



New England
Conservatory

Concert Program

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NEC Symphony

David Loebel, conductor

Thursday, February 1, 2024
7:30 p.m.
NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

Overture to *Fidelio*, op. 72

Aaron Copland
(1900–1990)

Suite from *Appalachian Spring* (1943–44)

Intermission

William L. Dawson
(1899–1990)

***Negro Folk Symphony* (1934)**

The Bond of Africa

Hope in the Night

O, Le' Me Shine, Shine Like a Morning Star!

Dawson *Negro Folk Symphony* (1934)

"I've not tried to imitate Beethoven or Brahms, Franck, or Ravel but to be just myself, a Negro. To me, the finest compliment that could be paid my symphony when it has its premiere is that it unmistakably is not the work of a white man. I want the audience to say: 'Only a Negro could have written that.'"

—William Levi Dawson, 1934

An almost exact contemporary of Aaron Copland's, Alabama-born **William Levi Dawson** is perhaps best remembered today for his popular choral arrangements of spirituals. The recent reemergence of Dawson's first and only major orchestral work, *Negro Folk Symphony*, speaks to his talent, courage and tenacity, even as it is sadly emblematic of the frustrations that hindered the careers of Black composers of his generation.

Negro Folk Symphony could hardly have had a more auspicious debut. The premiere performances in 1934 by the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski—in both Philadelphia and at Carnegie Hall, one of which was nationally broadcast on the radio—were huge successes, greeted by enthusiastic ovations and positive reviews. Nonetheless, the symphony fell into undeserved invisibility almost immediately and—except for a 1963 recording conducted by Stokowski—has only reentered public view in recent years. In this respect it shared the fate of Florence Price's *Symphony No. 1*, which received a highly visible debut by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra a year before that of Dawson's work. It is impossible not to believe that the racism endemic to the American classical music world in the 1930s played a major role in the long neglect their music suffered.

Negro Folk Symphony is unified by a "Leading Motive," first stated by the French horn at the very outset; Dawson described it as symbolizing "A link (that) was taken out of the human chain when the first African was taken from the shores of his native land and sent to slavery." To emphasize the "folk" character promised by the symphony's title, the first movement ("The Bond of Africa") includes a theme derived from the spiritual *Oh My Little Soul Gwine Shine Like a Star*. The second movement ("Hope in the Night") begins with music depicting, in Dawson's words, "...the humdrum life of a people whose bodies were baked by the sun and lashed by the whip for two hundred fifty years; whose lives were proscribed before they were born." A contrasting middle section depicts slave children at play, "unmindful of the heavy cadences of despair."

Two spirituals—*O Le' Me Shine, Shine Like a Morning Star!* and *Hallelujah, Lord, I Been Down into the Sea*—form the basis of the symphony's triumphant finale.

—David Loebel

NEC Symphony

David Loebel, conductor

First Violin

William Kinney
Joanna Peters
Yeji Hwang
Kevin Kang
Aidan Daniels
Joseph Zamoyta
Lauren Ahn
Tara Hagle
Audrey Weizer
Isabella Sun
Ava Kenney
Minkyung Kang
Kearston Gonzales

Second Violin

Ryan Tully
Eleanor Markey
Ian Johnson
Emma Servadio
Abby Reed
HyoJeong Hwang
Ravani Loushy Kay
Tzu-Ya Huang
Ashley Tsai
Sofia Skoldberg
Yirou Zhang
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Jessi Kaufman

Cello

Austin Topper
Yuxin Du
Alex Aranzabal
Yue Mao
Li-An Yu
Ethan Murphy
Ari Freed
Mina Kim
Amelia Allen
Li-An Yu
Nahar Eliaz
Angela Sun
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Bass

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Lawrence Hall

Flute

Sadie Goodman
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Nina Tsai *

Piccolo

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JouYing Ting §

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Yuhsi Chang *
Rebecca Mack §
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English horn

Victoria Solis Alvarado

Clarinet

Sarah Cho ‡
Evan Chu §
Yi-Ting Ma *

E-flat Clarinet

Sarah Cho

Bass Clarinet

Dillon Acey

Bassoon

Daniel Arakaki
Yerin Choi
Zilong Huang *
Wilson Lu §
Andrew Salaru ‡

Contrabassoon

Daniel Arakaki

French horn

Mattias Bengtsson ‡
Grace Clarke §
Mauricio Martinez
Xiaoran Xu *

Trumpet

Maxwell DeForest §
Sebastián Haros *
Alexandra Richmond ‡

Trombone

Becca Bertekap
Devin Drinan ‡
Allie Klaire Ledbetter *

Bass Trombone

Shin Tanaka

Tuba

Hayden Silvester

Timpani

Isabella Butler §
Rohan Zakharia ‡
Mingcheng Zhou *

Percussion
Isabella Butler
Ngaieng Lai ‡
Eli Reisz
Rohan Zakharia §
Mingcheng Zhou

Keyboard
Jin Jeong

Principal players
* Beethoven
‡ Copland
§ Dawson

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Special thanks to Jason Horowitz, Mickey Katz, Noriko Futagami,
and Anthony D'Amico for their work in preparing the orchestra
for this evening's concert.

David Loebel
Associate Director of Orchestras

Noted for performances that combine innate musicality with interpretive insight, David Loebel joined the faculty of New England Conservatory in 2010 as Associate Director of Orchestras following an eleven-year tenure as Music Director and Conductor of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra. Prior to his appointment in Memphis, he enjoyed a decade-long association with the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, serving as Associate and then Associate Principal Conductor, as well as Artistic Director of its summer festival, *Classics in the Loop*. He has also been Associate Conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

As a guest conductor, David Loebel has appeared with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Seattle Symphony Orchestra, and Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra. He has also conducted the symphony orchestras of Baltimore, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, New Jersey, and Syracuse, the Utah Symphony, the North Carolina Symphony, the Buffalo

Philharmonic Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the Kansas City Symphony, the Louisville Orchestra, Symphony Silicon Valley, the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and the Calgary Philharmonic, among many others.

Internationally, Loebel has conducted the Taipei Symphony Orchestra, the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica de Xalapa, and toured Australia to great acclaim, leading the Sydney, Adelaide, Queensland, Western Australian, and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras. He has led family and educational concerts at Carnegie Hall with the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. Operatic engagements include productions at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and Opera Memphis, and he has appeared at summer festivals including the Grant Park Music Festival, Eastern Music Festival, Sewanee Summer Music Festival, and Woodstock Mozart Festival.

Honored five times by ASCAP for his adventuresome programming, David Loebel is a recipient of the prestigious Seaver/National Endowment for the Arts Conductors Award. An equally articulate communicator off the podium, he is a popular speaker and hosted "The Memphis Symphony Radio Hour" on public radio station WKNO-FM. His writings on music have been widely published, including program notes for Telarc recordings. With the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra and Chorus he recorded the critically acclaimed CD *Independence Eve at Grant Park*.

Active throughout his career in the training of young musicians, Loebel has been Conductor-in-Residence of the New World Symphony and Music Director of the Saint Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra. He has also conducted the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the National Repertory Orchestra, and at conservatories including the Juilliard School, Cleveland Institute of Music, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and Indiana University. As a mentor to conductors, he has served on the faculties of the League of American Orchestras' Conducting Workshop, the Kennedy Center's National Conducting Institute, and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

A native of Cleveland, David Loebel is a graduate of Northwestern University and a recipient of its Alumni Merit Award.

<http://davidloebel.com/>

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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PUCCINI: *La Bohème*

performed by NEC Opera students and members of NEC Philharmonia;
Steven Goldstein, director; Robert Tweten, conductor

Monday & Wednesday, February 5 & 7, 2024, 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

Symphonic Music at New England Conservatory

–continued

NEC CHAMBER ORCHESTRA, Donald Palma, artistic director
Herbert *Elegy*; Mozart *Divertimento for Oboe, Two Horns and Strings*;
Bartók *Divertimento*
Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC PHILHARMONIA, Shiyeon Sung, guest conductor
Gubaidulina *Fairytale Poem*; Hindemith *Violin Concerto*;
Dvořák *Symphony No. 6 in D Major, op. 60*
Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC BAROQUE ENSEMBLE
Friday, March 8, 2024 at 8:30 p.m., Brown Hall

NEC NEW MUSIC ENSEMBLE, Stefan Asbury, conductor
Turnage *Blood on the Floor*
Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Burnes Hall

NEC SYMPHONY, Hugh Wolff, conductor
Esmail *Re|Member*; Thompson *An Act of Resistance*; Shostakovich *Symphony No. 5*
Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC PHILHARMONIA, Hugh Wolff, conductor
Chen Wu Xing (*Five Elements*); Strauss *Death and Transfiguration*;
Rachmaninoff *Piano Concerto No. 3*, Changyong Shin '24 AD, piano
Wednesday, April 3, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

STRAUSS: *Die Fledermaus*
performed by NEC Opera students and members of NEC Philharmonia;
Joshua Major, director; Robert Tweten, conductor
Thursday–Sunday, April 11-14, 2024, Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre,
times vary

NEC CHAMBER ORCHESTRA, Donald Palma, artistic director
Shaw *Entr'acte*; Schoenberg *Verklärte Nacht for string sextet, op. 4*;
Mozart *Concerto for Oboe in C Major, K. 314*
Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC LAB ORCHESTRA
Thursday, April 25, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Brown 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;
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