

NEC Saxophone Ensemble

Kenneth Radnofsky, director
Juchen Wang, assistant director

with special guest
Michael Couper, composer and saxophonist

Tuesday, March 26, 2024
7:30 p.m.
NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

Michael Couper
(b. 1985)

Transcend (2020)

Michael Couper, soprano saxophone

Francine Trester
(b. 1969)

from *Red Sox Blue Sax* (2005)

I. "Outta the Park!"

II. and the Moon turned Red...

III. Johnny Damon's Hair

Juchen Wang, soprano saxophone

Xinyi Liao, alto saxophone

Zhikang Chen, tenor saxophone

Cheng Wang, baritone saxophone

Short Pause

Jennifer Higdon
(b. 1962)

Stomp and Dance (1996)

Zhikang Chen, Xinyi Liao,
soprano saxophone

Elise Hill *, Margaret Nalen, Zeyi Tian,
Guanlong Shen, alto saxophone

Yingjie Hong, Cheng Wang,
tenor saxophone

Vladyslav Dovhan, Ethan Shen,
baritone saxophone

Juchen Wang, conductor

* guest, Longy School of Music

John H. Wallace
(b. 1960)

Summer Mosaics (2004)

Juchen Wang, Xinyi Liao,
soprano saxophone
Elise Hill *, Margaret Nalen, Zeyi Tian,
Guanlong Shen, alto saxophone
Zhikang Chen, Yingjie Hong,
tenor saxophone
Vladyslav Dovhan, Ethan Shen,
Cheng Wang, baritone saxophone

Kenneth Radnofsky, conductor

Samuel Barber
(1910–1981)
arr. Michael Warner

Adagio for Strings (1936)

Zhikang Chen, Xinyi Liao,
soprano saxophone
Elise Hill *, Margaret Nalen, Zeyi Tian,
Guanlong Shen, alto saxophone
Yingjie Hong, Cheng Wang,
tenor saxophone
Vladyslav Dovhan, Ethan Shen,
baritone saxophone

Kenneth Radnofsky, conductor

Leonard Bernstein
(1918–1990)

Fugue from Prelude, Fugue and Riffs (1949)

Juchen Wang, Xinyi Liao, alto saxophone 1
Elise Hill *, Margaret Nalen, Zeyi Tian,
alto saxophone 2
Zhikang Wang, Yingjie Hong,
tenor saxophone 1
Guanlong Shen, Cheng Wang,
tenor saxophone 2
Vladyslav Dovhan, Ethan Shen,
baritone saxophone

Kenneth Radnofsky, conductor

Duke Ellington

(1899–1974)

arr. Roger Jannotta

Prelude to a Kiss (1938)

Juchen Wang, Xinyi Liao,
soprano saxophone

Elise Hill *, Margaret Nalen, Zeyi Tian,
Guanlong Shen, alto saxophone

Zhikang Wang, Yingjie Hong,
tenor saxophone

Vladyslav Dovhan, Ethan Shen,
Cheng Wang, baritone saxophone

Kenneth Radnofsky, conductor

Joe Garland

(1903–1977)

arr. Dennis Ruello

In the Mood (1938)

Juchen Wang, Xinyi Liao,
soprano saxophone

Elise Hill *, Margaret Nalen, Zeyi Tian,
Guanlong Shen, alto saxophone

Zhikang Wang, Yingjie Hong,
tenor saxophone

Vladyslav Dovhan, Ethan Shen,
Cheng Wang, baritone saxophone

Kenneth Radnofsky, conductor

Hailed by the *New York Times* for his “sweet intensity” and “insinuating smoothness,” modern saxophonist **Michael Couper** has performed internationally as a soloist and chamber musician at venues including Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Seoul Arts Center, and Ryougoku Monten Hall in Tokyo. Dr. Couper was a finalist in the 2019 Matthew Ruggiero International Woodwind Competition and the prestigious 2015 Concert Artists Guild Victor Elmaleh competition. Dr. Couper performed the Tomasi Concerto with the San Bernardino Symphony in 2018 and has performed concerti with the Mimesis Ensemble, the USC Symphony Orchestra, the SDSU Wind Ensemble and the SDSU Orchestra.

Since the very beginning of his musical studies, Michael Couper has been torn between being a composer and a performer. In addition to an output that includes vocal music, chamber music, and an opera, he has worked with a multitude of composers and publishers as an arranger and orchestrator for small ensembles as well as large orchestras. His concertino for soprano saxophone and chamber orchestra, *Transcend*, was premiered in January 2020 at Carnegie Hall by the critically acclaimed Mimesis Ensemble. Besides film and conventional orchestral music, he is fascinated with Electronic Dance Music, in particular Zedd and Armin Van Buuren.

Dr. Couper studied composition with Brent Dutton, Malcolm Peyton, and Frank Ticheli and has a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Saxophone Performance from USC. He has served on the faculty at CSU San Bernardino and San Diego State University, and is a Conn-Selmer Artist endorsing Yanagisawa saxophones.

Trester *Red Sox Blue Sax*

This quartet is an "homage to the 2004 World Champion Red Sox."

The first movement, "Outta the Park!," opens with the hustle and bustle of the gathering fans. The crowd soon grows quiet as the Alto "steps up to the plate" for the first of three cadenzas. When the Alto "strikes out," a sad "chorale-like" melody ensues followed by a resurgence of hope and excitement. Next, the Tenor is "up at bat." but he too is unsuccessful. Once again the "chorale" is heard followed by a heightened anxiousness and energy - now all is riding on the Soprano, the last "at bat." This last cadenza hits it "out of the park," and following a triumphant high note, all four saxophones rally for an exuberant final cheer.

The second movement, "and the Moon turned Red..." refers to the eerie total lunar eclipse that occurred the night of the 2004 World Series. As if to match the singularity of the Red Sox victory, the moon itself donned a red uniform and cast a steady crimson glow. This movement evokes a certain spaciousness and the unique reddish tinted moonglow of that exceptional night.

"Johnny Damon's Hair," the third movement, is an unabashed tribute to #18 and the best hair in baseball. The melody flows...so does his hair. - Francine Trester

Upcoming Concerts at NEC

all programs subject to change

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PIANO DEPARTMENT CONCERT: IVES 150

Bruce Brubaker, curator of piano programming

“Ives Extended”: NEC piano students perform *The Celestial Railroad*, the *Set of Five Take-Offs*, works by Carl Ruggles, Lou Harrison and Henry Cowell, and rarely heard music for two pianos in quarter-tones by Ives, David Fulmer, and Georg Haas.

Wednesday, March 27, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

WHAT I HEAR (NEC/BSO collaboration)

Roberto Sierra, composer

Thursday, March 28, 2024 at 5:30 p.m., Williams Hall

NEC PEYTON RESIDENCY CONCERT, curated by Sid Richardson

“The Music of Valerie Coleman”

Thursday, March 28, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

“CONNECTIONS” CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES, Max Levinson, director

Thursday, March 28, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Burnes Hall

FIRST MONDAY IN JORDAN HALL, Laurence Lesser, artistic director

Mozart *Ein musikalischer Spass (A Musical Joke)*, K. 522; Smetana *Trio in G Minor*, op. 15; Bruckner *Quintet in F Major*, WAB 112; Ayano Ninomiya, violin;
Kim Kashkashian, viola; Lluís Claret, cello; HaeSun Paik, piano; Borromeo String Quartet

Monday, April 1, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC CMA HONORS ENSEMBLE: RED BIRD

Karl Henry, voice, cello; Yifei Marine Zhou, voice; Adrian Chabla, voice, piano,
Jacqui Armbruster, voice, viola; Evan Haskin, guitar

Tuesday, April 2, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC PHILHARMONIA, Hugh Wolff, conductor

Chen Wu Xing (*Five Elements*); Strauss *Death and Transfiguration*;
Prokofiev *Piano Concerto No. 2*, Changyong Shin '24 AD, piano

Wednesday, April 3, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC JAZZ HONORS ENSEMBLE: MOON.UNIT

Koki Renwick, trumpet; Jake Walters, piano; Dominic Vance, percussion

Thursday, April 4, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

Upcoming Concerts at NEC

—continued

NEC PERCUSSION GROUP, Will Hudgins, director

Monday, April 8, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

ARTIST DIPLOMA RECITAL: Leland Ko '24, cello

Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

ENCHANTED CIRCLE, Steven Drury, artistic director

The Callithumpian Consort performs piano trios by Ives and Ravel and Elliott Carter's *Sonata for Violoncello and Piano*

Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Williams Hall

NEC HONORS ENSEMBLE: TRIO NOMAD

Shalun Li, piano; Felicitas Schiffner, violin; Jiheuk Choi, cello

Wednesday, April 10, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

STRAUSS: *Die Fledermaus*

performed by NEC Opera students and members of NEC Philharmonia;

Joshua Major, director; Robert Tweten, conductor

Thursday–Sunday, April 11–14, 2024, Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre, times vary

BRASS BASH, James Markey, director

Sunday, April 14, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Jordan Hall

MARION RUBIN BERMAN '31 PIANO HONORS CONCERT

Monday, April 15, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

TUESDAY NIGHT NEW MUSIC

New music by NEC composers, performed by their peers

Tuesday, April 16, 2024 at 7:00 p.m., Brown Hall

NEC WIND ENSEMBLE & SYMPHONIC WINDS

Carl Atkins, William Drury, Rachel Brake '24 MM, and Jackie Hu '24 MM, conductors

Atkins *We Free Kings*; Johnson *Poem for Brass*; Dello Joio *Scenes from the Louvre*;

Dove *Figures in the Garden*; Bach/Mowett *Brandenburg Concerto No. 3*;

Nieske *Pop's Parade*; Schoenberg *Theme and Variations, op. 43a*

Tuesday, April 16, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

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Your gift to The NEC Fund has a direct and immediate impact on student scholarships, NEC's world-class faculty, and a collaborative and innovative learning environment rooted in the highest level of musical excellence.

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Food and drink are not allowed in the concert hall,
and photography and audio or video recording are prohibited.
Assistive listening devices are available for all Jordan Hall concerts;
contact the head usher or house manager on duty or inquire at the Coat Room.
Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of management.

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