

A young woman with her hair in a bun, wearing a black strapless dress, is playing a violin. She is in the foreground, looking down at her instrument. In the background, other orchestra members are visible, some wearing face masks. The setting is a grand concert hall with wood-paneled walls.

N | E | C

EXPERIENCE WORLD-CLASS ARTISTRY AT

# New England Conservatory

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# NEC Philharmonia

Hugh Wolff, conductor

*Stanford and Norma Jean Calderwood Director of Orchestras*

with

Leland Ko '24 AD, cello

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

7:30 p.m.

NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

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**Ludwig van Beethoven**  
(1770–1827)

**Leonore Overture No. 2 in C Major, op. 72**

**Elena Langer**  
(b. 1974)

*Leonora's Dream* (2022)  
*World premiere*

*Intermission*

**Richard Strauss**  
(1864–1949)

*Don Quixote (Fantastic Variations on a Theme of Knightly Character), op. 35* (1897)

Introduction

Thema: Don Quixote, the Knight of Sorrowful  
Countenance; Maggiore: Sancho Panza

Variation I: The Attack on the Giant (actually  
windmills)

Variation II: The Attack on a Hostile Army  
(actually sheep)

Variation III: Dialogue of the Knight and the Squire  
(meditations on chivalry)

Variation IV: The Rescue of the Abducted Maiden  
(actually pilgrims with an icon of the Virgin Mary)

Variation V: Don Quixote's Vigil (nocturnal meditation  
on love and loneliness)

Variation VI: The Encounter with the beloved Dulcinea  
(actually a peasant girl)

Variation VII: The Ride through the Air (firmly  
anchored on the ground)

Variation VIII: The Adventure in the Enchanted Boat

Variation IX: The Combat with the Two Satanists  
(actually monks)

Variation X: The Defeat of Don Quixote by the Knight  
of the White Moon

Finale: The Death of Don Quixote

Leland Ko '24 AD, cello (Don Quixote)

Cara Pogossian '23 MM, viola (Sancho Panza)

To commemorate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Beethoven's birth (December 2020), New England Conservatory and others planned to commission three composers from underrepresented populations to respond to the three *Leonore* overtures of Beethoven. The idea was to take the opera's central theme – victory over oppression and speaking truth to power – as the starting point, and to reference the one musical idea common to all three overtures: the aria Florestan sings from the dungeon: "In des Lebens Frühlingstagen ist das Glück von mir gefloh'n" (In the springtime of my life, all my happiness has vanished). The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted all these plans. No concerts took place in December 2020 and only one of the commissions was completed. This evening we are proud finally to present the world premiere of Elena Langer's *Leonora's Dream* along with its inspiration, Beethoven's *Leonore* Overture no. 2.

"Of all my children, this one gave me the worst birth pains and brought me the most sorrow." Thus **Ludwig van Beethoven** described the composition of his only opera, *Fidelio*. He began work on it as *Leonore* in 1804, finally finishing *Fidelio* in 1814. In between were two unsuccessful productions. The *Leonore* Overture no. 2, despite its number, was the first one he wrote and was performed at the disastrous premiere of November 1805. Perhaps Beethoven's most original orchestral composition, it is a through-composed fantasia on the themes and feelings of the opera. The opening *fortissimo* unison Gs and slow descending scale conjure up the slamming of the prison door and slow descent into the basement dungeon. Within eight measures Beethoven moves from C major to B minor, then abruptly to A-flat major, and the woodwinds quote the above-mentioned aria of Florestan. A mysterious *pianissimo* transition leads to an *Allegro* — rescue music that starts more as dream than reality. Minutes later, a distant trumpet signals the impending arrival of rescuers. Virtually every measure of this astounding overture describes one of four emotions: the cruelty of the oppressor, the fear and frailty of the oppressed, the dream of a better world, or the drama of rescue.

**Elena Langer** writes:

"I am mostly a composer of operas, so it was particularly nice that the New England Conservatory asked me to write an orchestral response to Beethoven's only opera, *Fidelio*. *Fidelio* is a she in the story, a woman called Leonora who, disguised as a man, frees her husband from prison. My piece is written, so to speak, from Leonora's point of view. I wanted to express her indomitable spirit, her feelings of joy and hope, alongside moments of softness and lyricism.

Beethoven wrote several overtures to his Leonora story. Since all three Leonora overtures share one musical element, the first phrase of Florestan's aria 'In des Lebens Frühlingstagen' ('In the springtime days of life') from the opera's second act, I wanted to include and play with some musical elements from that aria. I use Beethoven's motif at the beginning, but stretch it in time and let it ring and tinkle, using high orchestral instruments combined with glockenspiel and flexatone; then

the music gradually develops into an imaginary chorus of songbirds. In the fast section I played with the idea of a major triad, and you will hear a lot of ‘jumping’, fast-changing, percussive orchestral triads.

It was important for me to know I was writing for young musicians. I enjoyed giving each orchestral player a little song, so there are many solos and *divisi* passages, but sometimes the orchestra plays in a happy, strong unison.” – Elena Langer

**Richard Strauss** was a musical storyteller, whether through the more obvious form of opera, or – less intuitively – the symphonic poem. *Till Eulenspiegel*, *Don Juan*, and *Also sprach Zarathustra* all have the written word as their starting point. The most elaborately literary of all is his *Don Quixote*, fancifully subtitled “Fantastic Variations on a Theme of Knightly Character”, and based on the classic 17<sup>th</sup> century novel by Cervantes. The role Don Quixote de la Mancha is taken by the solo cello; his trusty sidekick and manservant Sancho Panza, by the solo viola with help from the unlikely duo of bass clarinet and tenor tuba.

In Cervantes’ story, the aged Don has read too many books about the wonders of knighthood, filling his addled brain with such fantasies that proper judgment goes by the wayside. A lengthy introduction depicts this loss of sanity with complex, contrapuntal music that veers toward the atonal (especially striking for 1897). The knight then introduces himself (Thema: solo cello) followed by Sancho Panza (Maggiore: solo viola). The ten knightly “adventures” that follow are misadventures with unfortunate outcomes. First (Variation I), the pair come across windmills. Thinking they are giants, the knight charges, only to be dumped unceremoniously from his steed. Next (Variation II) is a flock of sheep (depicted with astounding originality and accuracy by flutter-tonguing muted brass), mistaken for a hostile army. Again, the knight charges and again he is rudely separated from his horse. What follows is a long two-part Variation III. First the Don and Sancho Panza in dialog: the former expounding on idealism and chivalry, the latter responding with ever more banal platitudes (silly solo viola melodies with four-square phrasing and harmonies). Finally, the Don loses patience with his servant and chastises him for lack of ideals. What follows is an exquisite slow movement, rich in voluptuous Straussian melodies, as Don Quixote waxes rhapsodic on the wonders of knighthood. Sancho Panza’s reaction is a puzzled “Huh?” from the bass clarinet which elicits another frustrated outburst from the Don. Off they go again (Variation IV), this time encountering a group of pilgrims carrying an icon of the Virgin Mary. Thinking they are bandits with an abducted maiden, the Don challenges them with similarly predictable results. Quixote picks himself up off the ground, and Sancho Panza laughs in delight that his master is still in one piece. Night falls and the Don keeps a vigil over his armor (Variation V). He dreams of Dulcinea, the idealized and unattainable woman, in a deeply felt and melancholy variation for solo cello, supported simply by the orchestra cellos and occasional harp glissandi. A passing peasant girl with a tambourine awakens him from this reverie (Variation VI). Thinking her Dulcinea, turned by wizards from goddess to strumpet, he attempts her

“rescue.” Not the least interested in being “rescued,” she casts him aside. Next is a trip on flying horses (Variation VII), in fact hobby horses rooted to the ground. A wind machine conjures speeding through the air, while a pedal point D in the timpani, tuba, and double basses, firmly held for the entire variation, confirms that liftoff was never achieved. From the air to the water, the Don and Sancho Panza now board an “enchanted” boat (Variation VIII), only to have it capsize (the tenor tuba’s leitmotif is literally inverted). Sopping wet, the pair shake off the water (stuttering pizzicati in all strings) and quickly offer a prayer of thanks (quiet woodwind phrase). Next up (Variation IX), the pair see a couple of monks chanting in Latin (another bit of orchestrational magic from Strauss: two bassoons in close quasi-renaissance counterpoint). Sure they are Satanists, the Don creeps up on them and sends them running for their lives. Variation X, the wild battle with the Knight of the White Moon, ends with the Don’s final and most dramatic defeat. Accepting his fate, the Don’s sanity and judgment return. In a heartfelt Finale, full of longing, regret, and – finally – acceptance, the solo cello gives us Don Quixote’s final thoughts. With a quiet descending octave glissando, the knight breathes his last. As Cervantes writes, “never has a mind died so mildly, so peacefully.”

**Leland Ko** is the kind of person who’s always had an overflow of energy. His restlessness has led him to various callings, from calligraphy and origami to competitive tennis and distance running, but so far he’s found that making music with and for others – and the process that goes into that – are the things that best keep him seated and focus his mind. Though he has chosen to dedicate himself to classical music, he does his best to remember and live by a former mentor’s advice that music is about life, not the other way around.

A cellist of Chinese-Canadian descent, yet born and raised in the Boston area, Leland was a long-time student of Ronald Lowry and Paul Katz before attending Princeton University, where he graduated with an A.B. in German Literature. He went on to complete an M.M. at The Juilliard School under the teaching of Minhye Clara Kim, Timothy Eddy, and Natasha Brofsky, and began as an Artist Diploma candidate at New England Conservatory in the Fall of 2022 with Laurence Lesser.

Since the end of 2020, Leland plays on the ex-Peled, ex-Greenhouse Thomas Dodd from 1790.

**NEC Philharmonia**  
Hugh Wolff, conductor

*First Violin*

Jaewon Wee  
SooBeen Lee  
Yulia Watanabe-Price  
Qiyang Xing  
Anatol Toth  
Yebin Yoo  
Caroline Jesalva  
Anthony Chan  
Felicita Schiffner  
Hila Dahari  
Bella Jeong  
Bree Fotheringham  
Youngji Choi  
Haerim Oh

*Second Violin*

Nick Hammel  
Xiaoqing Yu  
Eunha Kim  
Joshua Brown  
Hyeon Hong  
Kristy Chen  
Kathryn Amaral  
Isabella Gorman  
Minami Yoshida  
Hannah O'Brien  
Claire Byeol Kim  
Nozomi Murayama  
Eric Chen

*Viola*

Cara Pogossian  
Aidan Garrison  
Yeh-Chun Lin  
Lisa Sung  
Elton Tai  
Samuel Zacharia  
Bram Fisher  
Kwong Man To  
Njord Fossnes  
Ayano Nakamura  
Sophia Tseng  
Adam Newman

*Cello*

Soobin Kong  
Lillian Yim  
Lily Stern  
Bennet Huang  
Daniel Kim  
Youjin Ko  
Dilshod Narzillae  
JungAh Lee  
Seoyeon Koo  
Hao Wang

*Bass*

Yu-Cih Chang  
Gregory Padilla  
Alyssa Peterson  
Chiyang Chen  
Yihan Wu  
Willie Swett

*Flute*

Javier Castro  
Jeong Won Choe \*  
Jay Kim  
Amelia Libbey †  
Yang Liu §  
Subin Serena Oh

*Piccolo*

Chia-Fen Chang §  
Anne Chao †

*Oboe*

Dane Bennett \*  
Donovan Bown  
Kian Hirayama †  
Sojeong Kim  
Kelley Osterberg  
Sam Rockwood §

*English horn*

Gwen Goble †  
Alexander Lenser §

*Clarinet*

Tristan Broadfoot §  
Hyunwoo Chun †  
Chenrui Lin  
Aleksis Martin  
Soyeon Park \*  
Erica Smith

*E-flat Clarinet*

Erica Smith

*Bass Clarinet*

Thomas Acey §  
Aleksis Martin †

*Bassoon*

Zoe Beck †  
Andrew Brooks  
Garrett Comrie  
John Fulton  
Miranda Macias \*§  
Julien Rollins

*Contrabassoon*

Adam Chen §  
Matthew Heldt †

*French horn*

Logan Fischer †  
Karlee Kamminga \*  
Huimin Mandy Liu  
Yeonjo Oh §  
Willow Otten  
Paolo Rosselli  
Jenna Stokes

*Principal players*

\*Beethoven  
§Langer  
†Strauss



*Trumpet*

Daniel Barak ‡  
Michael Harms  
Sarah Heimberg  
Eddy Lanois §  
Nelson Martinez  
*off stage*  
David O'Neill  
Alex Prokop  
Dimitri Raimonde \*

*Piccolo Trumpet*

Jon-Michael Taylor

*Euphonium*

Jack Earnhart

*Trombone*

Eli Canales  
Puyuan Chen §  
Lukas Helsel ‡  
Alex Knutrud \*  
Noah Korenfeld  
Quinn McGillis

*Bass Trombone*

Ki Yoon Park

*Tuba*

Masaru Lin §  
David Stein ‡

*Timpani*

Eli Geruschat \*  
Hayoung Song §  
Leigh Wilson ‡

*Percussion*

Eli Geruschat  
Ross Jarrell §  
Hayoung Song  
Zesen Wei ‡  
Leigh Wilson

*Harp*

Yvonne Cox ‡  
Morgan Mackenzie Short §

*Keyboard*

Sung Ho Yoo

*Orchestra Department*

Hugh Wolff

*Stanford and Norma Jean Calderwood Director of Orchestras*

Marjorie Apfelbaum  
*Director of Large Ensemble  
Administration*

David Loebel  
*Associate Director of  
Orchestras*

Iverson Eliopoulos  
*Student Manager*

Donald Palma  
*Artistic Director of  
Chamber Orchestra*

Andrés Almirall  
*Performance Librarian*

Hannah O'Brien  
*Student Librarian*

Sarah Heimberg  
Hayoung Song  
*Stage Crew*

Special thanks to Jason Horowitz, Daniel Getz, Mickey Katz, 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.

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### **BRITTEN: THE TURN OF THE SCREW**

Opera students and members of NEC Philharmonia perform; Connor Gray Covington, conductor; Steven Goldstein, director

*Thursday-Sunday, November 17-20, 2022, times vary*

*Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre*

### **NEC PHILHARMONIA, Mei-Ann Chen, guest conductor**

Clyne *Masquerade*; Dukas *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*;

Strauss *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*; Tchaikovsky *Piano Concerto*, soloist tba

*Wednesday, December 14, 2022 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

## **Other Upcoming Concerts at NEC**

### **SONATA NIGHT 43, Pei-Shan Lee, director**

Works for cello and piano by Bach, Chopin, and Britten

*Thursday, November 17, 2022 at 6:30 p.m., Burnes Hall*

### **NEC SYMPHONIC WINDS, SYMPHONIC CHOIR, NAVY BAND NE**

William Drury, Erica J. Washburn, Lt. Matt Shea, conductors;

Smith *The Consolation of Apollo*; medley including works by Saint-Saëns,

Francis Scott Key, Sousa, Whitacre, Williams, Donovan, Smith, Hayman

*Thursday, November 17, 2022 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

### **FACULTY RECITAL: BORROMEO STRING QUARTET**

Haydn *String Quartet in F Major*, op. 74 no. 2; Bartók *String Quartet No. 2*

*Sunday, November 20, 2022 at 8:00 p.m., Burnes Hall*

### **NEC PERCUSSION GROUP, Will Hudgins director**

Skidmore *Torched and Wrecked*; Crumb *Kronos-Kryptos: Four Tableaux for Percussion Quartet*; Glass "Japura River" from *Aguas de Amazonia*; Foss *Paradigm*

*Monday, November 21, 2022 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

## **Other Upcoming Concerts at NEC**

*–continued*

### **GUNTHER SCHULLER LEGACY CONCERT: “Founding Family”**

Music, remarks, and memories from those faculty appointed by Gunther Schuller during his tenure as NEC president: John Heiss, Ran Blake, Laurence Lesser, Carl Atkins, George Russell, Frank Battisti, and Hankus Netsky; performances by students, alumni, and members of NEC Wind Ensemble and CMA Bluegrass Ensemble

*Tuesday, November 22, 2022 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

### **FACULTY RECITAL: KENNETH RADNOFSKY, saxophone**

“Looking for Higher Ground” - Music by Emigrés and Refugees Paul Ben-Haim, Jakov Jakoulov *Bernstein Anniversary* (written for Radnofsky), Hugo Kauder, Ursula Mamlok, Sergei Rachmaninoff *Sonata, op. 19*; Yoshiko Kline, piano

*Monday, November 28, 2022 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

### **NEC SAXOPHONE ENSEMBLE, Kenneth Radnofsky, director**

Works by Higdon, Vivaldi, Ravel, Bach, Moe, and Milhaud

*Tuesday, November 29, 2022 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

### **UNDERGRADUATE OPERA STUDIO: Opera Scenes, Michael Meraw, director**

Opera scenes performed by the members of the Undergraduate Opera Studio

*Friday & Saturday, December 2 & 3, 2022 at 8:00 p.m.,*

*Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre*

### **CHAMBER MUSIC GALA**

*Sunday, December 4, 2022 at 8:00 p.m., Jordan Hall*

### **FIRST MONDAY IN JORDAN HALL, Laurence Lesser, artistic director**

All-French program: Ravel *Chansons madécasses*; Dutilleux *Ainsi la nuit*;

Fauré *Quartet No. 2 in G Minor, op. 45*

*Monday, December 5, 2022 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

### **TUESDAY NIGHT NEW MUSIC**

New music by NEC student composers, performed by their peers

*Tuesday, December 6, 2022 at 8:00 p.m., Williams Hall*

### **LIEDERABEND LXIII: “Wolf and Mörike”**

The program will comprise a selection of songs from Wolf’s masterpiece, The Mörike Songbook

*Wednesday, December 7, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., Williams 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.

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