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

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**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  
*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

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**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
Visit necmusic.edu for complete and updated concert and ticketing information

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
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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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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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