



NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY

# REIMAGINED

ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP GALA

A digital spin on a night at the Conservatory

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**SATURDAY, MAY 8, 2021**

**8:00 P.M. ET**





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## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to New England Conservatory's Annual Scholarship Gala: NEC Reimagined, a virtual spin on a night at the Conservatory.

Tonight, we look forward to celebrating with you and the NEC community around the world to showcase the imagination and talent of NEC students, faculty and alumni in a digital experience like no other.

While this year's gala may look different, the mission remains the same: to bring our community together to support scholarships for NEC's talented and committed musicians.

With your support, you empower NEC students to receive the highest level of music education, allowing them to share music throughout the city of Boston and beyond—advancing humanity, elevating society and illustrating that, no matter what, music prevails.

Please enjoy this year's specially curated program, which highlights the true depth of the NEC student experience that continues to persevere.

Thank you so much for believing in the power of music.



Eric A. Gray  
NEC Trustee and Gala Fundraising Chair



Eric A. Gray

# MUSICAL PROGRAM

## Live Performance from Jordan Hall

**Franz Liszt**                      **Grande Étude de Paganini No. 3 in G-sharp Minor,**  
(1811–1886)                      **S. 141 (“La Campanella”)**  
George Li '13 Prep, '18 Harvard/NEC, '21 AD, piano

**Improvisation**                      Anna Abondolo '22, double bass

**Hua Yanjun**                      **The Moon Reflected on Er-quan Spring**  
(1893–1950)                      Zhanbo Zheng '20, '22 MM, viola

**Improvisation**                      Anna Abondolo '22, double bass

**Anthony Braxton**                      **MDD-3/63D (Opus 23C)**  
(b. 1945)                      Anna Abondolo '22, double bass  
Zoh Amba '22, saxophone

**Remarks**                      Eric A. Gray  
NEC Trustee and Gala Fundraising Chair

**Bosba**                      **from a window down Huntington Avenue**  
(b. 1997)                      *Commissioned by New England Conservatory in honor of*  
*Provost Thomas Novak's Twenty Years of Service*  
NEC Chamber Singers  
Chloe Thum '24, soprano  
Erica J. Washburn, conductor

**Intermission**                      Visit the photo booth and explore recorded musical  
performances in the showcase room, NEC Reimagined.  
We will be back live in the Plimpton Shattuck Black Box  
Theatre in 15 minutes.

**Live Performance from Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre**

**Ludwig van Beethoven**      **Selections from Variations on “Là ci darem la mano” from Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* in C major, WoO 28**

(1770–1827)

Ryoei Kawai '20, '22 MM, english horn

Elias Daniel Medina '21, oboe

Kip Zimmerman '22 GD, oboe

**Traditional Iranian Song**      **Sortgar-e Naghash (The Portrait Painter)**

Isabel Crespo Pardo '21 MM, voice

Afarin Nazarijou '21 MM, qanun

**Marcel Grandjany**      **Aria in a Classic Style (excerpts)**

(1891–1975)

NEC Prep Harp Trio

Julia Chang-Holt '25 Prep

Marin Austin Trendel '23 Prep

Cecily Zhao '21 Prep

**Richard Strauss**      **Morgen!, op. 27, no. 4**

(arr. Merz Trio)

Merz Trio, NEC's Professional Piano

Trio-in-Residence

Brigid Coleridge '20 GD, violin

Lee Dionne '20 GD, piano

Julia Yang '14 MM, '20 GD, cello

**Remarks**      Andrea Kalyn

President of New England Conservatory

**Pedro Elías**      **Alma Llanera**

**Gutiérrez**

(1870–1954)

Ana Mora '19 MM, '21 GD, mezzo soprano

Angel Subero '06 DP, cuatro

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With your generous support, NEC students advance our shared humanity and deepen the connective power of music. Please consider making a gift in support of scholarship at

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NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY

# REIMAGINED

A SHOWCASE

Through collaboration and innovation, our musicians create beauty and connection. Discover the inspiring work of our talented students, faculty and alumni and learn how NEC is reimagining the future of music.

## FROM THE STAGE

### THE POWER OF VOICES

NEC reimagined opportunities for singers to safely create music together, filling NEC's Jordan Hall with their voices both in person and on screen.

### GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

From Philharmonia to Tuesday Night New Music, see and hear how NEC celebrates the cultural artistry of our students that spans the globe.

### ENSEMBLES REIMAGINED

NEC students continued to create and perform music together on a safe, yet vibrantly collaborative stage.

### CREATIVE COLLABORATION

Together or apart, the intimate connection of chamber music lives on at NEC.

### ALL THINGS PIANO

Enjoy a compilation of NEC student performances featuring masterworks and original compositions from both on campus and in their own homes.

### #NECPREPEVERYWHERE

NEC Prep expanded its reach beyond New England as students gathered nationwide to participate in Prep's dynamic programs.

### NEXT GEN ARTISTS

Meet NEC's Artist Diploma Students—the next generation of artists leading their field.



# CREATIVE RESILIENCE

## **INNOVATORS**

Delve into some of the imaginative minds of NEC's entrepreneurial and innovative musicians to view how they embrace technology and create the future of music.

## **COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**

NEC students share their music in new and profound ways. Learn how the Community Performances and Partnerships (CPP) program brings people together to impact the Boston community and beyond.

## **IN THEIR OWN VOICE**

NEC students express themselves through student-led concerts, original compositions, and submissions to the #NECMusicHub. Let the transformative power of music connect you to the students who make NEC extraordinary.

## **ALUMNI CENTER STAGE**

Meet NEC alumni who are currently making their mark on the music world and inspiring the next generation of NEC students.

## **COLLABORATION CHALLENGE**

The Collaboration Challenge encouraged NEC faculty and staff to consider “what’s next” in studios, classrooms, concert halls, and beyond. Explore three courses inspired by the spirit of collaboration and innovation that are reimagining the possibilities of music education.





## COMPOSER

**Bosba '19** was a Cambodian folk singer and trained in vocal performance before becoming a composer. She is a graduate of the Walnut Hill School for the Arts and New England Conservatory. At NEC, she completed a history minor on the commodification of trauma in the arts in post-genocide Cambodian society with Dr. James Klein and sang with the Chamber Singers under Erica J. Washburn. Previously, she attended the Lycée Français René Descartes of Phnom Penh. She is a former member of the Cambodian Olympic judo team.

A recipient of the Foundation Bay Music Studentship and Cambridge Trust European Scholarship, Bosba is currently completing her master's degree at the University of Cambridge. Her thesis will examine Southeast Asian musical identity and the challenges of cultural hybridity in composition.

## PERFORMERS

**Anna Abondolo '22** is in her third year at New England Conservatory, where she studies bass and composition. Abondolo's instructors have included Donald Palma, Dominique Eade, Frank Carlberg and John Clayton. She has performed with artists including Sean Jones, Dianne Reeves and Tom Kubis in addition to her own groups and projects.

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**Zoh Amba '22** is a saxophonist and composer from Tennessee. While growing up in the mountains, Amba played in the forest emerging into the sound world. After moving to San Francisco in 2018, she spent two years at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music where she played at venues such as the Black Cat and SFJAZZ. Outside of school she studied under saxophonist Hafez Modirzadeh.

Amba has played with William Parker and Francisco Mela. She attends New England Conservatory where she is mentored by David Murray.

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**Isabel Crespo Pardo '21 MM** is a vocalist, composer and improviser drawing on creative music, experimental and chamber traditions to create poetic work. Crespo focuses on developing new projects with artists in the United States and internationally. She is interested in reimagining the construction of artistic spaces and is committed to fostering collaborations devoid of oppressive dynamics.

Crespo received an undergraduate degree in Jazz Studies from the University of North Texas and is pursuing a master's degree in Contemporary Improvisation at New England Conservatory.



Born in Japan, **Ryoei Kawai '20, '22 MM** is pursuing a master's degree in oboe performance at New England Conservatory, studying with Keisuke Wakao. He was a guest artist for three years at the Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Traverse City, Michigan, performing at weekly services with music director Susan Snyder. His NEC chamber music group, Boreas Wind Quintet, was selected as an honors ensemble and has performed in NEC's Jordan Hall and at public libraries in collaboration with the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra and Music on Norway Pond.

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Since winning the silver medal at the 2015 International Tchaikovsky Competition, pianist **George Li '13 Prep, '18 Harvard/NEC, '21 AD**, has established an international reputation and performs regularly with some of the world's leading orchestras and conductors.

His first public performance was at Boston's Steinert Hall at the age of 10, and in 2011 he performed for President Barack Obama at the White House. Li is the recipient of the 2016 Avery Fisher Career Grant and the 2012 Gilmore Young Artist Award, and the winner of the 2010 Young Concert Artists International Auditions. He is pursuing an artist diploma at New England Conservatory and continues to work with Wha Kyung Byun, with whom he has studied since the age of 12.

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Cuban-American oboist **Elias Daniel Medina '21** is studying at New England Conservatory with John Ferrillo and Anne Marie Gabriele as a Laura Ahlbeck Memorial Scholar.

Medina has performed all over the world from the Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and Teatro Mayor Julio Mario Santo Domingo in Colombia to the New World Symphony - Adrienne Arsht Center and Carnegie Hall. He was selected to perform with the National Youth Orchestra of the United States in 2016 and 2017 and was featured on NPR's *From the Top* with Christopher O'Riley.

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Born in Venezuela, **Ana Mora '19 MM, '21 GD** is known for her rich, dark singing voice and commanding stage presence. Most recently, Mora performed the roles of Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Madame Flora in *The Medium*, Mère Marie in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Ximena in *jDime!*, Idamante in *Idomeneo* and Marguerite in *La damnation de Faust*.

Mora is pursuing a graduate diploma in Vocal Performance at New England Conservatory, under the tutelage of Karen Holvik and is the recipient of the John Moriarty Presidential Scholarship. This summer she will participate in the Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Singer Program.



**Afarin Nazarijou '21 MM** is an award-winning qanun player from Iran who has participated in various national and international music festivals. She has performed with acclaimed artists such as Negar Kharkan, Mahsa Vahdat, Dariush Talaei and Mohammadreza Fayaz. She holds a bachelor's and master's degrees in performance from Tehran University and is now pursuing her second master's degree in Contemporary Improvisation at New England Conservatory. She has 10 years of experience in teaching the qanun at the Pars Music Institute in Tehran, one of Iran's most prestigious institutions.

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Venezuelan trombonist **Angel Subero '06 DP** attended the Conservatorio Itinerante in Caracas, where he studied with the legendary Michel Becquet. Since coming to the U.S. in 2001, he has studied with Larry Isaacson at Boston Conservatory and with Douglas Yeo at New England Conservatory. He has appeared with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Boston Pops, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project. He is also a member of the award-winning Triton Brass Quintet, the brass ensemble in residence at Boston Conservatory.

Subero is on the faculty at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee and the Longy School of Music of Bard College. He is also on the faculty at the Atlantic Brass Quintet Seminar, where he collaborates with members of both the Atlantic Brass Quintet and the Triton Brass Quintet.

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Oboist **Kip Zimmerman '22 GD** was a finalist in the Philadelphia Orchestra's 2019 principal oboe audition, the winner of the 2016 International Double Reed Society Competition and a prize-winner at the National Young Arts Foundation. Zimmerman has performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra, and has been a featured soloist with numerous ensembles. He is an intern with the oboe maker Covey and Ramsay and currently plays an instrument of his own acoustical handiwork. Zimmerman is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied under Richard Woodhams, and he is currently pursuing a graduate degree with John Ferrillo at New England Conservatory.

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Chinese violist **Zhanbo Zheng '20, '22 MM** holds a bachelor's degree from New England Conservatory where he is now pursuing his master's degree under the mentorship of Kim Kashkashian and Miriam Fried.

In 2014, Zheng became the first Chinese violist to win the Primrose International Viola Competition. He won second prize and the Pablo Casals Prize for best performance of solo Bach in the 2017 Irving M. Klein International String Competition and the second prize in the Washington International Competition for Strings in 2018.

# ENSEMBLES

## PREP HARP TRIO

**Julia Chang-Holt '25 Prep** is an eighth-grade student at the Winsor School in Boston. She has been studying harp with Franziska Huhn for six years. She also enjoys reading and spending time with her dog.

**Marin Austin Trendel '23 Prep** has studied the harp for eight years under the instruction of Kathy Burmeister and Franziska Huhn. Prior to joining NEC Prep's Youth Philharmonic Orchestra (YPO), she performed in the Worcester Youth Orchestra, the Claflin Hill Youth Symphony Orchestra and was a guest performer with the NEC Prep String Chamber Orchestra. In 2018, she participated in the Honors Ensemble program at the Connecticut Valley Harp Intensive as well as the Summer Orchestra Institute at NEC in 2019. She was also a member of the Boston University Tanglewood Institute Class of 2020.

Over the past two years, **Cecily Zhao '21 Prep** has played with the MMEA Eastern District and All-State Orchestras. In March 2020, she performed at Symphony Hall with the All-State Orchestra. In the summer of 2020, she won second place in the Intermediate II division at the Connecticut Valley Harp Intensive competition. Outside of playing harp, Zhao studies piano and enjoys baking and exploring nature. This fall, Zhao will be heading to college to pursue a bachelor's degree in music education.

## MERZ TRIO

*Brigid Coleridge '20 GD, violin*

*Lee Dionne '20 GD, piano*

*Julia Yang '14 MM, '20 GD, cello*

The Merz Trio is the professional piano trio in residence at New England Conservatory.

Winner of the Fischhoff, Concert Artists Guild and Chesapeake competitions, the trio has been lauded by the *Reading Eagle* for its "fresh and surprising interpretations" and "stunning virtuosity and ensemble work." The members of the Merz Trio are committed to vibrant, dynamic programming that takes them beyond the concert hall into theaters, galleries and community spaces. Of equal importance to their mission is reshaping the narrative of classical music through their unique arrangements of works both familiar and forgotten.

The Merz Trio is known for its wide-ranging collaborations and interdisciplinary work, bringing music into conversation with other art forms ranging from dance to the culinary arts. Current projects include a video collaboration with Sandglass Theater, a video with director Jon Levin and an upcoming debut album, *INK*, featuring movements of the Ravel Trio interwoven with short pieces, arrangements, and text of the era (Paris, 1914).

## NEC CHAMBER SINGERS

*Tyler Bouque '21*

*Ashley Chen '24*

*Edward Ferran '23*

*Molly Flynn '23*

*Samantha Fox '21*

*Killian Grider '22 MM*

*Maxwell Herman '21*

*Jonathan Lawlor '21*

*Corinne Luebke-Brown '24*

*Colin Miller '23*

*Joseph Nizich '21 MM*

*Nicholas Ottersberg '24*

*Cassandra Pinataro '22*

*Daniel Rosenberg '21*

*Jennie Segal '21 MM*

*Anneke Stern '23*

*Chloe Thum '24*

*Madeleine Wiegers '23*

*Kerui Yang '24*

The NEC Chamber Singers is an auditioned ensemble open to all majors at NEC. The ensemble performs works from all style periods, with a particular emphasis on 19th through 21st century a cappella repertoire.

Each member of Chamber Singers seeks to understand the principles and nuances of superior choral artistry so that they may be prepared for professional opportunities beyond the Conservatory. They are expected to diligently prepare their music outside of scheduled rehearsals, which makes the brief time spent together musically invaluable. The ensemble typically performs eight to ten times each academic year: on campus in the Conservatory's famed Jordan Hall, at off-campus venues in and around Greater Boston and on tour and in schools for community outreach programs.

Conductor and mezzo-soprano **Erica J. Washburn** has been director of choral activities at New England Conservatory since 2009. Known for her student-centric approach to classroom and rehearsal instruction, and her commitment to the performance of new music, she is the recipient of several outstanding alumni awards, including the distinguished honor of induction to the Westminster Choir College Music Education Hall of Fame.





# PROGRAM NOTES

*By Kathryn J. Allwine Bacasmot '06 MM*

Change always brings with it the opportunity to reimagine. Artists are uniquely equipped for this task, having spent years practicing creativity in a variety of forms under a plethora of circumstances. Each selection on the program tonight is an example of artistic expression carried out under diverse circumstances. They are snapshots of individuals pursuing exploration, innovation, hope and celebration.

As New England Conservatory approaches the 155th anniversary of its founding, its own history is a testament to resilience and innovation in times of changes and challenges. Meeting the moment and advancing the mission of nurturing individual artistic sensibility and creative growth, the NEC community reimagines and prevails.

The program this evening is presented in two parts from two locations. Interspersed periodically through the first half are improvisational responses or reactions to what came before, and what is ahead, representative of NEC's journey.

# PART I

## INNOVATIVE TRADITION IN NEC'S JORDAN HALL

April in Paris, 1832. **Franz Liszt**, a 21-year-old former child prodigy, attended a performance by Niccolò Paganini, the fiery virtuoso violinist taking Europe by storm. Liszt's life would never be the same. What he witnessed was a musician exploring the limits of expression, technical skill, and artistry on his instrument. The experience unleashed in Liszt a desire to do the same for the piano. He immediately set to work. According to a letter from 1832, he would spend hours practicing "trills, sixths, octaves, tremolos, repeated notes, cadenzas and the like." Liszt reemerged with some of the most imaginative and technically challenging works in the repertoire, including many directly inspired by Paganini. Among those is *La Campanella* (*The Little Bell*), taking its melody from the third movement of Paganini's Violin Concerto No. 2.

*Génie oblige*, or the duty of artists to use their gifts in service to the public and give back to the next generation of creatives, was the guiding principle of Liszt's life and work, and it is reflected in the core values of NEC. George Li, a graduate of NEC Prep and the Harvard/NEC dual degree program, and a candidate for the prestigious artist diploma, is an outstanding model of this value, and quite the virtuoso himself.

## IMPROVISATION BY ANNA ABONDOLO, DOUBLE BASS

Our public spaces are enriched every day by street musicians who come from all walks of life and circumstances to enliven the environment and share music with all who walk by or linger. **Hua Yanjun** was born in 1893 and adopted by a Taoist priest and his wife in Wuxi, China, two hours west of Shanghai. Known as Abing to his family, Hua was taught to play music by his father and performed regularly at the temple. After his father's early death, the 21-year-old Abing's life turned upside down with an opium addiction, syphilis and blindness. After regaining some stability, he returned to music, playing regularly in Xihui Park by Er-quan Spring. This was the location of the "second fountain," a designation and name reportedly assigned by Lu Yu, author of the book *Classic of Tea*, who ranked it as the second-best source of fresh water for brewing tea leaves.

Originally for erhu, a traditional two-stringed Chinese instrument, tonight *The Moon Reflected in Er-quan Spring* is performed on viola. Benefitting from the unique advantages of NEC's wide range of training styles, soloist Zhanbo Zheng studies viola with Kim Kashkashian while enhancing breadth of musicianship on his instrument with Jazz and Contemporary Improvisation voice faculty Dominique Eade.

## IMPROVISATION BY ANNA ABONDOLO, DOUBLE BASS

**Anthony Braxton** found experimentalism in part due to his work with the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians in Chicago. The collective was founded in 1965 to promote the work of African American composers and provide community for artists seeking to explore new possibilities in sound. "I see my work as affirmation of universality," he has reflected. "With my music there was an opportunity to bring things together rather than to separate things."

Braxton's works use imagery, numbers and letters for titles, and are soundscapes full of texture. He often wrote by stacking melodic ideas, a style exhibited in **MDD-3/63D** (1973), calling it "additive repetition." Performers may decide how many times to repeat a section, giving it an improvisatory spirit, but instead of jazz lead sheets, all the performers work from fully composed scores.

Stages have been full of remarkably talented women in jazz, though the memories of their solo and ensemble performances have been overshadowed by their male counterparts. The women performing tonight represent those who have matriculated in the 52-year history of jazz at NEC, and the larger ongoing story of women in the genre.

Just as a fanfare concludes what came before and heralds what comes next, a celebratory new vocal work by **Bosba '19** brings to a close this first half of performances. Bosba came to the United States and NEC from Cambodia, first to the Preparatory School and Walnut Hill, and then the Conservatory, and found a community that wanted her to succeed, but to find and be herself. "My teachers supported the dichotomy and plurality of my heritage," she recollects. "I was doing Western music quite early on in finding my musical voice. Knowing that I was still growing up, they never pressured me to feel a certain way or present myself in a certain way. I told my teacher I was struggling with my music sounding more Cambodian or more Western. He said, 'It's not your job to prove to people who you are,' and that really stuck with me. I'm honored to be writing for NEC because this place has given me so much, even after I've graduated. My personal history is forever tied with NEC. It is a place that has affirmed my musical identity."

*from a window down Huntington Avenue* was commissioned for this occasion and dedicated in honor of Provost Thomas Novak. The work invites the listener to experience a vignette of life on campus through both its structure and melodies. Using only vocables (no text), Bosba embedded the letters N-E-C into the shape of the musical lines on the page and wove in song from the black-capped chickadee—the state bird of Massachusetts.



# PART II

## SONG AND EXPRESSION IN THE PLIMPTON SHATTUCK BLACK BOX THEATRE

Sixteen-year-old **Ludwig van Beethoven** showed up at Mozart's doorstep hoping to impress the famous master, take some lessons and secure his status as the Next Big Thing. Sitting down at Mozart's piano, he began to play. Mozart, impressed by the display of obvious talent but taken aback by Beethoven's fiery performance style, reportedly observed: "You really don't lack dexterity, but perhaps still a little good taste." In the end, Beethoven never studied with Mozart.

Whether or not the story is true (likely anecdotal, since neither Beethoven nor Mozart mentioned it personally), an intriguing detail is included in Johann Hummel's account of the meeting: Just as Beethoven arrived, Mozart was playing through melodies of his new opera, *Don Giovanni*.

Ten years later, Beethoven, then the darling of Vienna wrote the **Variations on "Là ci darem la mano"** ("There we will give our hand"), a popular duet from *Don Giovanni* in which the title character is attempting to seduce the recently married Zerlina away from her new husband. Enjoying timeless appeal, the duet was also arranged later by Chopin and Liszt, and Frank Sinatra even sang it alongside Kathryn Grayson in the 1947 film *It Happened in Brooklyn*.

The desire to be seen and heard is universal, whether in 19th century Austria or modern-era Iran. Sadly, that chance is too often denied. Marzieh, Hāyedah, Mahasti, Gooogoosh, Homeyra, Paris—these are just a few of the many beloved Iranian female vocalists who dominated the vibrant musical scene in Iran until the revolution in 1979 silenced them. Suddenly, they were restricted to singing only for their families if men were present. Developments in recent years have indicated a loosening of the restrictions, but in the interval many careers were cut short, and many never had the chance to happen.

**Sortgar-e Naghsh** (*The Portrait Painter*), a traditional Iranian song, is performed tonight by two women from the Contemporary Improvisation program, which celebrates versatility and individuality and embraces the full breadth of song as a world tradition. Founded by musical visionaries Gunther Schuller and Ran Blake, Contemporary Improvisation at NEC addresses the needs of musicians seeking to move beyond traditional genre boundaries. It celebrates its 50th year in 2022.

The great French harp virtuoso **Marcel Grandjany** was educated at the Paris Conservatoire, and was witness to the devastation of war as he served as organist at Sacré-Coeur Basilica in the midst of World War I. He immigrated to the United States in 1936, enjoying a career of performing and teaching until just weeks before his death in 1975. His resplendent **Aria in a Classic Style** is performed here by a trio of students from NEC's Preparatory School. Alongside Continuing Education and the College, these three branches of ONE NEC nurture artistic sensibility and growth for all stages of the creative life.

**Richard Strauss** was born into the world of music. His father, Franz, was an accomplished horn player who played principal in the court orchestra at Munich, operating under the auspices of King Ludwig II of Bavaria, who is remembered for his eccentricities, the Neuschwanstein Castle (the model for Disney's castles) and his obsession with the music of Richard Wagner. As a result, the elder Strauss played in the orchestra of many Wagner premieres, including *Tristan und Isolde*, and parts of the *Ring*. While the younger Strauss would go on to write some of the most famous instrumental music of the era, his true love was poetry and writing for the voice—the two elements that merge in song. Songs were his first compositions, at age 6, and his last, at age 84. In total there would be over 200, many premiered and performed by his wife, soprano Pauline de Ahna.

Op. 27 from 1894, is a collection of four songs written as a wedding present for Pauline. *Morgen!* (*Tomorrow!*) is the last in the collection and exudes an almost otherworldly serenity. Marked with score instructions to play “very sustained” and “very calm,” it floats in bliss anticipating the joy of tomorrow and his beloved. Tonight, it is performed as an instrumental arrangement for the Merz Trio.

Concluding this evening's performances is a Venezuelan traditional song, *Alma Llanera* (*Soul of the Plains*) by **Pedro Elías Gutiérrez**, which radiates the dynamic soul of Venezuela in its rural lifestyle, rhythms and contributions to a larger global popular culture.

Known as the “second national anthem of Venezuela,” *Alma Llanera* is an exuberant revel in the beauty of one's native land. With music by Gutiérrez and lyrics by author Rafael Bolívar Coronado, it was originally part of a larger theatrical work, but became immensely popular on its own—so much so that it is often sung at the end of a party or event.



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empowering their artistic voice, impact, and purpose.

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Music: Francis POULENC  
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