thomas Weaver, currently on faculty at the Curtis Institute of Music and Boston University Tanglewood Institute, is an American composer and pianist whose active solo and chamber career has included performances in concert halls throughout New York, Philadelphia, Washington DC, Boston, Chicago, Nashville, Dallas, and Berlin, in addition to festival appearances at Tanglewood and Red Rocks Music Festival. Weaver has performed with a number of eminent musicians including Jess Gillam, Elmira Darvarova, Kenneth Radnofsky, Jennifer Frautschi, Gene Pokorny, and members of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, and others. Weaver is currently a member of the Amram Ensemble, Trio Ardente, and New England Chamber Players. Also an award-winning composer, Weaver's music has been performed throughout the United States, Germany, Austria, Japan, and Australia. For more information please visit www.thomaseweaver.com.

Scott Woolweaver is principal violist of the Ann Arbor (MI) Symphony Orchestra and is a member of the Chameleon Arts Ensemble of Boston. Mr. Woolweaver is Artist Affiliate in Viola and Chamber Music at Tufts University in Medford Massachusetts and is a faculty member of the All Newton Music School in West Newton, where he is Director of the Con Brio chamber music series. He has held teaching positions at Williams College, Eastern Michigan University School of Music and Dance and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is also Director of the Adult Chamber Music Institute at Kneisel Hall in Blue Hill, Maine.

Ziang Yin '25 MM, graduated from The Juilliard School in 2019 and NEC in 2023, and is a current NEC student majoring in classical piano performance with Bruce Brubaker. Ziang has received highly professional piano education from a young age, including instruction from pianists such as Chu-Fang Huang, Gary Graffman, Ignat Solzhenitsyn, Robert McDonald, Victor Rosenbaum, and Bruce Brubaker. Ziang has won several prestigious competitions, including both the Canadian Music International Festival and the Tennessee International Music Festival with the full

scholarship. He has performed the Rachmaninov Second Piano Concerto with the Canadian Orchestra and received unanimous acclaim from the public. Following that, Ziang has given recitals in many countries including one at Lincoln Center after winning the Metropolitan International Piano Competition as the youngest winner. Ziang not only performs as a soloist but also collaborates with many other musicians. He is willing to explore the connections and effects between different instruments, as well as to exchange ideas with various musicians.

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