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New England
Conservatory

Concert Program

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NEC Chamber Orchestra

Donald Palma, artistic director

with

Elizabeth McCormack '24 MM, flute

Winner, NEC Concerto Competition

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

7:30 p.m.

NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

Caroline Shaw
(b. 1982)

Entr'acte (2011)

Amanda Harberg
(b. 1973)

Concerto for Piccolo and Orchestra (2021)

Allegro

Moderato

Vivace

Elizabeth McCormack '24 MM, piccolo

Intermission

Arnold Schoenberg
(1874–1951)

Verklärte Nacht (Transfigured Night)
for String Orchestra, op. 4

Shaw *Entr'acte*

Entr'acte was written in 2011 after hearing the Brentano Quartet play Haydn's Op. 77 No. 2 — with their spare and soulful shift to the D-flat major trio in the minuet. It is structured like a minuet and trio, riffing on that classical form but taking it a little further. I love the way some music (like the minuets of Op. 77) suddenly takes you to the other side of Alice's looking glass, in a kind of absurd, subtle, technicolor transition.

– Caroline Shaw

Harberg *Concerto for Piccolo and Orchestra*

Cast in three dramatically contrasting and colorful movements—an elegant opening reminiscent of a Classical Sonata-allegro, a tender lullaby, and a closing, raucous scherzo—Amanda Harberg's *Concerto for Piccolo and Orchestra* evolved from her piccolo sonata, following a commission from Philadelphia Orchestra piccoloist Erica Peel. Yanick Nézet-Séguin, who led the premiere, praised the concerto as “an extraordinary addition” to the piccolo's limited repertoire. He notes that “Amanda's creativity and unique voice are on full display in this work. Simply in choosing to explore the piccolo's middle and lower voices, she quietly shrugs off the mundane and explores the unexpected. This isn't performative, or different for the sake of being different: Amanda simply sought to highlight a particular aspect of the piccolo's beauty which is often overlooked. This spirit—of curiosity for curiosity's sake, of seeking out hidden loveliness as opposed to what is immediately apparent—pervades Amanda's work.” Harberg's piccolo concerto will undoubtedly remain an important and beloved fixture of the instrument's repertoire for years to come, rewarding listeners with its individual blend of new and old.

Elizabeth McCormack is a 2nd year masters student at New England Conservatory, studying with Cynthia Meyers. Elizabeth earned her bachelor's degree at Northwestern University where she pursued a double major in Flute Performance and International Studies. At Northwestern, Elizabeth studied flute with John Thorne and piccolo with Jennifer Gunn and Alyce Johnson. Elizabeth began her flute studies with Judy Grant at the Boston Flute Academy and studied with her throughout high school. In the fall, Elizabeth will start as a Flute Fellow in the New World Symphony.

Elizabeth feels very passionately about performing works by contemporary composers. In summer 2022, Elizabeth had the opportunity to perform Marcos Balter's *Thaw* for Solo Piccolo at the Chicago Flute Club's Concert: Chicago Flutists Play Chicago Composers at the 50th National Flute Association Convention. At Northwestern, Elizabeth was a finalist in the Bienen School of Music Concerto Competition in both 2021 and 2022. Elizabeth has had the opportunity to perform concertos previously with the University of British Columbia Chamber Orchestra Festival, the Wellesley Symphony Orchestra, and the Boston Civic Symphony. In her previous summers she has attended the Aspen Music Festival, the National Symphony Orchestra Summer Music Institute, and Vancouver Symphony Orchestra Institute at Whistler.

During her time in Boston, Elizabeth has had the opportunity to play as a substitute flutist with Rhode Island Philharmonic and the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. Elizabeth would like to extend her gratitude to all of her teachers for their continued support, and for growing her love for the piccolo.

Schoenberg *Verklärte Nacht*

Composed in 1899, *Verklärte Nacht* is almost Wagnerian, recalling especially Tristan und Isolde, which stretched the limits of tonality and the sexual morality of the 1860s. The title *Verklärte Nacht* comes from an 1896 poem by Richard Dehmel (1863–1920) that celebrates new life, both literally and figuratively. Its form—and that of Schoenberg’s music—is an ABACA structure. Section A recurs as a refrain in which a narrator describes a couple walking outside at night. In section B, the woman informs her companion that she is pregnant by another man, and in section C, the man answers with exceptional understanding, compassion, and acceptance. The transfiguring warmth shared between the man and the woman defies taboos of society to create unity for the unborn child.

Schoenberg did not consider the piece to be true “program music.” In 1950, he commented: “It does not illustrate any action or drama, but was restricted to portray nature and express human feelings ... in other words, it offers the possibility to be appreciated as ‘pure’ music.” In 1917, Schoenberg transcribed the work for string orchestra.

Verklärte Nacht

Zwei Menschen gehn durch kahlen, kalten Hain;

der Mond läuft mit, sie schau'n hinein.

*Der Mond läuft über hohe Eichen;
kein Wölkchen trübt das Himmelslicht,*

in das die schwarzen Zacken reichen.

Die Stimme eines Weibes spricht:

*Ich trag ein Kind, und nit von Dir,
ich geh in Sünde neben Dir.*

Ich hab mich schwer an mir vergangen.

*Ich glaubte nicht mehr an ein Glück
und hatte doch ein schwer Verlangen
nach Lebensinhalt, nach Mutterglück
und Pflicht; da hab ich mich erfrecht,
da ließ ich schaudernd mein Geschlecht
von einem fremden Mann umfängen,
und hab mich noch dafür gesegnet.*

Nun hat das Leben sich gerächt:

Transfigured Night

Two people are walking through a bare, cold
wood;

the Moon keeps pace with them and draws
their gaze.

The Moon moves along above tall oak trees,
there is no wisp of cloud to obscure the
radiance

to which the black, jagged tips reach up.

A woman’s voice speaks:

"I am carrying a child, and not by you.

I am walking here with you in a state of sin.

I have offended grievously against myself.

I despaired of happiness,

and yet I still felt a grievous longing

for life's fullness, for a mother's joys

and duties; and so I sinned,

and so I yielded, shuddering, my sex

to the embrace of a stranger,

and even thought myself blessed.

Now life has taken its revenge,

nun bin ich Dir, o Dir, begegnet.

*Sie geht mit ungelenktem Schritt.
Sie schaut empor; der Mond läuft mit.
Ihr dunkler Blick ertrinkt in Licht.
Die Stimme eines Mannes spricht:*

*Das Kind, das Du empfangen hast,
sei Deiner Seele keine Last,
o sieh, wie klar das Weltall schimmert!
Es ist ein Glanz um alles her;
Du treibst mit mir auf kaltem Meer,
doch eine eigne Wärme flimmert
von Dir in mich, von mir in Dich.
Die wird das fremde Kind verklären,*

*Du wirst es mir, von mir gebären;
Du hast den Glanz in mich gebracht,
Du hast mich selbst zum Kind gemacht.*

*Er faßt sie um die starken Hüften.
Ihr Atem küßt sich in den Lüften.
Zwei Menschen gehn durch hohe, helle Nacht.*

Richard Dehmel

and I have met you, met you."

She walks on, stumbling.
She looks up; the Moon keeps pace.
Her dark gaze drowns in light.
A man's voice speaks:

"Do not let the child you have conceived
be a burden on your soul.
Look, how brightly the universe shines!
Splendour falls on everything around,
you are voyaging with me on a cold sea,
but there is the glow of an inner warmth
from you in me, from me in you.
That warmth will transfigure the stranger's
child,
and you bear it me, begot by me.
You have transfused me with splendour,
you have made a child of me."

He puts an arm about her strong hips.
Their breath embraces in the air.
Two people walk on through the high, bright
night.

Translation by Mary Whittall

The NEC Chamber Orchestra was created to provide the students with an opportunity to apply the principals of chamber music in a small orchestral setting. The participants are chosen by audition at the beginning of the academic year and remain together throughout. As the ensemble rehearses and performs without a conductor, leadership responsibilities are rotated for every work performed. This affords the students an opportunity to develop communication skills, take responsibility for musical decisions and broaden their aural and score reading capabilities. Participation in the program also allows them to explore a wide range of the incredibly rich chamber orchestra literature.

NEC Chamber Orchestra
Donald Palma, artistic director

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Kitty Amaral ††

David Carreon *

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Hyeon Hong §

Masha Lakisova

Yeji Lim §§

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Cello

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Claire Park §

J. Alexander Smith

Yi-I Stephanie Yang *

Bass

Daniel Slatch

Timpani

Doyeon Kim

Harp

Yoonsu Cha

Principal players

* Shaw

† Harberg

§ Schoenberg

Double symbol for principal

2nd violin

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Donald Palma

*Artistic Director of
Chamber Orchestra*

Andrés Almirall

Performance Librarian

Donald Palma, Artistic Director

Donald Palma has an active career as double bassist, conductor, and educator. A native New Yorker, Don attended at the Juilliard School and at the age of nineteen joined Leopold Stokowski's American Symphony Orchestra. As a member of the newly formed contemporary music ensemble, Speculum Musicae, he went on to win the Naumburg Competition and secure management with Young Concert Artists. A founding member of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Don has toured the globe and recorded over fifty compact discs for Deutsche Grammophone, including the Grammy Award winning Stravinsky CD, *Shadow Dances*. Don has also been a

member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and played Principal Bass in the National Arts Centre Orchestra under Trevor Pinnock. He played principal bass for Leonard Bernstein on his recording of *West Side Story* and was a featured artist on Kathleen Battle's recording, *Grace*. As a performer devoted to contemporary music, he has played and conducted dozens of premieres and recordings of important works. Elliott Carter's *Figment III*, Mario Davidovsky's *Synchronism No. 11*, and Charles Wuorinen's *Spin-Off* are among the many works composed for him. He has conducted three critically acclaimed CDs of American music with the Odense Symphony in Denmark. Don has conducted the Xalapa Symphony, the Bridgeport Symphony, at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and at the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires. He recorded Stravinsky's *L'histoire du soldat* with Rogers Waters narrating which was released by SONY in 2018. Don also appears with Orpheus on Wayne Shorter's *Emanon*, which won a 2018 Grammy. He frequently performs with Mistral, the Walden Chamber Players, at the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, the White Mountains Festival and is Music Director of the Symphony-by-the-Sea in Beverly, MA.

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 LAB ORCHESTRA

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

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

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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.

Stay connected



necmusic.edu/tonight



Welcome to NEC!

I am thrilled to share New England Conservatory's 2023-24 concert season—a celebration of the power of music to connect and inspire one another.

Whether you are seated in one of our concert halls or watching online, we hope you are uplifted by the performances of our students, faculty, and guest artists.

Above all, we thank you for your support of our students as they cultivate their artistry and contribute to the world through music.

A handwritten signature in black ink.

Andrea Kalyn
President

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the music playing?

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