NEC New England Conservatory

Concert Program

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NEC Department of Contemporary Musical Arts presents

1923

Anthony Coleman, producer with Eden MacAdam-Somer and Lautaro Mantilla

performed by NEC students, faculty, and ensembles

Tuesday, November 14, 2023 7:30 p.m. NEC's Jordan Hall When we are planning these concerts, we throw around a lot of ideas. It's important for us to have something thematic, in order to channel all of the wild creativity of this Department.

In these few years since I began leading first one, then two Early Jazz ensembles in school, I've thought a lot about the amazing leap in jazz style that took place in 1923. Not to denigrate the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, etc., but 1923 was the beginning of acknowledged "Jazz Masterpieces". King Oliver, Jelly Roll Morton, Bessie Smith, Louis Armstrong (as a sideman) all made their first recordings in 1923.

Advances in technology led to greater and wider dissemination of recorded music, although we were still a couple of years away from the microphone. But technology as a theme became very important. As did the search for new sound palettes. As I started to look deeper into 1923 as a theme, I noticed how much this connected disparate works by composer such as Bartók, Honegger, Varèse, Cowell, etc. 1923 was also the year when Schoenberg put his ideas about 12-tone music into practice for the first time.

In order to get beyond this kind of Euro- (or Euro-Americo) centricity, we dug deeper. The students delved into their histories and traditions in order to broaden our understanding of what music and culture in 1923 were really about globally. I am amazed and delighted by how they ran with the prompts and by what they came up with.

In between the performances, you will hear some music representing genres that we weren't able to present. If you want to follow the playlist, you can find it at <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wS6XAjd-9h8&list=PLphtBHFa2PYrpHi6iixEN14uF7AHFdGy_</u>

Last, but definitely not least, I want to thank my colleagues Eden Macadam-Somer and Lautaro Mantilla. Whenever I "produce" a concert, it is actually a team effort. I couldn't do it without you.

Anthony Coleman

PROGRAM

Haoyu Zheng

The Timeless Echo of Shanghai, 1923

Chinese Traditional Music Ensemble —Hui Weng, director Anouk Chemla, voice Emily Mitchell, guitar Shota Renwick, saxophone Philip Rawlinson, viola Michael Yang-Wierenga, erhu Ting Zhou, guzheng Hui Weng, guzheng Moyu Zhang, piano Elfie Shi, percussion

special guests: Harry Liu, zhongruan Amber Sang, pipa Shutong Li, erhu, jinghu

Skyler Lim

Time's Yet to Forget

Emily Mitchell, voice Itay Dayan, clarinet Maddoc Johnson, trumpet Aidan Coleman, trombone Yinjei Hong, saxophone Roman Barten-Sherman, guitar Elfie Shi, percussion Skyler Lim, piano

Osvaldo Fresedo/Rosita Quiroga	Sollozos Tango
	Rosario Rivas, voice
	G Korth Rockwell, guitar
Frank Silver/Irving Cohn	Yes! We Have No Bananas
	Survivors Breakfast — Anthony Coleman, director Helen Bultman, voice Jake Wise, clarinet Gabe Boyarin, guitar Rita Hugues Söderbaum, viola Beth Ann Jones, double bass Hidemi Akaiwa, piano
Béla Bartók arr. CMA Chamber Ensemble	Allegro Vivace from Dance Suite, Sz 77, BB 86a CMA Chamber Ensemble – Eden MacAdam-Somer, ensemble director Morgan Brookman, voice, triangle Katya Popova, voice Agne Giedraityte, voice, piano Eden MacAdam-Somer, voice, violin Sofia Beiran, viola Hayley Yu Qin, cello Jamie Eliot, electric bass, electric guitar
	Short Pause

Gabe Boyarin Taut ha Uni Zui Crishan	Wofur?
Text by Uri Zvi Grinberg	Eden MacAdam-Somer, voice Jake Wise, clarinet Giulia Haible, cello Hidemi Akaiwa, piano Anthony Coleman, conductor
William Russell/Ed Herbert arr. Roman Barten-Sherman	Oh Daddy (Signal x Noise Spiral)
	Roman Barten-Sherman, guitar, voice Itay Dayan, clarinet Lemuel Marc, trumpet Anthony Coleman, piano Michele Zimmerman, violin Philip Rawlinson, viola Yoona Kim, ajaeng Beth Ann Jones, double bass
Enoch Sontonga	Nikosi sikelel' iAfrika
	Pitiki Aliakai, Kayden Carter, Hayley Yu Qin voice
Kurt Schwitters	Ursonate
	CMA Rock Ensemble —Lautaro Mantilla, ensemble director Morgan Brookman, voice Philip Rawlinson, viola Kai Burns, guitar Noah Mark, drums

Jelly Roll Morton

King Porter Stomp

Anthony Coleman, piano, director Itay Dayan, clarinet Michele Zimmerman, violin Yoona Kim, ajaeng Roman Barten-Sherman, banjo Giulia Haible, cello Paul July Joseph, drums

Hayley Yu Qin

At One Day I Will Return

Doyeon Kim, percussion Agne Giedraityte, voice, percussion Sofia Beiran, viola, percussion Pitiki Aliakai, voice, narration, percussion Jamie Eliot, voice, narration, percussion Michele Zimmerman, violin Philip Rawlinson, viola Karl Henry, cello, percussion

Zheng The Timeless Echo of Shanghai, 1923

Reflecting on Shanghai in 1923 reveals a metropolis at the crossroads of transformation, with Western influences permeating Shanghainese culture — from fashion to the proliferation of electricity, trams, and the introduction of café culture, to the celebrated Bellagio ballrooms. The city's essence was one of rapid change, especially in music, where there was a unique Shanghainese approach to blending emerging jazz styles with a Chinese sensibility as well as the heritage of Chinese Traditional Music.

I re-arranged these historical soundscapes, drawing inspiration from the traditional Chinese Opera "Ding Jun Shan" (A Battle at Dingjun Mountain) and integrating the sweetness of "Maomao Yu" (Drizzle), the first-ever Chinese-Mandarin pop song. This harmonious collision and fusion of Chinese and Western music, where instruments from both traditions converse and intertwine, echo the rich, eclectic tapestry of Shanghai. Here, the timeless and the modern coalesced, giving rise to an innovative and lasting cultural identity.

Through the lens of a young Shanghainese girl of our time, the composition navigates the vibrancy and complexities of a city pulsating with life yet marked by the scars of war. Her narrative, set against the bustling backdrop of Xiafei Road and enveloped in the strains of "Ding Jun Shan" and "Maomao Yu," captures the fluid cultural exchange and the enduring allure of Shanghai. – *Haoyu Zheng*

Lim Time's Yet to Forget

I am proud to present my composition for this CMA 1923 concert. My song is based on the 1924 song *Susie* (*Song of the Islands*) by the Wolverines. However, it was not solely *Susie* which my inspiration drew upon - I wanted to explore the blending of Ragtime with hints of Impressionism in Jazz heard as early as 1921, and gave rise to the later conventional Roaring 20s sound. In the numerous hours I worked for this concert, what overcame me was a gratefulness that finally I could share my passion for this music, which was held in my idolization since 7th grade. *– Skyler Lim*

I may question why, Thou made this heart cry, Those days have passed and gone, But still, I ponder long, Why do I persist In the memory of your kiss? To part ways, I cannot let, For time's yet to forget.

Fresedo/Quiroga Sollozos Tango

Rosita Quiroga is often considered to be the first female tango singer, and her version of Osvaldo Fresedo's *Sollozos* came out in 1923 as one of her earliest recordings. She was born and raised in La Boca, Buenos Aires, and her singing style was a direct reflection of this, which can be heard in her use of Lunfardo (street slang that

emerged among the lower classes of Brazil in the early 19th century) and vulgar words in her interpretations. She maintained this style of singing until her death, even after attaining a wealthy economic position. Rosita Quiroga is recognized by many as the most genuine representative of tango from the neighborhood known as "Arrabal Porteño," and she is highly respected by all who love tango. *– Rosario Rivas*

Silver/Cohn Yes! We Have No Bananas

Yes! We Have No Bananas is an American novelty song by Frank Silver and Irving Cohn, published on March 23, 1923. It became a major hit in 1923 (placing No. 1 for five weeks) when it was recorded by Billy Jones, Billy Murray, Arthur Hall, Irving Kaufman, and others. The text comes from both the words of the song and from an interview given by Frank Silver to *Time Magazine* in 1923.

But why is it all cut up like that? Is it connected to the wide influence that Stravinsky's pieces from close to that period (especially *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*) had? Or is it just my personal *mischegoss*? These are the mysteries... – Anthony Coleman

Bartók Allegro Vivace from Dance Suite

Bartók's *Dance Suite* was written to celebrate the 1923 merging of the traditional, old city of Buda with the artistic and commercial working class town of Pest. In addition to resulting in the creation of one of Europe's greatest metropolitan hubs, this blending also represented "a return to life for the entire nation of Hungary three years after the Treaty of Trianon, which divested Hungary of half of its land, virtually all of its natural resources, and most of the ethnic minorities that made it the most diverse of European cultures" (LA Phil program note)

Bartók wrote the melodies himself, drawing on his research and love of traditional folk music. In creating our version of this movement, we worked with Bartók's original orchestral score as well as his piano reduction, along with traditional fiddle and singing styles from the region. We are greatly indebted to NEC faculty and multidisciplinary artist Katya Popova, who worked with us to develop a vocal text based on Slavic phonemes. *- Eden MacAdam-Somer*

Boyarin Wofur?

Why is the song of a rain-filled night sorrowful? And the odors of a field-why do they make you sad? Why does the peace of a village draw you to loneliness, and the ripe reds of an orchard becloud your thirsty eye? There must be someone surely, someone not God, who rests in the blue, wafts fragrance from lilacs, and breathes from the walls in sadness, someone who cries out from every play of hands in the house of joy. פֿאַר װאָס איז אַזו עצבֿותדיק די רעגננעכטס געזאַנג און סיפֿילן דיך מיט טרויער אָן די ריחות פֿון אַ פֿעלד און ס'ציט דיך צו דער איינזאמקייט די שלווה פֿון אַ דאָרף און די גערײַפֿטע רויטקייט פֿון אַן עפּלסאָך באַטרערט דין דאָרשטיק אויג? מוז זײַן אַוודאי עמעץ – אויסער גאָט וואָס רוט אין בלאָ און דופֿטעט פֿונעם בעז און אָטעמט אויף מיט עצבות פֿון די ווענט און וויינט אַרויס פֿון יעדן פֿריידנשפּיל אין הויז פֿון גליק

Russell Oh Daddy (Signal x Noise Spiral)

Oh Daddy (Signal x Noise Spiral) attempts to acoustically summon the entirety of a 78 RPM shellac record. The skeleton of this piece draws from Bessie Smith's *Oh Daddy Blues,* (recorded April 11, 1923) modified through a smattering of Lovie Austin-isms.

In most cases, as the turntable needle follows the record groove over and over again, the signal becomes blanketed by noise, eventually being consumed by a cacophony of cycling hisses and pops. However, most contemporary 78 enthusiasts typically listen through the noise or use varied techniques to actively erase the noise. This piece presents signal and noise as a non-hierarchical dichotomy, invoking the audience to enter the multifaceted sonic cosmos of the 78 record.

– Roman Barten-Sherman

Sontonga Nkosi sikel' iAfrika

Nkosi sikel' iAfrika is a Xhosa hymn written in 1897 by Enoch Sontonga and was first recorded in 1923 by Sol Plaatje, founding member and first General Secretary of the African National Congress. It is traditionally sung as a group, almost chant-like, showing togetherness for Blacks seeking refuge from oppression in South Africa and beyond. As of today it is part of the national anthem of South Africa. – *Pitiki Aliakai*

Nkosi sikel' iAfrika Maluphkam' uphondo lwayo Yizwa imithandazo yethu Nkosi sikelele,Nkosi sikelele Woza moya,Woza moya Oyingcwele Lord, bless Africa May her horn rise high up; Hear Thou our prayers and bless us. Descend, O Spirit Descend, O Holy Spirit Lord bless us

Schwitters Ursonate

The *Ursonate* is a 30-page sound poem written over the course of almost a decade (1923–1932) by German artist, poet, writer Kurt Schwitters. Refused by the Berlin Dadaists in the early 1920s, Schwitters started a one-man Dada group in Hannover called Merz.

This sound poem has a structure similar to a classical sonata or a symphony. It consists of four movements: Erster Teil, Largo, Scherzo and Presto. There is also a Cadenza where the reciter is invited to perform the written part or create their own

by using elements of the Poem. Schwitters, in his instructions for future performers of the piece, said that he wrote his cadenza only for those among them who "had no imagination".

At the source of the *Ursonate* there are two "Plakatgedichte" ("Poster Poems") by Raoul Hausmann, which provided the sonata's opening line: "Fumms bö wö tää zää Uu, pögiff, kwii Ee." According to performer Jaap Blonk, Schwitters used phrases such as this one "to provoke audiences at literary salons, who expected traditional romantic poetry, by endlessly repeating them in many different voices."

As an ensemble, we have been learning the piece methodically, choosing excerpts from it that best fit our group sound and using the text as a laboratory of experimentation with sound, texture, timbre, dynamics, and collective sense of rhythm and pulse. Just like in the process of working on any other sound poem, our journey of learning this piece hasn't been much different than what it would have been in 1923. -CMA Rock Ensemble

Morton King Porter Stomp

Jelly Roll Morton's *King Porter Stomp*, one of the most important of all jazz compositions, was first recorded in 1923. The actual date of composition will, unfortunately, have to remain a subject of conjecture. Morton said that he composed it in 1906 but that seems highly unlikely. He said that he sent a copy to Scott Joplin, which would date it before 1917 but, unfortunately, most of Joplin's papers were lost.

In any case, *King Porter* really spells out, in the most elegant and coherent fashion, both the differences and the similarities between Ragtime and Early Jazz. The multi-thematic March-like structure owes a lot to classic Ragtime as it was practiced by Joplin and a few others, while the culminating section simplifies the final section of a classic rag, transforming it into rhythmic riff-based music that both encourages and supports improvisation. — *Anthony Coleman*

Qin At One Day I Will Return

This piece, with themes of time, faith, and determination, is a portrait of texture, rhythm, and contour. In three movements, the listener is introduced to the soundworld of chaos and wonders in nature, social turbulence and diverse traditions, and introspection of travelers. The first movement is a sound-map made of percussion and narrative. It is inspired by three travelers — botanist Joseph Rock, medical missionary Hubert Gordon Thompson (accompanied by Brig. Gen. George Pereira), and anthropologist Frederick R. Wulsin — whose footsteps covered southern and western China in 1923. The narratives in the music are taken from these travelers' journals, specimen labels, and letters. Through fragments of leaves, winds, and ceremonies, the audience is invited to a piece of history that is diverse, untamed, beautiful, and controversial.

The second movement includes a one-minute recording of "Young Doctor's Canoe Song," recorded by Charles Swan; it is one of the thirty songs in the album *Songs of the Nootka and Quileute,* recorded at Neah Bay, Washington, US in 1923 and 1926, collected and edited by Frances Densmore, issued by the Library of Congress.

The album is also among the many other recordings created in connection with the study of Indian music for the Bureau of American Ethnology of the Smithsonian Institution. As the album's notes suggests, the canoe song is sung at a celebration, when "a delegation was sent to deliver the invitation to neighboring villages or tribes." The lyrics are translated as "on all fours on the water is my craft, flashing light is my craft."

The last movement is an original composition that ponders, lifts, and echoes the journeys, people, celestial and earthly spheres. Musically also inspired by folk songs and composer Arthur Farwell's "Haku" quartet (published in 1923, inspired by indigenous music), the piece opens up the questions to the audience: Who am "I?" Where will I return from? When will I return? Is it hope? Or is it elegy?

Special thanks to Deborah Shapiro and Richard Gilreath at the Smithsonian Institution Archives for their support on locating and accessing Joseph Rock's journal and labels; to Holly Mockovak at Boston University Library for helping with accessing recordings of indigenous music; to Hunter Shen for accessing books on Wulsin and Rock; to Leonie Paterson at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh Library and Archives; to Laura Smolowitz and Patrick Quinn at the New England Conservatory Library; and to John Hague's website about his grandfather Hubert's trip, "Traveling the Tibetan and Mongolian Borders in 1923." – Hayley Yu Qin

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