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New England  
Conservatory

# Concert Program

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# NEC Symphonic Winds

## NEC Wind Ensemble

William Drury, Conductor of Wind Ensembles

with guest artists

Carl Atkins, conductor  
Kwaku Kwaakye Obeng, Master Drummer  
NEC Ghanaian Drumming Ensemble  
Jerry Leake, drums

and

Rachel Brake '24 MM and Jackie Hu '24 MM, conductors

Tuesday, April 16, 2024  
7:30 p.m.  
NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

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**Johann Sebastian Bach**

(1685–1750)

arr. for brass by

Christopher Mowett

**Brandenburg Concerto No. 3, BWV 1048**

Allegro moderato

Adagio

Allegro

William Drury, conductor

**Jonathan Dove**

(b. 1959)

*Figures in the Garden* (1991)

Dancing in the Dark

Susanna in the Rain

A Conversation

Barbarina Alone

The Countess Interrupts a Quarrel

Voices in the Garden

Nocturne: Figaro and Susanna

Jackie Hu '24 MM, conductor

**Arnold Schoenberg**

(1874–1951)

**Theme and Variations, op. 43a**

Theme: Poco allegro

Variation

Variation: Allegro molto

Variation: Poco adagio

Variation: Tempo di valse

Variation: Molto moderato

Variation: Allegro

Variation: Moderato

Finale: Moderato

Rachel Brake '24 MM, conductor

*Intermission*

**J. J. Johnson**  
(1924–2001)

*Poem for Brass*

*soloists:*

Mark Tipton, trumpet  
Eli Canales, trombone

Carl Atkins, conductor

**Norman Dello Joio**  
(1913–2008)

*Scenes from “The Louvre”* (1966)

The Portals  
Children’s Gallery  
Kings of France  
Nativity Paintings  
Finale

Carl Atkins, conductor

**Robert Nieske**

*Pops Parade*

William Drury, conductor

**Carl Atkins**

from *We Free Kings*

I. Dance for an Unknown African King

Kwaku Kwaakye Obeng, Master Drummer

*Members of NEC Ghanaian Drumming  
Ensemble*

Victor Giraldez, John Jiang, Carlo Kind,  
Elfie Shi

Jerry Leake, director and drummer

Carl Atkins, conductor

**Dove** *Figures in the Garden* (1991)

For their 1991 Mozart bicentenary celebrations, Glyndebourne commissioned five composers to write wind serenades. Each serenade was to be musically connected in some way with one of Mozart's operas, and to be played outdoors before the performance of the opera. I was asked to compose a piece to precede *The Marriage of Figaro*. Although Mozart's comic masterpiece needs no introduction, musically or otherwise, I was attracted by the aptness of playing a serenade in the garden before performances of an opera whose last act is set in a garden, and which itself includes a number of serenades: *Voi che sapete*, *Deh vieni, non tardar*, and Susanna and the countess' letter-writing duet *Canzonetta sull'aria*. I had the idea that with all the performances of *The Marriage of Figaro* that had taken place at Glyndebourne, sounds from the opera had in some way impregnated the garden: snatches of recitative, musical figures, instrumental colours. I didn't want to overwork Mozart's tunes – it would be disastrous if the audience were tired of them before the opera had even begun – but each movement of *Figures in the Garden* is developed from a musical idea in the opera. Here and there an alternative scenario emerges: Susanna sings her aria in the rain (because it's an English garden), and Figaro and Susanna finally enjoy a moment of shared tranquillity that is denied them in the opera. – Jonathan Dove

**Schoenberg** *Theme and Variations, op. 43a*

*Theme and Variations, op. 43a* was commissioned for high school band by Carl Engel, Schoenberg's friend and the publisher of G. Schirmer Music. Hoping to encourage original high-quality literature for band, he requested a piece with multiple characters and moods to enrich the wind ensemble repertoire. However, its complexity proved beyond the capabilities of high school bands at the time, and it is still mostly performed only by advanced bands today.

The work is a carefully crafted masterpiece of complex counterpoint. Having completed his textbook, *Preliminary Exercises in Counterpoint*, just prior to composing this piece, Schoenberg put into practice much of what he wrote. It is not a 12-tone work like many pieces he composed at the time but a masterfully created tonal work in g minor that demonstrated his virtuosity.

The theme is introduced first by the oboes and clarinets and then developed through seven variations each increasing in complexity. As the piece progresses, elements of the theme are treated like a tone row through fragmentation, inversion, retrograde, etc. and played by various instruments according to their complimenting timbres and tessituras. When the piece climaxes at the finale, the powerful forces of the entire ensemble are released and a reference to Schoenberg's dear friend and tennis partner, George Gershwin, is heard through a Rhapsody in Blue chordal progression in the last bars. – Rachel Brake

**Atkins** *Dance for an Unknown African King* from *We Free Kings*

"Dance for an Unknown African King" is the first movement of a work-in-progress, *We Free Kings*. This suite is dedicated to three notable Africans/African Americans in history: An Unknown African King, Martin Luther King, Jr., and

Rodney King. The “Dance” is based on ancient West African songs and dances associated with the war dance ritual known as *Agbekor*. It loosely translates to “clear life”, the aspirational mental state of warriors returning from battle. *Agbekor* is central to the West African cultures of the Ewe, Ashanti, and the Yoruba people in Ghana, Nigeria, and other regions of Central West Africa.

The current realization was composed and arranged with the hope of successfully integrating African and western musical elements. This involved the direct usage of melodic and rhythmic elements from *Agbekor*, as well as originally composed melodic and rhythmic material, based on *Agbekor* elements. The African percussion ensemble sets and maintains the traditional rhythmic foundation, while the melodic material is based on melodic material from *Agbekor*, and written for the wind band. The percussion ensemble consists of the “primary time-keeper”, the *gangkoqui* or double-clapperless bell, the *axatse*, a gourd, playing a stylized version of the bell pattern; various high and low pitched drums (i.e., *sogo*, *kidi*, *kagan*), filling in and supporting the bell pattern, and the “master drum” or *Atsimevu*, played by the Master Drummer, embellishing the bell pattern and improvising. – Carl Atkins

## NEC Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Winds

William Drury, conductor

### *Flute*

Chia-Fen Chang  
Anne Chao  
Jeong Won Choe  
Isabel Evernham  
Sadie Goodman  
Honor Hickman  
Amelia Kazazian  
Subin Oh  
Anna Ridenour

### *Clarinet*

Dillon Acey  
Sarah Cho  
Evan Chu  
Xianyi Ji  
Phoebe Kuan  
Yi-Ting Ma  
Chasity Thompson  
Cole Turkel

### *French horn*

Elijah Barclift  
Mattias Bengtsson  
Grace Clarke  
Graham Lovely  
Mauricio Martinez  
Willow Otten  
Noah Silverman  
Xiaoran Xu  
Qianbin Zhu

### *Oboe*

Dane Bennett  
Donovan Bown  
Yuhsi Chang  
Robert Diaz  
Rebecca Mack  
Kelley Osterberg  
Victoria Solis Alvarado

### *Bassoon*

Zoe Beck  
Abigail Heyrich  
Zilong Huang  
Evan Judson  
Wilson Lu  
Erik Paul  
Julien Rollins

### *Trumpet*

Daniel Barak  
Ko Te Chen  
Matthew Dao  
Maxwell DeForest  
Sebastián Haros  
Eddy Lanois  
Reynolds Martin  
Nelson Martinez  
Matthew Mihalko  
Alexandra Richmond  
Cody York

### *Saxophone*

Zhikang Chen  
Vladyslav Dovhan  
Xinyi Liao  
Zeyi Tian

*Trombone*

Becca Bertekap  
 Devin Drinan  
 Jaehan Kim  
 Noah Korenfeld  
 Allie Klaire Ledbetter  
 Ethan Lehman  
 Quinn McGillis  
 Noah Nichilo  
 Alex Russell  
 Kevin Smith

*Bass Trombone*

Roger Dahlin  
 Scott Odou  
 David Paligora  
 Ki Yoon Park  
 Jason Sato  
 Shin Tanaka

*Tuba*  
 James Curto  
 Masaru Lin  
 Hayden Silvester

*Percussion*

Isabella Butler  
 Eli Geruschat  
 Doyeon Kim  
 Felix Ko  
 Danial Kukuk  
 Nagaieng Lai  
 Mark Larrivee  
 Eli Reisz  
 Jeff Sagurton  
 Halle Hayoung Song  
 Lucas Vogelmann  
 Rohan Zakharia

*Wind Ensemble Graduate  
 Assistant*

Weizhe Bai  
 Rachel Brake

In a career spanning more than 60 years, **Carl Atkins** has distinguished himself as a woodwind specialist, conductor, composer, ethnomusicologist, administrator, consultant, and teacher, in “Jazz,” non-Western and Western European art music. Atkins received the Bachelor of Music in Woodwinds from Indiana University, the Master of Music in Conducting from the New England Conservatory, and the Doctor of Music in Conducting from the Eastman School of Music.

Atkins has performed with many noted musicians and organizations, including Gunther Schuller, George Russell, Bill Evans, Jaki Byard, and Herbie Hancock; the American National Opera Co., the Boston Opera Co., and the Swedish Radio Jazz Orchestra. As a composer, he has written for solo artists, chamber ensembles, symphony orchestras, wind orchestras, and documentary films.

Atkins was the founding director of the Jazz and Afro-American Music Department at the New England Conservatory, where he also taught woodwinds, African American Music History, and conducted jazz and wind ensembles. He has served as President and Executive Director of the David Hochstein School of Music & Dance (Rochester, NY), and Board Chair of the National Guild for Community Arts Education. In 1995 he became Co-Director (with noted Jazz bassist, Ron Carter) of the Thelonious Monk Institute at NEC. In 1999, Atkins was appointed Associate Dean for Advanced Studies at NEC. In 2002, he was appointed Professor of Music at the Rochester Institute of Technology, serving as Chair of the Department of Performing and Visual Arts from 2012 to 2018. Atkins retired as Professor Emeritus in 2018, and in 2021 was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the New England Conservatory.

**Jerry Leake** is a professor at Berklee College of Music, the Berklee Global Jazz Institute, and the New England Conservatory (Jazz and CMA). He is a founding member of Cubist, Natraj, Club d'Elf, and the Agbekor Drum and Dance Society. He has written eight texts on Indian, West African, and Afro-Cuban percussion, as well as articles for the Percussive Arts Society Magazine. Jerry is a student of Gary Burton (vibes), Godwin Agbeli, Alhaji Dolsi-naa Abubakari Lunna (Ghana), and Rajeev Devastli, and T.K. Ramakrishnan (India).

**Kwaku Kwaakye Obeng** (KK0) is a world-renowned Ghanaian drummer, singer, composer, dancer, and educator, who has performed and taught internationally for the past 30 years. He began drumming at age five with the Fontomfrom Ensemble, a royal court ensemble that performs for the Paramount Chief of the Aburi-Akuapim area in the Eastern region of Ghana. He was also a member of Ghana's National Arts Council Folkloric Company based in Accra. In addition to traditional West African music, he has performed and recorded a range of musical styles, such as highlife, funk, jazz, Latin, and reggae.

Mr. Obeng directs the Ghanaian Drumming and World Music Ensembles at Brown University. Previously, he taught at Wesleyan University, Rochester Institute of Technology, University of New Haven, and the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts. He has shared the stage with such luminaries as Roy Hargrove, Randy Weston, Max Roach, Anthony Braxton, Obo Addy, Fleetwood Mac, and Bootsy Collins. Mr. Obeng has given workshops at many colleges and universities across the U.S., and appeared at many venues and festivals in the U.S, Mexico, Brazil, St. Lucia, New Zealand, and Africa.

Kwaku has been featured on many recordings and compilations, most recently playing on the soundtrack for the Penratonix's *It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year*, for *Around the World for the Holidays* on Disney. KKO's music is available at Bandcamp and CDBaby.

### **William Drury**

#### *Conductor of Wind Ensembles*

William Drury is NEC's Conductor of Wind Ensembles and directs the NEC Symphonic Winds. He is also Music Director and Conductor of the Falmouth Chamber Orchestra and plays saxophone with the Jimmy Capone Big Band.

As a conductor, Drury has premiered works by composers such as Bell, Pinkham, Fletcher, Popkin, and Zorn; conducted orchestras at Harvard, Brown, and Brandeis universities and numerous Air Force bands throughout the nation; and has previously been MIT's Assistant Conductor of Orchestras, conductor of the Boston Conservatory's Wind Ensemble, assistant conductor of the Civic Orchestra of Boston, and conductor of the Auros Chamber Orchestra. As a jazz saxophonist, Drury has performed with Natalie Cole, the Coasters, Dave Stewart and MFB, and played lead tenor sax with the Bob Curnow Big Band. Before entering undergraduate studies, he worked for five years as a track laborer for the Burlington Northern Railroad.



## Upcoming Concerts at NEC

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**CMA DEPARTMENT:** “The Music of David Bowie”

Lautaro Mantilla, curator

*Wednesday, April 17, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

**SONATA NIGHT 51:** Music for Saxophone and Piano

a collaboration with the saxophone studio of Kenneth Radnofsky

*Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 6:30 p.m., Burnes Hall*

**NEC JAZZ ORCHESTRA,** Ken Schaphorst, conductor

Carl Atkins guest conductor - “The Music of Wayne Shorter”

*Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

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