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# Concert Program

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# Tuesday Night New Music

Tuesday, May 7, 2024  
7:30 p.m.  
NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

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**Changjin Ha**

*Welcome to—* (2024)

Changjin Ha, Rotem Eylam, Ian Yoo Kim,  
Ai Jian, Mason Ishida, Ian Wiese,  
Shawn Lian, Lingbo Ma, Linxi Chen,  
Trygve Lebakken, composers

**Rotem Eylam**

*INA* (2023)

Chihiro Asano, voice  
Honor Hickman, bass flute, piccolo  
Dillon Acey, bass clarinet  
Njord Kárason Fossnes, viola  
Miruna Eynon, cello  
Ariel Mo, piano

**Ian Yoo Kim**

*Fall of a Dynasty* (2024)

The East Kingdom  
Song of the Wise  
The Inner Streets  
War  
Requiem – Fall

Ashley Tsai, Jeremiah Jung, violin  
Amelia Kazazian, flute  
Sherry Chang, oboe  
Herbert Bi, viola  
Nahar Eliaz, cello  
Dennis McIntyre, double bass  
Abel Zhou, Elfie Shi, Ian Yoo Kim,  
percussion  
Changjin Ha, conductor

**Mason Ishida**

*Duet Minuet* (2023)

William Kinney, violin  
Alex Aranzabal, cello

**Frank Sang**

*Burnt by the Sun* (2023)

Alex Russell, trombone

**Ai Jian**

*Eyre* (2024)

Honor Hickman, flute  
Yilei Yin, violin  
Yuheng Wang, viola

**Linxi Chen**

*Chatoyant of Somberness* (2023)

Chihiro Asano, soprano  
Honor Hickman, alto flute  
Isaac Dubow, horn  
Philip Rawlinson, viola  
Rotem Eylam, electric guitar  
Stratis Minakakis, conductor

**Changjin Ha**

*Romance IX* (2024)

Song Without Words  
Romance IX

Songhyeon Kim, piano

**Shawn Lian**

*Twelve Illusions* (2024)

Echoes  
Spark  
Lament  
Dance of Mephistopheles  
Twelve Stone Statues in an Ancient Temple  
Human-faced Snake  
Gate of Death  
Footsteps in the Empty Valley  
Headless Clown  
Black Lake  
Mirror in Dream  
Gate of Life

Jiaqing Luo, piano

**Ian Wiese**

*Four Short Pieces for Piano* (2022)

Inversions  
Tremolos Rewrite  
Ascending and Descending  
Chorale

Changjin Ha, piano

**Zining Wu**

*Sarula* (2024)

Silver Autumn Morning  
Naadam  
Sarula's Eyes

Juchen Wang, saxophone  
Ziang Yu, piano

**Lingbo Ma**

*Quickstep* (2024)

Chuze Sun, alto saxophone  
Yutong Sun, piano

**Qingyang Yu**

*I wish* (2024)

Xinyi Yang, guitar  
Qingyang Yu, piano  
Changrong Yan, voice

**Lemuel Marc**

*transidiomatic gun-machine for two pianos*  
(2023)

Ariel Mo and Shalun Li, piano

**Austin Conrad Smith**

*that being said...* (2024)

Chuze Sun, alto saxophone  
Miruna Eynon, cello  
Austin Conrad Smith, piano

**Claire Stephenson**

*I dream of you to wake* (2024)

Isabel Evernham, flute  
Corinne Foley, oboe  
Sarah Cho, clarinet  
Adam Chen, bassoon  
Shaylen Joos, harp  
Corinne Luebke-Brown, Aislin Alancheril,  
Hannah Miller, soprano  
Anna Poltronieri-Tang, Daniela Pyne,  
Sianna Monti, alto  
Caroline Smoak, Tara Hagle, violin  
Philip Rawlinson, viola  
Amelia Allen, cello  
Dan Slatch, double bass  
Maggie Storm, conductor



own grandfather, who used to sing sijo as a hobby (Sijo, an old form of Korean poetry, once popular amongst the nobility during the Joseon Dynasty). Once the old man ends his tales, he leads the traveler to the streets of the kingdom.

### *The Inner Streets*

The traveler is surprised by the inner streets of the kingdom. Unlike the outer walls of the kingdom, the streets are full of lively people enjoying their lives. It is here where the traveler is struck with the cultural colors of the Eastern Kingdom. In this section, the strings in pizzicato try to replicate both the rhythmic and melodic nature of the Gayageum. Because there are occasions where the Gayageum plucks repeated notes at a fast pace, the strings in this section are instructed to use two fingers rather than one finger when doing pizzicato.

### *War*

The Gong hits and the traveler is confused. Suddenly, the people began singing, the animals started dancing, and the sound of the marching soldiers were getting closer. The type of music in this section is called Samul nori (Samul nori, a traditional rhythmic music combined with folk dances). An intense battle between the East Kingdom and the nomadic tribes of the North commences. The traveler is knocked unconscious during the battle.

### *Requiem – Fall*

Waking up, the traveler heads towards the East Kingdom hoping for its survival. But against his hopes, the kingdom had fallen and only rubble remained. The music played here tries to replicate the sound of Jongmyo Jeryeak (Korean ritual music performed at the Jongmyo shrine for the past rulers of the Joseon Dynasty). It is slow paced and showcases a monophonic melody. The traveler, with nowhere to stay, begins his travels elsewhere. The final melody of the piece is played, signaling the ending of the journey.

– Ian Yoo Kim

### **Ishida** *Duet Minuet* (2023)

I wrote this piece as a project for the class composition and tonality in the 18th and 19th centuries.

– Mason Ishida

### **Sang** *Burnt by the Sun* (2023)

I still remember when I was living in the dorm on campus at NEC. When I would wake up in the morning with my bed oriented towards the window, the sunlight coming in was like a sword stabbing through my eyes. It hurt a lot. This piece is a reflection of what my eyeballs were suffering, but translated into musical textures. Just like how one sometimes sees narratives playing out with one's eyes closed, here we have a procession of fantastical events.

– Frank Sang

### **Jian** *Eyre* (2024)

Shakespeare said that “love is a madness most discreet, a choking gall and a



preserving sweet." *Eyre* is taken from the British novel, *Jane Eyre*, for my name 简爱 is the Chinese name of this book. It will be a romantic title for my own piece about love.

– Ai Jian

### **Ha** *Romance IX* (2024)

*Romance IX* is the last piece in my Romance series that explores unusual aspects of love. It comprises two piano solo pieces inspired by the Schumannian idiom, reflecting on his final moments. The first piece, *Song without Words*, is a three-minute work sketched in early 2023. It serves as a prelude within the Schumannian atmosphere: it eschews a dramatic climax, focusing instead on subtle yet exquisite details without direct quotations from Schumann.

The second and main piece, *Romance IX*, delves into the period from when Schumann composed his last work, *Geistervariationen* WoO 24 (Ghost Variation), to his life's end. The piece is through-composed based on rough variation design, without any clear cadence to illustrate endless thoughts that emerge and disappear without form. Beginning with my original Romance motif, G-flat—E-flat—D, its variations are layered with the held pedal with the tempo instruction *poco a poco pensando* - little by little thinking. Soon the individual lines gradually lose their substance, merging into a cluster of directionless thoughts. Then the main melody emerges from diminished sonority and wanders without a definitive cadence. As the piece reaches its climactic point, it abruptly transitions into two direct quotations from Schumann's *Davidsbündlertänze*: no. 14. *Zart und singend* and no. 17. *Wie aus Der Ferne*. Additional chromatic lines are added to the latter quotation to evoke the impression of his *Geistervariationen*. The music then returns to the main wandering melody that suddenly ascends to G Major, symbolizing a transcendent end for Schumann. The piece culminates with starlight-like notes that stitch together moments of time, leading to a profound inner confession in the extreme register.

I chose Schumann as the final topic of my Romance series because his music exhibits the truest love for himself. I attempted to look very closely into my own 'innersten', instead of focusing on meticulous structural design as usual in my other pieces. This piece would not have come into the world without the help of Songhyeon Kim, the pianist. I thank him for providing his deepest yet brightest musical insight and dedicate this piece to him, my friend.

– Changjin Ha

### **Lian** *Twelve Illusions* (2024)

The *Twelve Illusions* features 12 short pieces, each piece represents the illusion that a man experienced before he was tortured to death in a dungeon.

– Shawn Lian

### **Wiese** *Four Short Pieces for Piano* (2022)

*Four Short Pieces for Piano* is both an homage to and modelled after the 1961 *Four Short Pieces* by my late studio teacher, John Heiss. I had the idea to follow his pieces after I had taken the time to orchestrate his 1961 and 2014 anthologies for wind quintet as a gift to him. The first movement, "Inversions," is based on inverting the same set of

intervals that appear repeatedly (based on a very short improvisation that I did at the piano). It is also the shortest and most compact of the four, clocking in at only six measures. The second, "Tremolo Rewrite," as the title suggests, is a rewritten version of the tremolos concept that I had for the second movement; the first version of this piece was meandering and dull, so I cannibalized it and created this rewrite. The movement utilizes roughly the same pitch collection written as a vertical (the chords that tremolo) and a horizontal (the descending line that emerges from the chords). The third, "Ascending and Descending," mirrors the first piece in the manner of inverting the same intervals over each other, however, in this case, the intervals of a fourth and a fifth are mapped out between the white and black keys of the piano, staying mostly exclusively to one set of keys or the other. The last movement, "Chorale," imitates the chorale that forms the last of the Heiss 1961 pieces. – *Ian Wiese*

### **Wu Sarula** (2024)

The name of this work, *Sarula* in Mongolian, is a female name symbolizing a bright future. I chose this title for two reasons. Firstly, this title can be seen as an expression of my social beliefs: "women" represent the colorful spectrum of life, the gentle force of society, and the symbol of endless possibilities. Their future, like a bright light, illuminates the path ahead, filled with hope and potential. Secondly, this work was commissioned by Juchen Wang and was ultimately created. I also hope that Juchen, who is about to graduate, will have a bright future.

This piece is divided into three movements.

The inspiration for the first movement comes from two lines of poetry by Mongolian poet Bie Yawohulang: "The cracks in the skylight are filled with light, and dawn is imminent." Therefore, traditional Mongolian long tunes were used to compose this movement, expressing a sense of anticipation for dawn. This emotion can be vividly conveyed through the traditional Mongolian long tunes, which often carry profound and distant characteristics, suitable for expressing the waiting and anticipation inherent in the poetry.

The inspiration for the second movement is drawn from the traditional festival and sports competitions of the Mongolian—Naadam. It's a vibrant and enthusiastic scene. The Shaman drum, as a significant instrument during the Naadam festival, carries the atmosphere of the celebration and the emotions of the ethnic group. Its rhythm resembles the heartbeat of the grassland, igniting people's passion and vitality. The structure of this movement is designed to be rhythmic and compact, reflecting the dynamic energy of the Naadam festival. It aims to immerse the audience in the ambiance of the Naadam festival, allowing them to experience the unique charm and lively spirit of the Mongolian ethnic group.

The third movement, *Sarula's Eyes*, carries a profound symbolism and emotion within the music. The title embodies themes of feminine strength, wisdom, and aspirations. In this movement, the use of air-tone and its unique development in tone

color creates an atmosphere reminiscent of distant winds, imbued with mystery and depth. The progression of the music, from afar to nearby, symbolizes the gradual recognition and understanding of women's inner strength and wisdom and in the third movement of this piece, may every woman's eyes shine with clarity, infusing their lives and futures with strength and hope, and may they all realize their dreams, showcasing their infinite charm and wisdom.

– Zining Wu

**Ma Quickstep (2024)**

This short encore piece, a scherzo-dance in nature, was written for saxophonist Chuze Sun. The piece is developed entirely on the opening 3-note motive and has an upbeat and playful character.

– Lingbo Ma

**Yu I wish (2024)**

I took a lyric from pop song, and Chinese folk song, I wish to say thanks to NEC and my all my fellows and teachers.

– Qingyang Yu

**Stephenson I dream of you to wake (2024)**

This piece is a setting of the Christina Rossetti poem *I dream of you to wake* from *Monna Innominata*.

– Claire Stephenson

I dream of you, to wake: would that I might  
Dream of you and not wake but slumber on;  
Nor find with dreams the dear companion gone,  
As, Summer ended, Summer birds take flight.  
In happy dreams I hold you full in night.  
I blush again who waking look so wan;  
Brighter than sunniest day that ever shone,  
In happy dreams your smile makes day of night.  
Thus only in a dream we are at one,  
Thus only in a dream we give and take  
The faith that maketh rich who take or give;  
If thus to sleep is sweeter than to wake,  
To die were surely sweeter than to live,  
Though there be nothing new beneath the sun.

*Christina Rossetti*

**Lebakken Gradient (2021)**

*Gradient* (2021) is a piece for percussion quartet that was created in collaboration with the UW - Madison Chamber Percussion Ensemble. The concept of a “gradient” abstractly refers to a “change in” some quantity, typically elevation or height. This piece is unique due to the fact that all of its musical elements are constructed from the title alone. The idea of a “gradient” produces two main motives: a crescendo of consecutive notes and a crescendo of consecutive notes followed by a decrescendo of consecutive notes. Each player, only having a wood block, a metal keyboard

instrument, and a drum, is assigned one of the common SATB roles for all their instruments, creating a pitch gradient across the ensemble. As the two motives develop and all players gradually switch from woods to metals to membranes, the piece reveals that its macroscopic elements of structure and narrative exactly reflect the microscopic motives they are built with. Additionally, the idea to have timbre define form in the piece came from Mark Rothko's paintings in which he uses large swaths of a homogeneous color to define form. The haziness of the colors' boundaries and the perceptibility of individual brush strokes in his paintings also inspired how the timbral sections of this piece blend together at the edges with individual crescendi and decrescendi mirroring Rothko's individual brushstrokes that make up his works.

– *Trygve Lebakken*

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