

Bram Fisher

viola

Recital in partial fulfillment of the
Bachelor of Music degree, 2024
Student of Melissa Reardon

with

Pualina Lim Mei En, Elgin Lee, and Rafe Schaberg, piano

Laura Coe, dance

Andrew Salaru, bass clarinet

Arun Asthagiri, violin

Jonah Kernis, cello

Doyeon DY Kim, percussion

Iverson Eliopoulos, conductor

Sunday, March 31, 2024

12:00 noon

Brown Hall

PROGRAM

Esperanza Spalding

(b. 1984)

arr. Bram Fisher

Radio Song

Pualina Lim Mei En, piano

Bram Fisher

Nursery Rhyme

Laura Coe, dance

Charles Ives

(1874–1854)

from **Violin Sonata No. 4, “Children’s Day”**

III. Allegro

Pualina Lim Mei En, piano

Paul Hindemith

(1895–1963)

Viola Sonata, op.11 no. 4

played without pause

Fantasie

Thema mit Variationen

Finale (mit Variationen)

Elgin Lee, piano

Intermission

Tōru Takemitsu
(1930–1996)

A Bird Came Down the Walk

Elgin Lee, piano

Claude Debussy
(1862–1918)

from **Sonate pour violoncelle et piano**

I. Prologue

Pualina Lim Mei En, piano

Bram Fisher

Miami 2063

Andrew Salaru, bass clarinet
Arun Asthagiri, violin
Jonah Kernis, cello
Doyeon DY Kim, percussion
Rafe Schaberg, piano
Iverson Eliopoulos, conductor

Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872–1958)

from **Suite for Viola and Orchestra**

I. Prelude

VIII. Galop

Pualina Lim Mei En, piano

*Thank you to my devoted teachers Martha Strongin Katz and Melissa Reardon
and to the South Mountain Association, Ferris Burtis Scholarship Fund,
and Virtu Foundation for all their support.*

Esperanza Spalding *Radio Song*

The first time I heard jazz composer, singer, and bassist Esperanza Spalding's album *Radio Music Society* was ten years ago during an interminable (and chaotic) bus ride to Québec City with my seventh-grade French class. My friend Richard Stanmeyer (also NEC MM '24 in jazz trumpet) passed me his earbuds, and I was amazed by this kaleidoscope of sound and rhythm.

Bram Fisher *Nursery Rhyme*

Nursery Rhyme was written for Yellow Barn's Young Artists Program in June 2020 and performed by violinist Grant Houston (Trio Gaia). Inspired by Grant's energetic musicality, I decided to recast motives and phrasing from the Sesame Street children's song "Rubber Duckie." Bits of the song's contours, harmonies, and bass line are translated into a quirky and exaggerated idiom, imitating the sing-song vocal style of the muppet Ernie. Several techniques on the viola suggest the squeaking, splashing, or quacking of Ernie's beloved rubber duck, humorously hinting at the song's verses. I am excited to perform this piece with my friend Laura, whose work and perspective I really admire.

Laura Coe (Chickasaw) is a dancer and choreographer based in Chatham, New York. Her work centers collaboration and environmental awareness, combining her background in concert dance with her practice in Breaking (Harvard Breakers Crew). She holds a B.A. from Harvard University and is a member of Double Yolk Collective.

Charles Ives *Violin Sonata No. 4, "Children's Day"*

"Children's Day at a Camp Meeting" draws on Ives' recollections of hymns sung at children's services and of kids shouting and marching during summer camp meetings. This movement seems so intuitively put together—both logical and illogical in its motivic and harmonic conception—and I think that this aspect appeals to a child's imagination and perception of the world. The clash of tonalities creates a sense of playful taunting or teasing reminiscent of children's games. The hymn tune *Gather at the River* is spun in fragments throughout the piece, and its dual disposition—both lively and touching—captures a jumbled sense of childhood bliss and nostalgia. The contrast of Ives' complex harmonic language and the joyful simplicity of the hymn melody feels to me like a quality inherent in childhood, which itself is filled with contradictions. This piece reminds me of the many summers I spent growing up at Greenwood Music Camp, playing chamber music and singing hymn tunes every Sunday at the (non-denominational) Cummington Village Church and feeling vaguely aware of each moment's ephemerality. The kids who stood singing next to me are still my closest friends.

Paul Hindemith *Viola Sonata, op. 11 no. 4*

like an endless gust of wind, evolving and unfurling through a series of variations without pause, luminous and exhilarating (and also long)

Tōru Takemitsu A Bird Came Down the Walk

dedicated to violist Nobuko Imai

and inspired by a poem of the same name by Emily Dickinson

[you can kind of hear the ink scratching and pecking at the page]:

A Bird, came down the Walk -
He did not know I saw -
He bit an Angle Worm in halves
And ate the fellow, raw,

And then, he drank a Dew
From a convenient Grass -
And then hopped sidewise to the Wall
To let a Beetle pass -

He glanced with rapid eyes,
That hurried all abroad -
They looked like frightened Beads, I thought,
He stirred his Velvet Head. -

Like one in danger, Cautious,
I offered him a Crumb,
And he unrolled his feathers,
And rowed him softer Home -

Than Oars divide the Ocean,
Too silver for a seam,
Or Butterflies, off Banks of Noon,
Leap, plashless as they swim.

Claude Debussy Sonate pour violoncelle et piano

This piece reminds me of an incredible summer I spent two years ago studying music alongside architecture students at the Fontainebleau Chateau in France. The sonata itself feels grand and architectural and recalls the reverberant acoustics of the ballrooms and salons of the chateau. One day, as we were setting up for a rehearsal, we walked in on Gerard Poulet and Reghis Pasquier, two of the most respected French violinists of the 20th century. Poulet was rehearsing Debussy's violin sonata; Pasquier sat rapt with attention. As he listened, his mouth began to droop more and more and his hand fluttered into the air involuntarily, his eyes twinkling wildly. It felt as if Poulet were sculpting time itself with his sound. When he finished playing, Pasquier leapt into the air and began hopping madly around the room in ecstasy. (please restrain yourself if a similar urge reveals itself during our performance today)

Bram Fisher *Miami 2063*

Commissioned in 2023 by the Magari Ensemble, *Miami 2063* is a tribute to a city which may soon be partially underwater, as climate models predict two feet or more of sea-level rise over the next four decades and potentially \$23.5 billion worth of property lost to daily tidal flooding. Scored for chamber ensemble and pre-recorded tape, which features a soundscape of news reports, vintage commercials, and other audio clips, *Miami 2063* explores the convergence of glamorization, nostalgia, and now apprehension associated with this storied vacation magnet. The soundscape incorporates audio clips recorded in Miami, including environmental sounds, street music, a conversation about urban redevelopment with an Uber driver originally from Cuba, and other reminiscences from Miami residents. Other recorded excerpts include historical broadcasts either advertising Miami's paradise destination or warning of severe weather patterns, natural disasters, and climate change. Among several street recordings is a passing refrain from Rauw Alejandro's 2021 disco hit, *Todo de ti*, clashing with sobering news clips and scientific perspectives; a fragment from Billy Joel's apocalyptic *Miami 2017*; and an anecdotal excerpt from my grandfather's book relating his experience surviving Hurricane Andrew. The written music serves as an extension of the timbres and sentiments of the soundscape and traces a trajectory from low to high, echoing the ebb and flow of the ever-rising coastal tides. *Miami 2063* looks both to the future and the past, comparing projections of Miami's next forty years with audio memorabilia from a century prior.

Ralph Vaughan Williams *Suite for Viola and Orchestra*

Picture yourself in the backseat of your mom's car, WMHT comes on the radio, and the trees suddenly dissolve into the sound of the viola...

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Garrett Comrie, *bassoon* (BM)

Student of Marc Goldberg

Sunday, March 31, 2024 at 4:00 p.m., Keller Room

Taewan Gu, *piano* (MM)

Student of Pavel Nersessian

Sunday, March 31, 2024 at 4:00 p.m., Williams Hall

Claire Deokyong Kim, *cello* (GD)

Student of Laurence Lesser

Sunday, March 31, 2024 at 4:00 p.m., Pierce Hall

So Jeong Kim, *oboe* (GD)

Student of John Ferrillo

Sunday, March 31, 2024 at 4:00 p.m., Brown Hall

GaYeon Kim, *cello* (MM)

Student of Laurence Lesser

Sunday, March 31, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall

Hyelim Kong, *viola* (GD)

Student of Nicholas Cords

Sunday, March 31, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Pierce Hall

Cheng Wang, *saxophone* (MM)

Student of Kenneth Radnofsky

Sunday, March 31, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Burnes Hall

Jacqueline Armbruster, *contemporary musical arts* (MM)

Student of Eden MacAdam-Somer

Monday, April 1, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Keller Room

Jialin Guo, *jazz drums* (MM)

Student of Jerry Bergonzi and Donny McCaslin

Monday, April 1, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Pierce Hall

Rachel Yi, *violin* (MM)

Student of Miriam Fried

Monday, April 1, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Williams Hall

Food and drink are not allowed in the concert hall,
and photography and audio or video recording are prohibited.
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Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of management.

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