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Conservatory

Concert Program

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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, appearing to read "Andrea Kalyn".

Andrea Kalyn
President

NEC Philharmonia

Hugh Wolff, conductor

Stanford and Norma Jean Calderwood Director of Orchestras

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

7:30 p.m.

NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

Joan Tower
(b. 1938)

Sequoia (1981)

Hector Berlioz
(1803-1869)

Overture to *Benvenuto Cellini*, op. 23

Intermission

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, op. 55 “Eroica”
Allegro con brio
Marcia funebre: Adagio assai
Scherzo: Allegro vivace
Finale: Allegro molto – Poco andante – Presto

Joan Tower turned eighty-five earlier this month. A pioneering woman composer, her success in the late 1970's and 1980's heralded a new era of acceptance for women composers. She is the first woman recipient of the prestigious Grawemeyer Award for Music and her works have been performed all over the world. *Sequoia* is her first orchestra work. About it, she writes:

I think most composers would have to admit that they live, to various degrees, in the sound-worlds of other composers both old and new, and that what they consciously or unconsciously take from them enables them to discover what they themselves are interested in. Long ago, I recognized Beethoven as someone bound to enter my work at some point, because for many years I had been intimately involved in both his piano music and chamber music as a pianist. Even though my own music does not sound like Beethoven's in any obvious way, in it there is a basic idea at work which came from him. This is something I call the "balancing" of musical energies.

In *Sequoia*, that concept is not only very much present in the score but it actually led to the title (which is meant in an abstract rather than a pictorial sense). What fascinated me about sequoias, those giant California redwood trees, was the balancing act nature had achieved in giving them such great height.

Cast in three continuous movements (fast, slow, fast), *Sequoia* opens with a long-held pedalpoint on G with percussion punctuations. Around this central G (finally arrived at in a solo-trumpet note), there begins a fanning-out (first high, then low), on both sides of harmonies symmetrically built up or down from G. This "balancing" of registers like the branching of a tree, continues to develop into more complex settings, as the "branches" start to grow sub-branches. The main pedal point (or trunk, to continue the analogy) on G eventually shifts, both downward and upward, thereby creating a larger balancing motion that has a longer-range movement throughout the piece. Because musical gestures are not confined only to registers and harmonies, the balancing principle permeates every facet of *Sequoia* - most importantly, in the areas of rhythm, tempo, dynamics, pacing, texture and instrumental color. For example, the initial movement's first two sections (connected by quick, repeated Gs in the muted trumpet) exhibit a balancing of loud dynamics with soft; of heavy and thin sound (a possible parallel: despite the enormous size of sequoias, their "leaves" - literally, needles - are miniscule, the size of thumbnail); of static (one-note) and moving harmony; of many instruments with a few; of middle-low and middle-high registers, and so on. In this score, the pacing is active and energetic, perhaps suggesting (with the exception of occasional solo instrumental passages) the power and grandeur inherent in the sequoia.

Throughout life, **Ludwig van Beethoven** was both a fervent believer in individual rights and someone who unapologetically curried favor with the nobility. Supremely confident in his abilities, he yearned for a world that rewarded according to those abilities, not birthright. At times he even promoted the fiction that he himself was of noble birth, changing his Dutch “van” to the “von” of German nobility. So when Napoleon Bonaparte swept through Europe at the beginning of the 19th century, Beethoven was one of many who saw him as the avatar of a new world. Inspired by the promise of a republican future, Beethoven seriously planned to move to Paris in 1803. Perhaps with the dream of meeting Napoleon, he started work on a new symphony – grander and more ambitious than anything written prior – something worthy of the title Bonaparte. In the summer of 1803, Beethoven isolated himself in the little village of Oberdöbling and set to work. Throughout its composition and right up to the preparations for its premiere, the symphony retained its title Bonaparte. Only when Napoleon declared himself emperor in May 1804, did the bitterly disillusioned composer change the title to “Sinfonia eroica, composta per festeggiare il sovvenire d’un grand’uomo” (Heroic symphony, composed to celebrate the memory of a great man). But the work itself was clearly designed as a tribute to the man who was already dominating Europe.

The scope of the hero’s life determines the size and shape of the symphony’s first movement, *Allegro con brio*. Beethoven’s expressive and dramatic ambitions expand the traditional three-part form of exposition, development, and recapitulation into a four-part form – exposition, development, recapitulation, and coda – in which the development and coda become equal partners with the exposition and recap. In striking innovation, they share melodic elements not found in the exposition or recap, and together are considerably longer.

The symphony begins with a simple melody in the cellos that follows the outline of the E-flat major triad – the tonic note on each of the first four downbeats. This melodic straightjacket is abruptly broken with an astonishing chromatic turn down to C-sharp. Triads and chromatic steps become essential building blocks for the entire movement, and, in some ways, the entire symphony.

The second movement, *Marcia Funebre*, is a meditation on a fallen hero’s life. The *sotto voce* opening dirge with its characteristic dotted rhythm, is placed at the beginning, center, and end of the movement, and frames two important episodes. The first, *Maggiore*, is a sunnier C major episode perhaps recounting great deeds and happier memories. The second, a massive fugato, begins with stoic power but culminates in a passage of unrestrained grief, the emotional climax of the movement and, arguably, the whole symphony. After the dirge returns, the music breaks into fragments – shards of melody over bass pizzicato are all that is left.

The third movement is Beethoven’s first symphonic scherzo – a form he invented by speeding up the minuet of Haydn and Mozart. What had been an elegant 18th century dance is now a breathless 19th century romp. Beethoven instructs the entire orchestra to play *pianissimo* for the first ninety-one measures, before erupting into a jubilant *fortissimo*. The trio features the three horns, outlining the E-flat major triad,

just as the cellos did at the symphony's outset.

The Allegro molto finale is a complex set of variations on a theme Beethoven had used in his *Creatures of Prometheus* ballet and *Piano Variations*, op. 35. After a short, stormy introduction, a simple, skeletal theme (with a wink to the symphony's opening cello melody) first outlines E-flat major for four measures, then moves chromatically up to F. Two variations follow: for string trio and string quartet. When the winds finally appear, they have a new melody, revealing that the skeletal theme was really just a bass line (much as Berlioz superimposed two melodies in his overture). Subsequent variations include two fugatos, a virtuosic flute interlude, and an exuberant Hungarian-style dance. Halfway through the movement, as Beethoven transforms the main melody into a hymn, the tempo shifts abruptly to Poco Andante. A grand climax precedes the brilliant Presto coda.

Bear in mind that Beethoven was just thirty-two years old when he wrote this symphony, and Haydn was still alive. Beethoven's first two symphonies, while full of beautiful and original ideas, are very much within 18th century traditions. In the *Eroica Symphony*, Beethoven has made an enormous leap forward. He breaks fully with the past of his mentors and confidently ushers us into a brave new artistic world.

– Hugh Wolff

NEC Philharmonia
Hugh Wolff, conductor

First Violin

Mitsuru Yonezaki
Minami Yoshida
Joshua Brown
Tsubasa Muramatsu
Anatol Toth
Thompson Wang
Jiaxin Lin
Sydney Scarlett
Jusun Kim
Passacaglia Mason
Sarah McGuire
Peixuan Wu
Tzu-Tung Liao
Hannah Park

Second Violin

Hannah Goldstick
Michael Fisher
Kristy Chen
Emily Lin
Olga Kaminsky
Arun Asthagiri
Chloe Hong
Min-Han Hanks Tsai
Byeol Claire Kim
Jisoo Kim
Ioan-Octavian Pirlea
SooBeen Lee
Angela Sin Ying Chan

Principal players

*Berlioz

‡Tower

§Beethoven

Viola

Cara Pogossian
Nicolette Sullivan-Cozza
Yeh-Chun Lin
Inácia Afonso
Corley Friesen-Johnson
Peter Jablokow
Xinlin Wang
Katie Purcell
Chi-Jui Chen
Po-Sung Huang
Bram Fisher

Cello

Noah Lee
Lexine Feng
Xinyue Zhu
Zachary Keum
Claire Deokyong Kim
Rei Otake
Shijie Ma
Joanne Hwang
Annie SeEun Hyung
Zac Fung
Thomas Hung
Hayoung Moon

Bass

Alyssa Burkhalter
Misha Bjerken
Cailin Singleton
Shion Kim
Yu-Cih Chang
Beth Ann Jones

Flute

Chia-Fen Chang *
Shengyu Cui
Jay Kim
Jungyoon Kim
Elizabeth McCormack §
Anna Ridenour ‡

Piccolo

Shengyu Cui
Jungyoon Kim *
Anna Ridenour ‡

Oboe

Robert Diaz *
Abigail Hope-Hull ‡
Alexander Lenser §
Christian Paniagua

Clarinet

Hyunwoo Chun §
Phoebe Kuan ‡
Chasity Thompson *

Bass Clarinet

Hyunwoo Chun

Bassoon

Zoe Beck *
Seth Goldman
Abigail Heyrich §
Evan Judson ‡
Wilson Lu
Erik Paul

French horn

Grace Clarke §
Jihao Li ‡
Noah Silverman *
Qianbin Zhu

Trumpet

Ko Te Chen §
Matthew Dao
Reynolds Martin ‡
Justin Park *
Alex Prokop

Cornet

Matthew Dao *
Reynolds Martin

Trombone

Eli Canales ‡
 Noah Korenfeld
 Ethan Lehman *
 Kevin Smith

Bass Trombone

Scott Odou *
 David Palingora ‡

Tuba

Masaru Lin ‡
 Hayden Silvester *

Timpani

Felix Ko
 Jeff Sagurton §
 Lucas Vogelmann *
 Connor Willits ‡

Percussion

Jordan Fajardo-Bird
 Ross Jarrell
 Felix Ko ‡
 Ngaieng Lai *
 Liam McManus
 Jeff Sagurton
 Lucas Vogelmann

Harp

Shaylen Joos

Keyboard

Yali Levy Schwartz

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Hugh Wolff

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Stage Crew

Special thanks to Paul Biss, Noriko Futagami, Guy Fishman,
 and Anthony D'Amico for their work in preparing the orchestra
 for this evening's concert.

Hugh Wolff

*Stanford and Norma Jean Calderwood Director of Orchestras;
Chair, Orchestral Conducting*

Hugh Wolff joined the New England Conservatory faculty in 2008 and has conducted a large share of NEC's orchestral concerts every year since then. He has taught graduate students in an elite training program for orchestral conductors since 2009.

Wolff has appeared with all the major American orchestras, including those of Boston, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Cleveland. He is much in demand in Europe, where he has conducted the London Symphony, the Philharmonia, the City of Birmingham Symphony, the Orchestre National de France, Czech Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Munich Philharmonic, and the Bavarian and Berlin Radio Orchestras. A regular guest conductor with orchestras in Japan, Korea, Scandinavia, Canada and Australia, he is also a frequent conductor at summer festivals.

Currently Laureate Conductor of the Belgian National Orchestra, Wolff was principal conductor of the Frankfurt Radio Orchestra from 1997 to 2006 and maintains a close relationship with that ensemble. He led it on tours of Europe, Japan, and China, and at the Salzburg Festival. Wolff was principal conductor and then music director of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra (1988-2000), with which he recorded twenty discs and toured the United States, Europe, and Japan. Performances with the Boston Symphony have included the world premiere of Ned Rorem's *Swords and Ploughshares* in Symphony Hall. Wolff was music director of the New Jersey Symphony (1986-1993) and principal conductor of Chicago's Grant Park Music Festival (1994-1997). He began his professional career in 1979 as associate conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra under Mstislav Rostropovich.

Wolff's extensive discography includes the complete Beethoven symphonies with the Frankfurt Radio Orchestra and music from the baroque to the present. He has recorded or premiered works by John Adams, Stephen Albert, John Corigliano, Brett Dean, Lukas Foss, John Harbison, Aaron Jay Kernis, Edgar Meyer, Rodion Shchedrin, Bright Sheng, Michael Torke, Mark-Anthony Turnage, and Joan Tower and has collaborated on CD with Mstislav Rostropovich, Yo-Yo Ma, Steven Isserlis, Joshua Bell, Hilary Hahn, Dawn Upshaw, Jennifer Larmore, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, and jazz guitarist John Scofield. Three times nominated for a Grammy Award, Wolff won the 2001 Cannes Classical Award.

A graduate of Harvard College, Wolff studied piano with George Crumb, Leon Fleisher and Leonard Shure, composition with Leon Kirchner and Olivier Messiaen, and conducting with Charles Bruck. In 1985, Wolff was awarded one of the first Seaver/ National Endowment for the Arts Conducting Prizes.

A gift from the Calderwood Charitable Foundation endowed the Stanford and Norma Jean Calderwood Director of Orchestras chair now occupied by Hugh Wolff.

He and his wife, harpist and radio journalist Judith Kogan, have three sons.

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.

Visit necmusic.edu for complete and updated concert information:

NEC PHILHARMONIA, David Loebel, conductor

Mendelssohn *Overture to the Fairy Tale of the Fair Melusina*; Ravel *Ma mère l'Oye*; Abels *Global Warming* (1990); Debussy *La Mer*

Wednesday, September 27, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC CHAMBER ORCHESTRA, Donald Palma, artistic director

Elgar *Introduction and Allegro*; Theofanidis *Visions and Miracles*; Shostakovich *Chamber Symphony*, op. 110a

Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC SYMPHONY, David Loebel, conductor

Coleman *Seven O'Clock Shout*; Haydn *Symphony* No. 95; Sibelius *Symphony* No. 2

Wednesday, October 17, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC PHILHARMONIA, Earl Lee, guest conductor

Schumann *Manfred Overture*; Shin *Upon His Ghostly Solitude* (2023); Brahms *Symphony* No. 2 in D Major, op. 73

Wednesday, October 25, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC CHAMBER ORCHESTRA, Donald Palma, artistic director

Haydn *Symphony* No. 6 "*Le Matin*"; Stravinsky *Concerto in D*; Rózsa *Concerto for Strings*, op. 17

Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC PHILHARMONIA & SYMPHONIC CHOIR, David Loebel, conductor

Pärt *Fratres*; Mozart "*Great*" *Mass in C Minor*, K.427

Wednesday, November 8, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC SYMPHONY, Paul Biss, conductor

Zwiliich *Jubilation*; Rachmaninoff *Piano Concerto* No. 2; Dvořák *Symphony* No. 8

Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

Symphonic Music at NEC

—continued

CAVALLI: LA CALISTO

Performed by opera students and members of NEC Philharmonia

Brenna Corner, director; Robert Tweten, conductor

Thursday-Sunday, November 16-19, 2023, times vary

Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre

NEC PHILHARMONIA, Hugh Wolff, conductor

Frank Escaramuza; Lutoslawski *Cello Concerto*, Leland Ko '24 AD, soloist;

Rachmaninoff *Symphonic Dances*

Wednesday, December 13, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC LAB ORCHESTRA

Graduate student conductors

Thursday, December 14, 2023 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall

Other Upcoming Concerts at NEC

FACULTY RECITAL: TANYA BLAICH, piano & Paula Murrihy, mezzo-soprano

Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC SYMPHONIC WINDS, William Drury, conductor; Rachel Brake '24 MM, conductor

Martino *Estate*; Maconchy *Music for Woodwind and Brass*; Liu *The Torment of a Flower*;

Gounod *Petite Symphonie for Wind Instruments*; Firsova *Three Portraits*

Thursday, September 28, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

FIRST MONDAY IN JORDAN HALL, Laurence Lesser, artistic director - 39th season

Ives *Violin Sonata No. 4*; Schnittke *Piano Quintet*; Brahms *Piano Trio in C Major*, op. 87

Monday, October 2, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

JAZZ RESIDENCY: SARA SERPA – “RECOGNITION”

Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall

NEC WIND ENSEMBLE, James Stephenson, guest conductor

Stephenson *Symphony No. 2, “Voices”*; Bernstein *Overture to Candide*; Brahms

Variations on a Theme by Haydn, op. 56a; Stephenson *Octet*

Thursday, October 6, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

Other Upcoming Concerts at NEC

—continued

LIEDERABEND LXVII

Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., Williams Hall

NEC CHAMBER SINGERS, Erica J. Washburn, conductor

“Wanting Memories” - reflective music by Barnwell, Barnum, Bosba, Brahms, Ives, David, Davids, McDowall, Panufnik, Perduto, and Wilby

Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC JAZZ ORCHESTRA: The Music of George Russell

Ken Schaphorst, conductor,

Thursday, October 19, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

“CONNECTIONS” CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES

Max Levinson, director

Thursday, October 19, 2023 at 8:00 p.m., Burnes Hall

JOHN HEISS MEMORIAL CONCERT

Monday, October 23, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

TUESDAY NIGHT NEW MUSIC

New music by NEC student composers, performed by their peers

Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall

SONATA NIGHT 47, Pei-Shan Lee, director

Thursday, October 26, 2023 at 6:30 p.m., Burnes Hall

NEC COMPOSERS’ SERIES

Works by NEC faculty and alumni composers

Thursday, October 26, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

RESIDENCY CONCERT: THE MUSIC OF DAVE HOLLAND

Thursday, October 26, 2023 at 8:00 p.m., Eben Jordan

FACULTY RECITAL: TIMOTHY STEELE, *piano*

Monday, October 30, 2023 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

LIEDERABEND LXVIII

Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., Williams Hall

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