NEC Lab Orchestra Concert

conducted by graduate students in orchestral conducting

Jherrard Hardeman ’25 GD
Timothy Ren ’25 MM

Students of Hugh Wolff

with
NEC Lab Orchestra

Thursday, April 25, 2024
8:00 p.m.
Brown Hall
PROGRAM

Johannes Brahms
(1833–1897)

Variations on a Theme by Joseph Haydn,
op. 56a
Theme: Chorale St. Antoni, Andante
Variation 1: Poco più animato
Variation 2: Più vivace
Variation 3: Con moto
Variation 4: Andante con moto
Variation 5: Vivace
Variation 6: Vivace
Variation 7: Grazioso
Variation 8: Presto non troppo
Finale: Andante

Timothy Ren ’25 MM, conductor

Richard Wagner
(1813–1883)

Siegfried Idyll

Jherrard Hardeman ’25 GD, conductor

Intermission
Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967)  

*Dances of Marosszék*

*Timothy Ren ’25 MM, conductor*

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)  

*Symphony No. 8 in F Major, op. 93*

Allegro vivace e con brio  
Allegretto scherzando  
Tempo di Menuetto

*Jherrard Hardeman ’25 GD, conductor*

Allegro vivace

*Timothy Ren ’25 MM, conductor*
Brahms  Variations on a Theme by Haydn
T. S. Eliot writes the following in “Little Gidding”:

“We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.”

Brahms’ Variations on a Theme by Haydn bears witness to the claim that the new is often concealed in the old. Using a classical chorale falsely attributed to Joseph Haydn, Brahms composes a set of eight variations based on a slightly reimagined theme plus a grand finale. Completed in Bavaria in the summer of 1873, the work is in turn bucolic and introspective, but never overbearing or gloomy. The essential chamber-music-like atmosphere of the piece suggests a delicate and sensitive approach. The fleeting nature of each variation is not unlike Monet’s Haystack paintings in which the artist shows how the difference in light and atmosphere throughout the day (and seasons) enlivens an unadorned pile of hay. Unlike the fatalistic passacaglia of the finale of his 4th Symphony, its counterpart in this earlier work is gentle, self-assured, and brimming with hope. The sound of a triangle accompanies a work of superb craftsmanship and subtlety to its jolly, but unheroic conclusion.

– Timothy Ren

Wagner  Siegfried Idyll
Premiered on Christmas morning in 1870, Richard Wagner’s Siegfried Idyll is imbued with intimacy and tenderness, serving as a heartfelt expression of Wagner’s love and admiration for his wife, Cosima, and a celebration of the birth of their son, Siegfried.

The work opens with a gentle, lullaby-like theme introduced by the strings, evoking a sense of serenity and domestic bliss. This tender melody serves as the foundation upon which the entire composition unfolds, weaving its way through various transformations and developments.

As the music progresses, it builds to moments of exquisite beauty and passion, reflecting the overwhelming joy and love that inspired its creation. Wagner’s use of chromatic harmonies and lush textures further enhances the work’s emotional impact.

– Jherrard Hardeman

Kodály  Dances of Marosszék
Lesser known than the enchanting Dances of Galanta, Kodály’s Dances of Marosszék is equally spirited and well-crafted. Premiered in 1930, this dance suite offers a glimpse of the musical identity of rural Transylvania—a “Fairyland of the past”, in the composer’s own words. The recurring, monophonic rondo theme first heard at the beginning of the piece is most definitely vocal in origin, colored with chromatic appoggiaturas and occasional modal jaunts. The first episode is a joyful duple dance accompanied by offbeat twitterings of the strings and woodwinds. Next comes a comfortably-paced yet virtuosic interlude, showcasing the oboe, flute, and piccolo soloists in sequence. The second episode is characterized by the use of fast trills and percussion, culminating in a whirlwind of timbres and rhythms played fortissimo.
The pedal points and ground-bass nature of the final section is suggestive of bagpipe playing. The low instruments take a prominent role in this piece, as Kodaly deploys a contrabassoon to highlight the earthy nature of folk music despite only scoring for a compact woodwind section. Also worth noticing is Kodaly’s sensuous orchestration and superimposition of diatonic and modal-pentatonic scales. – Timothy Ren

Beethoven Symphony No. 8 in F Major, op. 93
Completed just months after his monumental Seventh Symphony, Beethoven’s Eighth Symphony, in many ways embraces a lighter, more playful tone, infusing the work with a sense of buoyancy and joy.

The first movement bursts forth with exuberance, propelled by its spirited primary theme. Beethoven's trademark rhythmic drive is on full display here, as the music traverses a kaleidoscope of moods and textures.

The second movement, a playful scherzo, is full of incredible wit and charm. Beethoven toys with the listener’s expectations, weaving intricate counterpoint and rhythmic surprises into the fabric of the music.

The third movement takes the form of a minuet, harkening back to the classical traditions of Beethoven’s predecessors. Yet, even in this more traditional dance form, Beethoven infuses the music with his distinctive voice, blending the elegance of a minuet with unexpected rhythmic emphases.

The finale explodes with energy and vitality as Beethoven unleashes a whirlwind of musical invention. Much like the finale of the Seventh Symphony, this finale embraces tireless repetition of its themes which seem to make their way to multiple dead ends. In true form, Beethoven always shows us the way out of any complicated compositional situation.

One of the most notable aspects of this symphony is that there is not a single movement composed in a minor key. Even amidst the explosive joy of the Seventh and the reflectiveness of the Sixth, darkness and stormy weather still found its way into those works. The Eighth truly embraces joy, even if sometimes sardonic, from start to finish. – Jherrard Hardeman
NEC Lab Orchestra

Violin 1
Mitsuru Yonezaki
Yebin Yoo
David Carreon
Yeji Lim
Jisoo Kim
Kearston Gonzales

Violin 2
Rachel Yi
Olga Kaminsky
Yeji Hwang
Jeremiah Jung
Aidan Daniels
Abby Reed

Viola
Yi-Chia Chen
Elton Tai
Inácio Afonso
Po-Sung Huang

Cello
Rei Otake
Jihyeuk Choi
Joanne Hwang
Nicholas Tsang Man To

Bass
Yu-Cih Chang
Lawrence Hall

Flute, Piccolo
Chia-Fen Chang
Anne Chao
Jeong Won Choe

Oboe
Abigail Hope-Hull
Victoria Solis Alvarado

Clarinet
Evan Chu
Chasity Thompson

Bassoon, Contrabassoon
Abigail Heyrich
Evan Judson
Andrew Salaru

French horn
Rachel Brake
Grace Clarke
Qianbin Zhu

Trumpet
Daniel Barak
Reynolds Martin

Timpani, Percussion
Isabella Butler
Danial Kukuk

Symphonic Music at New England Conservatory
Stanford and Norma Jean Calderwood Director of Orchestras Hugh Wolff is joined by Associate Director of Orchestras David Loebel, Chamber Orchestra founder Donald Palma, and a rich array of guest conductors and coaches for dozens of FREE orchestral concerts in NEC’s Jordan Hall this year.

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NEC SYMPHONY, David Loebel, conductor
Simon The Block; Mussorgsky Pictures at an Exhibition and Prelude from Khovanschina; Jennings Five Miniatures from Greenwich Village
Tuesday, April 30, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC PHILHARMONIA, Hugh Wolff, conductor
Mahler Symphony No. 7
Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall
Other Upcoming Concerts at NEC

**ARTIST DIPLOMA RECITAL:** Yeonjae Cho ’24, soprano  
*Monday, April 29, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

**CHAMBER MUSIC GALA**  
*Friday, May 3, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

**NEC HONORS ENSEMBLE: TRIO SPONTE**  
Charles Berofsky, piano; Nicholas Hammel, violin; Yi-I Stephanie Yang, cello  
*Sunday, May 5, 2023 at 8:00 p.m., Jordan Hall*

**FIRST MONDAY IN JORDAN HALL,** Laurence Lesser, artistic director  
Brahms *Trio in C Minor, op. 101*; Chausson *Concerto for Violin, Piano and String Quartet, op. 21*; Miriam Fried, David McCarroll, violin; Angela Park, cello; Ieva Jacubaviciute, Marc-André Hamelin, piano; Terra String Quartet  
*Monday, May 6, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

**TUESDAY NIGHT NEW MUSIC**  
New music by NEC composers, performed by their peers  
*Tuesday, May 7, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

**NEC HONORS ENSEMBLE: KROMA QUARTET**  
Clayton Hancock, Arun Asthagiri, violin; Nathan Emans, viola;  
Sophia Knappe, cello  
*Wednesday, May 8, 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, May 14, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall*

**NEC COMMENCEMENT CONCERT**  
*Saturday, May 18, 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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