N E C New England Conservatory

Concert Program

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NEC Percussion Group

Will Hudgins, director

Monday, November 20, 2023 7:30 p.m. NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

Joseph Pereira (b. 1974)	tied to the past (2010) Eli Geruschat, Ross Jarrell, Danial Kukuk, Halle Hayoung Song, Jordan Fajardo-Bird, Doyeon Kim, Mingchen Able Zhou
Tōru Takemitsu (1930–1996)	<i>Rain Tree</i> (1981) Eli Reich, Isabella Butler, Michael Rogers
John Cage (1912–1992)	<i>Third Construction</i> (1941) Liam McManus, Halle Hayoung Song, Lucas Vogelman, Connor Willits
Maurice Wright (b. 1949)	SIXES (2023) World premiere played without pause Chant Sarabande Moving On Eli Geruschat, Gustavo Barreda, Jordan Fajardo-Bird, Conner Willits, Lucas Vogelman, Liam McManus

Pereira ... tied to the past

After studying percussion and composition at Boston University, Joseph Pereira became the assistant timpanist in the New York Philharmonic and subsequently became a member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic as the principal timpanist. Pereira has continued his composition career to much acclaim, and his pieces have been performed throughout the world stages. His work *…tied to the past* is a fine example of the originality and creativity Pereira employs in his writing. *From the composer*:

"... *tied to the past* received its premier in 2010. The title refers to an imaginary larger piece with the idea that the beginning is actually the climax of a larger work. The ensemble is equipped with drums, wood blocks and dry metal sounds, used to echo the two "soloists'" material. As the soloists' material deteriorates, the ensemble starts to dictate all activity. The sound of muffled marimba played with bass drum mallets turns the pitched instrument into an eerie non-pitched rumble. In the last attempt to hold their ground with rimshots, the soloists are finally swallowed up by a cacophony of small wood planks played on top of glissing timpani, which acts as an echoing chamber. By the end all sounds dissipate to nothing....."

Takemitsu Rain Tree

Tōru Takemitsu was a Japanese composer and writer on aesthetics and music theory. Largely self-taught, Takemitsu was admired for the subtle manipulation of instrumental and orchestral timbre. He is known for combining elements of oriental and occidental philosophy and for fusing sound with silence and tradition with innovation. His percussion trio *Rain Tree* is considered a masterpiece in the percussion repertoire.

There are three compositions by Takemitsu on the subject of the Rain Tree. *Rain Tree Sketch* (1982) and *Rain Tree Sketch II* (1992, in memoriam Olivier Messiaen) are among Takemitsu's most often performed piano works. The origin of the *Rain Tree Sketches* can be traced back to Takemitsu's percussion trio *Rain Tree* (1981).

Rain Tree is used as a metaphor of water circulating in the cosmos, and Takemitsu employed Messiaen's modes of limited transposition in order to construct the pitch collections evocative of cosmic imagery. Takemitsu's goal as an artist was to expand the possibilities of music and to express himself through creation of a universal language. The title was suggested by a passage from the novel *Atama no ii*, *Ame no Ki* by Kenzaburo Oe: "It has been named the 'rain tree' for its abundant foliage continues to let fall rain drops collected from last night's shower until well after the following midday. Its hundreds of thousands of tiny leaves—finger-like—store up moisture while other trees dry up at once. What an ingenious tree, isn't it?"

(Source, <u>www.vicfirth.com</u>)

Toru Takemitsu during an interview (1993):

"My music is like a garden, and I am the gardener. Listening to my music can be compared to walking through a garden and experiencing the changes in light, pattern, and texture. I do not like to emphasize too much with my music. Someone once criticized my music as getting to be very old fashioned. Maybe I am old, but I am looking back to the past with nostalgia. Composers are sometimes afraid to use tonality, but we can use anything from the tonal to the atonal -- this is our treasure. I can say that because I am Japanese!"

Cage Third Construction

John Cage hardly needs an introduction. A pioneer of indeterminacy in music, electroacoustic music, and non-standard use of musical instruments, Cage was one of the leading figures of the post-war avant-garde. Critics have lauded him as one of the most influential composers of the 20th century. He was also instrumental in the development of modern dance, mostly through his association with choreographer Merce Cunningham, who was also Cage's romantic partner for most of their lives.

Third Construction was composed in 1941 and dedicated to Xenia Kashevaroff-Cage, to whom Cage was married at the time and who played in his percussion orchestra. Over the decades the piece has become one of the most performed staples of the percussion ensemble genre. *Third Construction* is scored for four percussionists. There are 24 sections of 24 bars each, and the rhythmic structure is rotated between the players: 8, 2, 4, 5, 3, 2 for the fourth, 2, 8, 2, 4, 5, 3 for the first, etc. Among the truly unusual instruments used are rattles, drums, cowbells, lion's roar, cymbals, rachet, teponaxtle, quijades, cricket callers and conch shell.

Wright SIXES

Dr. Maurice Wright grew up in rural northern Virginia and moved to Florida as a pre-teen. Later he attended graduate school at Columbia University after completing his undergraduate degree at Duke University. After Columbia, he taught at Boston University for one year before receiving an offer from Temple University. He has been there for more than 40 years, enjoying "being in the middle of music and musical history in Philadelphia. I also wanted to be part of a more egalitarian mindset. As part of its mission, Temple opens its doors to anybody who has demonstrated talent in music, which makes it a great place to be."

In addition to teaching, Dr. Wright has had an extremely active life in composition, in which he has included many works for percussion. These works include concerti for timpani & marimba (premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Boston Symphony Orchestra respectively), and many chamber works for percussion and percussion with mixed instrumentation. Regarding the far reaching thought process of his work, Dr. Wright states: "I'm always working on a piece at a time, whether that's an opera, orchestral music, computer and electronic music, or trying to tie music with graphics and even robots."

Regarding tonight's world premiere of his new percussion work *SIXES*, Dr. Wright states:

"SIXES looks at ways to organize a group of six percussionists. Their traditional instruments are augmented by a mallet controller (that looks something like vibraphone), which provides musical codes for synthesis software composed for

this piece. The first movement—"Chant"—features a melodic quartet of pitched percussion instruments in a canonic introduction somewhat akin to Renaissance counterpoint. The two remaining performers initially support the majority—one quietly playing a drum, the other contributing computer synthesized reverberation of the pitched instruments. The movement then breaks the quiet and calm of its beginning with a series of rhythmic episodes before returning to an unwinding of the opening music. "Sarabande" is structured as a vibraphone solo with five generally supporting—although at times distracting—other instruments. The concluding movement begins with 6 soloists playing multiple instruments in a whirlwind of micro-melodies. As the broken phrases are restored and extended, the finale achieves a unified, forceful voice. The three movements are played without pause."

NEC Percussion Group

Gustavo Barreda Isabella Butler Jordan Fajardo-Bird Eli Geruschat Ross Jarrell Doyeon Kim Danial Kukuk Liam McManus Eli Reich Michael Rogers Halle Hayoung Song Lucas Vogelman Connor Willits Mingchen Able Zhou

Upcoming Concerts at NEC Visit necmusic.edu for complete and updated concert and ticketing information

GUNTHER SCHULLER LEGACY CONCERT Music, remarks, and performances by students, alumni, and members of CMA and Jazz ensembles *Tuesday, November* 21, 2023 *at* 7:30 *p.m., Jordan Hall*

NEC SAXOPHONE ENSEMBLE, Kenneth Radnofsky, director Monday, November 27, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

FACULTY RECITAL: BORROMEO STRING QUARTET Bartók String Quartets Tuesday, November 28, 2023 at 7:00 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC SYMPHONIC WINDS, William Drury, conductor Nielsen *Symphony for Brass and Organ;* Huling *Into the Forest of Strange Beasts;* Nieske *Like Dancing* (world premiere) *Wednesday, November 29, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

LIEDERABEND LXVIII, Cameron Stowe and Tanya Blaich, directors Poulenc Songs *Thursday, November 30, 2023 at 7:00 p.m., Williams Hall*

NEC WIND ENSEMBLE, Robert Spittal, guest conductor Harbison Three City Blocks; Spittal Concerto for Wind Ensemble (2023) Gabrieli Canzone septimi toni No. 2 and Sonata pian' e forte Thursday, November 30, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

"CONNECTIONS" CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES - Max Levinson, director Live Triangle? Music by the Schumanns and Brahms Thursday, November 30, 2023 at 8:00 p.m., Burnes Hall

KIM KASHKASHIAN STUDIO RECITAL Friday, December 1, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Keller Room

UNDERGRADUATE OPERA STUDIO: Opera Scenes, Michael Meraw, director Opera scenes performed by the members of the Undergraduate Opera Studio *Friday & Saturday, December 1 & 2, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre*

Upcoming Concerts at NEC

-continued

FIRST MONDAY IN JORDAN HALL, Laurence Lesser, artistic director - 39th season Mozart *Quintet in C Minor, K. 406;* Shostakovich *Symphony No. 15* (transcr. for sextet) *Monday, December 4, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

[NEC]SHIVAREE, Stephen Drury, director Monday, December 4, 2023 at 8:00 p.m., Williams Hall

HANDEL ARIAS & SHAKESPEARE MONOLOGUES Performances by graduate students in the NEC Opera Department *Tuesday & Thursday, December 5 & 7, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre*

TUESDAY NIGHT NEW MUSIC New music by NEC student composers, performed by their peers *Tuesday, December 5, 2023 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall*

LIEDERABEND LXIX & SONG AND VERSE Wednesday, December 6, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., Williams Hall

CHAMBER MUSIC GALA Wednesday, December 6, 2022 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC JAZZ ORCHESTRA: "Music of Ken Schaphorst" Ken Schaphorst, conductor *Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

WIND ENSEMBLE STUDENT CONDUCTORS Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall

LESSONS AND CAROLS: NEC SYMPHONIC CHOIR & CHAMBER SINGERS Erica J. Washburn, conductor; Back Bay Ringers, Griff Gall, director *Friday, December 8, 2023 at 7:00 p.m., Church of the Covenant, Boston, MA* (*free admission*)

"INTO THE HOLIDAYS" NEC Chamber Singers, Symphonic Winds, & Navy Band, NE perform works of the season Monday, December 11, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall Support the future of music at NEC!

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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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