

NEC Preparatory School

Senior Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble

Michael Mucci

Music Director, Senior Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble

Allison Lacasse

Assistant Director

Monday, May 22nd, 2023

7:30 p.m.

NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

SENIOR MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH WIND ENSEMBLE

John Mackey
(b.1973)

High Wire

John Barnes Chance
(1932-1972)

Variations on a Korean Folk Song

Vincent Persichetti
(1915-1987)

Masquerade

Julie Giroux
(b.1961)

One Life Beautiful

Haydn Wood
(1882-1959)

Mannin Veen

NEC Senior Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble Program Notes

High Wire

John Mackey

The high wire is a visceral, acrobatic stunt: A tightrope is suspended at enormous height, often swaying above some deadly hazard, and one of the Flying Wallendas dares to traverse it, dazzling the captivated onlookers with death-defying courage and precision. Any errant step brings a gasp of panic from the audience, who dread what they may see yet cannot look away. John Mackey's *High Wire* captures that electric sensation, presented without a net above a three ring heavy-metal circus. This explosive fanfare courses with dizzying virtuosity – pure kinetic energy released from a compression-loaded spring. The commission – put together by the University of WisconsinMilwaukee Youth Wind Ensembles in honor of their founder, Thomas L. Dvorak – was simply for a concert opener but, as Mackey relates, other factors contributed to the eventual composition: “I was itching to write something fun and flashy and yes – I suppose – virtuosic for the ensemble. I had been writing slow, simple music just before starting *High Wire*, and my brain felt like a hyperactive dog that's been locked up indoors for days. I needed to sprint around the yard, musically speaking. “From the outset, I was just thinking ‘flashy fanfare.’ To me a fanfare is a grand, brass-flourish loaded opening gesture for a concert, but they're usually very short. How could I create one that was four minutes long, keeping it exciting while not making it aurally exhausting? I was going for ‘razzmatazz’ and I wanted lots of plus a largely octatonic scale, but it seems that if I combine those ideas – fanfare plus polychords plus octatonic – we get... circus.” The octatonic scale Mackey references is a synthetic collection of pitches favored by a host of composers since the beginning twentieth century, including, notably, Igor Stravinsky. This scale works particularly well in *High Wire* for two reasons. First, it provides a host of semitones, which give any sonority a biting dissonance; and, second, it allows the generation of polychords (two chords that sound like they're in different keys played at the same time) and quick backflipping between a major and minor “home” key. All of these factors interlaced provide one indisputable characteristic: sonic edge. When applied with bright, peeling orchestration, it presents the listener with a sense of agitation and fright that something might go wrong. That fright comes in waves, as the energies surge, then dissipate, only to reload methodically for another discharge.

Variations on a Korean Folk Song

John Barnes Chance

While serving in Seoul, Korea as a member of the Eighth United States Army Band, John Barnes Chance encountered “Arirang,” a traditional folk song sung by native Koreans when experiencing circumstances of national crisis. The Korean word “arirang” means literally rolling hills, and the song relates the story of a man who is forced to leave his significant other, despite her persistent pleas to accompany him. Chance overheard “Arirang” while riding a public bus in Korea and later incorporated it into his work, *Variations on a Korean Folk Song*. *Variations on a Korean Folk Song* is comprised of a theme and five distinct variations. Though the theme is of Eastern origin, Chance maintains a traditional Western tonal function based on triadic harmony and a pentatonic melody. Formal techniques used in the piece are canon, inversion, imitation, augmentation, ostinato, and polymeter. Chance maintains the theme’s Eastern influence by featuring distinct percussive instruments like gong, temple blocks, cymbals, timpani, vibraphone, and triangle. In 1966, *Variations on a Korean Folk Song* was awarded the American Bandmasters Association’s Ostwald Composition Award and the piece remains a standard of band repertoire today.

Masquerade

Vincent Persichetti

When commissioned in 1966 by the Baldwin-Wallace College Conservatory of Music to write a piece for band, chorus, orchestra or string quartet, Vincent Persichetti chose to write for band. His only piece for band using the variation form, *Masquerade* uses several themes in a way that creates a continuous form rather than a series of discrete episodes. The listener unaware of the intent of the piece may not even be aware that this is a variation form because of its continuity when compared to other traditional theme and variation examples. *Masquerade* epitomizes the craftsmanship of Persichetti’s compositional process. Sketches include extensive examples of the composer’s working method, demonstrating the re-working and editing of his materials until satisfied with the result. One of the most interesting aspects of this piece is its well-known derivation from some of the themes he used to write his 1960 text *Twentieth-Century Harmony*. The cover of the score is a reproduction of some of Persichetti’s sketches, containing the example numbers from the book that he utilized in the piece, and it has been noted that this may be the first piece of music to be based on examples for a harmony text rather than the other way around. While this is

interesting and may stimulate detective work (prompting the reason for its title), it is noteworthy that even musical examples designed exclusively for pedagogical purposes stirred his creativity and resulted in a substantial piece of music for the band. Regardless, *Masquerade* is the work of a mature composer working at the height of his powers.

One Life Beautiful

Julie Giroux

Julie Giroux wrote the alluring and captivating piece *One Life Beautiful* as a commission by Ray Cramer, former director of bands at Indiana University. The composition pays tribute to Cramer's daughter Heather Cramer Reu, whose life was tragically cut short by a car accident in the summer of 2009. The title has a double meaning. One refers to the delightful "one life" beautifully lived by Cramer's daughter and the strong impact she had on those around her. The other meaning emphasizes that having one life is what makes our existence so sacred and cherished. Giroux demonstrates her experience as an adept composer of eloquent and passionate music for film and television in this moving work.

Mannin Veen

Haydn Wood

Haydn Wood was born in Yorkshire, England but grew up on the Isle of Man. The seventeenth century writer, Chaloner, said that the Manx people were "much addicted to the music of the violin, so that there is scarce a family on the island that doesn't more or less play upon it, but as they are ill composers, so are they bad players." Wood, however, was a talented fiddler, which led him into the Royal College of Music, where he became a popular composer. "Mannin Veen" is an arrangement of four Manx folk tunes which the composer no doubt learned as a child. They are: "The Good Old Way", an old and typical air, followed by "The Manx Fiddler", a lively reel, then "Sweet Water in the Common", a lovely and lilting tune, and ending with "Harvest of the Sea", which is a Manx fisherman's evening hymn of thanksgiving for a safe return from the sea.

NEC Senior Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble

Michael Mucci, Music Director

Piccolo

Cindy Lee

Flute

Niharika Chawla +

Darren Huang

Cindy Lee

Bessie Li

Yiwen Lin

Alice Rho +

Charis Shin

Irene Song

Jessie Wang

Oboe

Alexander Zheng

Bassoon

Seth Goldman *

Garrett Comrie *

Clarinet

Aidan Chen

Hannah Girma +

Ellie Kim

Richard Li +

Brandon Li

Jong Park +

Su Min Pyo

Yipeng Sha +

Deepak Viswalingam

Bass Clarinet

Christopher Bauge +

Rohan Miovic

Alto Saxophone

Giancarlo D'Agostino +

Sam Richman

Tenor Saxophone

Davi Rangel

Baritone Saxophone

Owen Somers

Trumpet

Simone Cooke +

Nathaniel Gillette +

Yuxiang Wei

Forrest Williams +

French Horn

Lily Hicks +

Trombone

Leo Carpenter +

Kyle Pinto

Joseph Repaci

Euphonium

Lily Hyde +

Tuba

Sydney Parke +

Piano

Daniel Oslin *

Percussion

Ian Chang +

Stella Ovcharova

Jacob Pan

Reuven Wolfe +

Ian Wolossow +

Jason Amis ◊

+*Graduating Prep Seniors*

**NEC College Player*

◊*NEC Guest Ringer*

Michael Mucci

Music Director, Senior Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble

Michael Mucci retired from the Longmeadow Public School System, in Longmeadow, Massachusetts, in 2013, where he taught for thirty-five years, and was Chairman of the Music Department and Director of Instrumental Music at Longmeadow High School. He graduated Summa Cum Laude from the Crane School of Music in Potsdam, New York, where he was awarded the Undergraduate Teaching Award, the Departmental Scholar Award, and the Crane-McMenamin Scholarship. He also holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Mr. Mucci's Longmeadow ensembles performed at the National Band and Orchestra Festival at Carnegie Hall and Boston Symphony Hall, the National Concert Band Festival in Indianapolis, Indiana, and at the International Association of Jazz Educators Convention. Under his direction, the Longmeadow High School Symphony Orchestra received the 2010 American Prize for Secondary School Orchestral Performance and the Longmeadow High School Music Department was awarded three Grammy Signature Awards by the National Association of Recording Arts and Sciences.

Mr. Mucci is currently in his twenty-fifth season as Director of the Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble at the New England Conservatory of Music. Under his leadership, MYWE has performed in the National Band Festival at Carnegie Hall, and was featured as part of "Winds Across the Century," a nationwide wind symposium held at the New England Conservatory of Music. MYWE has also shared the stage with the Metropolitan Winds and the Boston College Wind Ensemble, performed at the National Music Educators All Eastern Conference in Providence, Rhode Island, and toured Italy, performing concerts in Florence, Naples, Rome, and the Vatican City, where they played for Pope John Paul II. Under Mr. Mucci's leadership, MYWE has also performed in Austria, the Czech Republic, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Scotland, Spain, and Wales.

Mr. Mucci serves as an adjudicator for the Massachusetts Instrumental and Choral Conductors Association and has appeared as a guest conductor with festivals throughout New York and New England. He has received the Citation of Excellence from the National Band Association and the 2011 Lowell Mason Award from the Massachusetts Music Educators Association for outstanding leadership in music education. He has also received the Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Award; the New England Public Radio Arts and Humanities Award; the Singer Family Prize for Excellence in Secondary School Teaching, awarded by the University of Rochester; and the Jean Stackhouse Award for Excellence in Teaching, given by the New England Conservatory of Music. Mr. Mucci was elected into the Massachusetts Instrumental and Choral Conductors Association's Hall of Fame in 2017. He and his

family reside in Longmeadow, MA, where the Longmeadow High School Concert Hall was named in honor of Mr. Mucci on November 24, 2015.

Allison Lacasse

Assistant Director, Senior Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble

Allison Lacasse is the Director of Bands at Belmont High School in Belmont, Massachusetts. At the University of Rhode Island, Allison is the Artistic Director of Summer Music Academy Chamber Music Intensive program and the Head Volunteer for the URI Music Alumni Network. Allison is a member of the operational staff for the Western International Band Clinic (WIBC) in Seattle, Washington and the American Band College (ABC) in Ashland, Oregon. At the New England Conservatory Preparatory School, Allison serves as the Assistant Conductor of the Senior Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble.

As a professional flutist and chamber musician in Boston, Massachusetts, Allison is a member of the Cambridge Symphony and is a regular substitute within the community music circuit in Boston. Allison maintains a private studio of intermediate and advanced level flute students in the Greater Boston area and serves as an adjudicator and clinician for local area festivals and band programs.

Allison received Bachelor of Music degrees in Music Education and Performance from the University of Rhode Island, where she studied with Susan Thomas. Allison earned a M.Ed. degree from Cambridge College and a Master's Degree in Music Education from the American Band College of Central Washington University. Allison was a semifinalist for the 2017 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year. In 2018, Allison was selected among her peers for the Massachusetts Music Educators Association Advocacy Award.

NEC Preparatory School Administration

Adam Calus

Preparatory Division Director

Sheila Esquivel

Boston BEAM Interim Program Director

Austin Martin

Enrollment Specialist

Cynthia Mathiesen

Large Ensemble Manager

Zach Roberson

Associate Director of Operations

Greg Tolwinski

Associate Director of Administration

Brianna Kirkland

Operations Coordinator

Upcoming NEC Preparatory School Upcoming Events

Wednesday, May 24th 2023

Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble Concert Band &
Youth Brass Ensemble

7:30 PM in Jordan Hall

Thursday, May 25th 2023

Youth Philharmonic Orchestra

7:30 PM in Jordan Hall

Tuesday, May 30th 2023

Youth Chorale

7:30 PM in Jordan Hall

Wednesday, May 31, 2023

CHIPS Piano Concert

7:30 PM in Jordan Hall

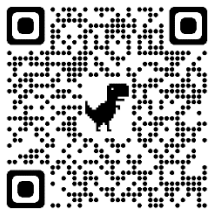
Thursday, June 1, 2023

Chamber Music Showcase

7:30 PM in Jordan Hall

Support the musical journeys of NEC students!

Contributions to The NEC Fund directly supports the musical journeys of our extraordinarily talented NEC students and helps keep our concerts free. From student scholarships and faculty support to exceptional student resources and learning opportunities, your gift makes the unparalleled NEC experience possible. Learn more at necmusic.edu/give.



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