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New England
Conservatory

Concert Program

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Trio Sponte

Honors Ensemble

Nick Hammel, violin
Yi-I Stephanie Yang, cello
Charles Berofsky, piano

Kim Kashkashian and Vivian Hornik Weilerstein, coaches

Sunday, May 5, 2024

8:00 p.m.

NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

Piano Trio in E-flat Major, op. 1 no. 1
Allegro
Adagio cantabile
Scherzo: Allegro assai
Finale: Presto

Astor Piazzolla
(1921–1992)

from *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*
Spring
Summer

Intermission

Changjin Ha '24

Leaves Fall Like Snow
World premiere

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809–1847)

Piano Trio No. 2 in C Minor, op. 66
Allegro energico e con fuoco
Andante espressivo
Scherzo: Molto allegro quasi presto
Finale: Allegro appassionato

Upcoming Honors Ensemble Concerts

Kroma Quartet

Wednesday, May 8, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

redbird

Tuesday, May 14, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall

Ha *Leaves Fall Like Snow*

Leaves Fall Like Snow is a seven-minute piece for a piano trio that portrays the last leaves falling onto the ground along with snow on the final day of winter. The piece predominantly stays in the extremely high register to depict the floating journey of the leaves and snow until they touch the ground. Its floating movement is enhanced by the extensive use of grace notes and calligraphic glissandi. At several moments when the leaves touch the ground, they release the memories of the entire year they have cherished, which never last long enough. The climactic point washes away the last bits of reminiscence with a sudden gust of rich harmony and pleasing dissonance. At the request of the trio to respond to Piazzolla's *Four Seasons* on the program, the last minute of the piece incorporates a melodic quotation from Piazzolla's *Winter* to signify the complete arrival of winter. As the snow melts, heralding the arrival of spring, the piece concludes with the melody of *Spring* from the same work by Piazzolla.

– Changjin Ha

Trio Sponte is a dynamic ensemble whose members are graduate students at the New England Conservatory. Violinist Nick Hammel, cellist Yi-I Stephanie Yang, and pianist Charles Berofsky started playing together at the Taos School of Music during the summer of 2023 and, drawn to each other's artistry and passion for music, decided to form a trio at the start of the fall semester. Trio Sponte was recently awarded Grand Prize at the 2024 Coltman Chamber Music Competition (Senior Division) in Austin, Texas, and the ensemble looks forward to performing on the Austin Chamber Music Series during its 2024-25 concert season. In addition, each of the trio's members are experienced chamber musicians as well as soloists, having won prizes at various competitions and appeared with renowned artists and ensembles.

Nick Hammel won first prize in the Ann & Charles Eisemann Young Artists Competition, and has performed with ensembles such as the Austin Symphony Orchestra and the Richardson Symphony Orchestra. He has performed with many notable musicians, such as Anton Nel, Sandy Yamamoto, and Bion Tsang, as well as members of the Miro Quartet, the Kronos Quartet, and the Borromeo Quartet.

Yi-I Stephanie Yang has performed actively with a wide range of artists such as Jaime Laredo, Hugh Wolff, and Jonathan Biss. She has performed with A Far Cry chamber orchestra and has performed in Carnegie Hall as a member of the New York String Orchestra Seminar in 2022. She received the grand prize in the Hsinchu City Cello Competition, as well as the Taiwan National Chamber Music competition, and was also selected as the most outstanding cellist by the Taipei Symphony Orchestra in 2018.

Charles Berofsky was awarded the Third Prize in the 2022 New York International Piano Competition, along with the First Prize for the piano four-hands round; and First Prize in the 2021 Thousand Islands International Piano Competition. He has performed with members of the Borromeo Quartet, the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players, and the Pressenda Chamber Players, and he has made solo appearances with the NEC Chamber Orchestra and the Eastman School Symphony Orchestra.

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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.

Stay connected



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Welcome to NEC!

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.

Andrea Kalyn
President

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