

N|E|C

New England  
Conservatory



# Concert Program

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# Welcome to NEC!

I am thrilled to share New England Conservatory's 2024-25 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, which appears to be "Andrea Kalyn". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Andrea Kalyn  
President

Great Music for a Great Space:  
*Of Im/Mortals*

NEC Chamber Singers

Erica J. Washburn, conductor

with  
Rafe Schaberg, piano

Thursday, October 24, 2024  
7:30 p.m.  
NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

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**Ruth Crawford Seeger**  
(1901–1953)

*Chant, 1930*

Amy Li, soprano

**Johannes Brahms**  
(1833–1897)

*Schicksalslied, op. 54*

Rafe Schaberg, piano

**Veljo Tormis**  
(b. 1930)

*Raua needmine (Curse Upon Iron)*

Henri Youmans, tenor  
Johan Hartman, baritone (guest)  
Gustavo Barreda, drum

**Gustav Holst**  
(1874–1934)

from *Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda (Group 1)*  
**op. 26**

I. Battle Hymn  
II. To the Unknown God

Rafe Schaberg, piano

**Ilyas Iliya**  
(b. 1963)

*avoonan dbishmayya*

McLain Weaver, baritone

**Jenny Wilhelms**  
(b. 1974)

*Hjaðningaríma (Rhyme of the Warriors)*  
*variation on an Icelandic runic song*



For as long as I can remember I've been fascinated by the belief systems of various cultures, particularly by those we consider today ancient. Be it the major deities of the Mesopotamian pantheon, the religion and mythology the Aztecs clung to, the gods and goddesses of Norse paganism, even the reverence with which some honor the mechanical 'gods' of the Industrial Revolution, the human spirit feels compelled to connect to some kind of higher power seeking guidance, support, comfort, etc.

Over the past 25+ years I have been collecting choral works that I have found fascinating, not only because of the selected text(s), which are a direct connection and reflection of beliefs featured this evening, but also because of the insight paired with the compositional technique and musical brilliance of each composer.

Tonight's program opens with American musicologist, composer and daughter of a Methodist minister, **Ruth Crawford Seeger's** *Chant*, 1930. The octavo "projects collective unity through its emphasis on what Crawford identified as monotony—of timbre, tempo, and sound-world—...." 1 Through the use of duetting treble voices and seamless exchanges in the lower voices, the soprano soloist, through vowel experimentation, floats above all, creating an otherworldly, harmonically suspended listening experience.

**Johannes Brahms** needs little introduction, however the text of his *Schicksalslied*, which is taken from Friederich Hölderlin's epistolary novel, *Hyperion*, does. While the main character, Hyperion, was named after the ancient Greek Titan, the god of heavenly light and watchfulness, Hölderlin's *Hyperion* is an 18th century, disillusioned soldier who has spent time fighting for the liberation of Greece. Hölderlin often married semi-autobiographical information with Christian and classical literary and spiritual themes.

"Sumptuous and often muted, *Schicksalslied* comes close to the spirit of Brahms's *Requiem*. The text describes the serenity of the Greek deities, contrasted with the despair and suffering of humanity. Set in E-flat major, the prelude's broadly flowing melodies give way to a solo line for the altos that is repeated in four-part harmony and, indeed, the choral writing is largely homophonic. To contrast the lot of the gods with that of mankind, Brahms changes the meter from 4/4 to 3/4 and the tempo from *Langsam* (slow) to *Allegro*. Cross-rhythms depict water hurled from one rock to another, and the text finally ends on a note of plaintive surrender."

—J. Mark Baker, *Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra*, 2020

1 Hisama, Ellie M., 'Ruth Crawford, "To an Angel" from Chants for Women's Chorus (1930)', in Laurel Parsons, and Brenda Ravenscroft (eds), *Analytical Essays on Music by Women Composers: Concert Music, 1900–1960* (New York, 2022; online edn, Oxford Academic, 18 Aug. 2022),

*Curse Upon Iron (Raua Needmine)* is one of **Veljo Tormis'** most celebrated and adventurous works, written in 1972. "The idea of *Curse upon Iron*," Tormis wrote, "was in my mind for years, before I found a perfect form for it in an enchanting repetitive ostinato accompanied by a shamanic drum. I combined those elements with modern choral techniques. The idea of the composition derives from shamanism: in order to acquire power over a material or immaterial thing, one communicates knowledge to the object. Thus the describing and explaining of the birth of iron to iron itself forms a part of the shamanic process. The magical rite is performed to restrain the evil hiding inside iron. Each and every thing created by man may turn against man himself when used without respect towards the living. The lyrics composed in Estonian by August Annist were based on the ritual incantations of the Finnish epic *Kalevala*, to which modern-day Estonian poets Paul-Eerik Rummo and Jaan Kaplinski added elements from modern reality."

– Meurig Bowen ©, Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, 2018

Based on sacred Hindu texts and translated from the original Sanskrit by the British composer himself, **Gustav Holst** drew inspiration from Indian classical music for much of the music he wrote in the first years of the 20th century...Hinduism's sacred texts in the Rig Veda include more than 1,000 poems, composed between 1500 and 1000 B.C. and Holst sets 14 of these for mixed chorus, men's chorus, women's voices with harp, as well as a set for solo voice.

– Sonya Sutton

*Battle Hymn*, the opening of the two mixed-voice selections from Holst's First Group of the Rig Veda settings featured this evening, honors Indra, the Hindu God of war, rain and thunder. The second selection, *To the Unknown God*, is an homage to the Trimurti, the trinity of supreme divinity in Hinduism, comprised of Brahma (the Creator), Vishnu (the Preserver) and Shiva (the Destroyer).

**Ilyas Iliya**, composer of *avoonan dbishmayya*, writes:

In the midst of quietness, a solitary voice emerges in supplication. Surrounded by reverberating resonances, the voice soars and cries out. The Space of matter and spirit comes nearer and benevolently cradles the prayer with compassion while also protecting the prayer's solitude.

The Lord's Prayer is perhaps one of the most familiar of prayers, having been translated into every language. I chose to use Aramaic, the predominant language of Judea (539 BC–70 AD) and believed to be the language most often used by Jesus. Aramaic has over 3,000 years of history and was the language spoken in many empires in the Middle East. It is a member of the Semitic family of languages that includes Phoenician, Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac and Ethiopic. Today, it is still spoken by various groups including the Assyrian Christians, Maronite Christians (Lebanon), some Jewish communities, and Mandeans.

Closing the program is Finnish musician **Jenny Wilhelms'** arrangement of the Icelandic rímurkvæde *Hjaðningaríma*. Originally composed/arranged for Gjallarhorn, a Finnish band with its roots in the folk musics primarily of Finland and Sweden, Wilhelms later arranged an SSAA treble choral setting of the piece. In the spirit of folk music improvisation, the NEC Chamber Singers have reconceived Wilhelms' arrangement to include tenors and basses, giving the work a visceral and intense interpretation while remaining true to Wilhelms' original composition.

– Erica J. Washburn

## **Brahms**

### **Schicksalslied**

*Ihr wandelt droben im Licht  
Auf weichem Boden, selige Genien!  
Glänzende Götterlüfte  
Rühren euch leicht,  
Wie die Finger der Künstlerin  
Heilige Saiten.*

*Schicksallos, wie der schlafende  
Säugling, atmen die Himmlischen;  
Keusch bewahrt  
In bescheidener Knospe,  
Blühet ewig  
Ihnen der Geist,  
Und die seligen Augen  
Blicken in stiller  
Ewiger Klarheit.*

*Doch uns ist gegeben,  
Auf keiner Stätte zu ruh'n;  
Es schwinden, es fallen  
Die leidenden Menschen  
Blindlings von einer  
Stunde zur andern,  
Wie Wasser von Klippe  
Zu Klippe geworfen,  
Jahrlang in's Ungewisse hinab.*

Friedrich Hölderlein

### **Song of Fate**

You wander above in the light  
on soft ground, blessed genies!  
Blazing, divine breezes  
brush by you as lightly  
as the fingers of the player  
on her holy strings.

Fateless, like sleeping  
infants, the divine beings breathe,  
chastely protected  
in modest buds,  
blooming eternally  
their spirits,  
and their blissful eyes  
gazing in mute,  
eternal clarity.

Yet there is granted us  
no place to rest;  
we vanish, we fall -  
the suffering humans -  
blind from one  
hour to another,  
like water thrown from cliff  
to cliff,  
for years into the unknown depths.

*Translation copyright © 1995 by Emily Ezust,  
from the LiederNet Archive -<https://www.lieder.net/>*

## Tormis

### *Raua needmine*

*Ohoi sinda, rauda raiska!  
rauda raiska, rähka kurja,  
liha sööja, luu pureja,  
vere süütuma valaja!  
Kust said kurja, kange'eksi,  
üleliia ülbe'eksi?*

*Hurjuh sinda, rauda raiska!  
Tean ma sündi su sõgeda.  
arvan algust su õela!*

*Käisid kolme ilmaneitsit,  
taeva tütarta tulista,  
lüpsid maale rindasida,  
soo pääle piimasida.*

*Üks see lüpsis musta piima,  
sest sai rauda pehme'eda;  
teine valgeta valasi,  
sellest tehtud on teraksed,  
kolmas see veripunasta,  
sellest malmi ilma tulnud.*

*Ohoi sinda, rauda raiska,  
rauda raiska, rähka kurja!  
Ei sa siis veel suuri olnud,  
ei veel suuri, ei veel uhke,  
kui sind soossa solguteldi,  
vedelassa väntsuteldi.*

*Hurjuh sinda, rauda raiska!  
Tean ma sündi su sõgeda  
arvan algust su õela!*

*Susi jooksis sooda mööda,  
karu kõmberdas rabassa,  
soo tõusis soe jalusta,  
raba karu käpa alta,  
Kasvid raudased orased,  
soe jalgade jälile,  
karu käppade kohale.*

*Ohoi rauda, laukalapsi,  
rabarooste, pehme piima!*

### Curse Upon Iron

Ohoi cursed, evil iron!  
Ohoi, evil, cursed iron!  
Flesh consuming, bone devouring,  
spilling blood, devouring virtue!  
Whither comes your cruel cunning,  
haughtiness so overbearing?

Fie upon you, evil iron!  
Your beginnings reek of malice.  
You have risen from villainy.

From above the earth appeared  
fiery maidens in the heavens,  
heavily with milk aladen,  
spilling milk upon the marshes.

Black, the liquid from one maiden,  
turning into ductile iron.  
White milk flowing from the other,  
tempered steel from this arising.  
From the third a crimson liquid,  
cursed, rusty ore created.

Ohoi cursed, evil iron!  
Ohoi, evil, cursed iron!  
Then you were not high and mighty,  
not so mighty, not so haughty,  
when you slumbered in the swampland  
when you suffered in the marshes.

Fie upon you, evil iron!  
Your beginnings reek of malice.  
You have risen from villainy.

Then a wolf came running hither,  
bear arambling over yonder.  
Footprints stirring in the swampland,  
traces from the swamp arising  
giving rise to iron seedlings,  
in the shadows of the wolf prints  
in the traces of the bear tracks.

Ohoi wretched child of bogland,  
born of rust and milk of maidens!



*Kes su küll vihale käskis,  
kes pani pahalle tööle?*

*Surma sõitis sooda mööda,  
taudi talveteeda mööda,  
leidis soost terakse taime,  
raua rooste laukaalta.*

*leidis soost terakse taime,  
raua rooste laukaalta.*

*Nii kõneles suuri surma,  
taudi tappaaja tähendas:  
mäe alla männikusse,  
põllulla küla päralla,  
talu aitade tagana:  
siin saab surma sepipada,  
siia ahju ma asetan,  
siia tõstan lõõtsad laiad,*

*hakkan rauda keetamaie,  
raua roostet lõõtsumaie,  
rauda tampima tigidaks.*

*Rauda, vaene mees, värises,  
jo värises, jo võbises,  
kuulis kui tule nimeda,  
tule kurja kutsumista.*

*Ohoi sinda, rauda raiska!  
Ei sa siis veel suuri olnud,  
ei veel suuri, ei veel uhke,  
kui sa ääsilla ägasid,  
vingusid vasara alla.*

*...kui sa ääsilla ägasid,  
vingusid vasara alla.  
Taat see ahjulta ärises,  
halliparda vommi päältä:*

*Rauda rasvana venikse,  
ila kombel valgunekse,  
veerdes alla ääsiilta,  
voolates valutulesta.*

Tell me who made you so angry!  
Who set you to evil doings?

Death came riding through the marshes,  
plague along the wintry byways,  
til they found the iron seedlings  
resting in the lowly swampland.

Finding seedling steel in swampland  
rusty iron in a boghole.

Then great death began to utter,  
killer plague began intoning,  
in a pinegrove on a hillside,  
in a field behind the village,  
far beyond the farmer's granges.  
Here will be the fateful forging!  
Here a furnace I will fashion,  
mighty fanning bellows anchor!

Here I'll set the iron boiling!  
Blast the rusty ore to flaming!  
Pound the iron full of fury!

Iron quaked and iron quivered,  
quaked and quivered, tossed and trembled,  
when he heard the call for fire,  
heard the iron's angry summons.

Ohoi cursed, evil iron!  
Then you were not high and mighty,  
not so mighty, not so haughty!  
Moaning in the blazing furnace,  
whining under beating anvils.

...moaning in the blazing furnace,  
whining under beating anvils.  
Droned the old man on the oven  
groaned the greybeard from the furnace:

"Iron stretches out like tallow,  
dripping down like oozing spittle,  
flowing from the blazing furnace,  
seeping from the scalding fire.

*(The text continues on the following page. Please turn the page quietly.)*

*Veel sa rauda pehmekene,  
mis ka sind karastatakse,  
terakseksi tehtanekse?*

*Toodi ussilta ilada,  
Musta maolta mürgikesta,  
Ei see raud kuri olekski,*

*ilma usside ilata,  
mao musta mürkideta.  
Taat see ahjulta ärises  
Halliparda vommi päältä:*

*Varja nüüd vägeva Looja,  
kaitse kaunike Jumala,*

*Uued ajad. Uued jumalad.  
Kahurid, lennukid,  
tanid, kuulipildujad.*

*et ei kaoks see mees koguni  
hoopis tükkis ema lapsi,*

*Uus raud ja teras,  
uhiuued targad,  
täpsed, vägevad, tapjad,  
automaatsete sihtimiseadmetega  
tuumalaengut kandvad  
tõrjerelvadele kättesaamatud raketid.*

*Looja loodusta elusta,  
Jumala alustatusta.*

*Noad, odad, kirved,  
taprid, saablid,  
lingud, tomahawkid, bumerangid,  
ammud, nooled, kivid, kaikad  
küüned, hambad, liiv ja sool,  
tuhk ja tõrv, napalm ja süsi.*

*Uus ja kõige kaasaegsem tehnika,  
elektroonika viimane sõna,*

*valmis liikuma igasse punkti,  
kõrvalekaldumatult sihti tabama,  
peatama, rivist välja lööma, hävitama,  
võitlusvõimetuks tegema,  
haavama, teadmata kaotama,*

Yet the iron, soft and gentle,  
must be toughened, must be tempered,  
turned into steel defiant.

“Get the spittle from a serpent!  
Bring the venom from a viper!  
Iron would not harbour evil,

if it had no serpent spittle  
had no murky viper venom.”  
Droned the old man on the oven,  
groaned the greybeard from the furnace:

“Shelter us, Supreme Creator!  
Grant us safety, God Almighty,

Changing eras, modern deities.  
Cannons, airplanes, tanks, armed warfare.  
Cannons, tanks, airplanes.

so that mankind will to perish,  
future children be protected

New steel and iron,  
transformed into precise  
evil, powerful killers  
armed with automated guiding devices,  
armed with nuclear warheads  
useless against all defenses

from destruction, from extinction.  
ever part of God’s creation.”

Knives, spears, axes,  
halberds, sabres,  
stings, tomahawks, boomerangs,  
bows and arrows, rocks and clubs,  
claws and teeth, sand and salt,  
dust and tar, napalm and coal.

Innovations, far-reaching, technical,  
electrical, ultimate...

Ready to fly in any direction,  
stay undeflected, striking target forcefully,  
annihilate, knocking out of action,  
obliterate, render hopelessly impotent,  
render hopelessly impotent,

*tapma raua, terase,  
tapma raua, terase,  
kroomi, titaani, uraani, plutooniumi,  
ja paljude teiste elementidega,*

*Ohoi sinda, rauda kurja,  
mõõka sõja sünnitaja,  
rauda rähka, kulda kilpi,  
sina teras, nurja tõugu!*

*Hurjuh sinda, rauda raiska!  
Oleme ühesta soosta,  
uhest seemnest me siginud,*

*sina maasta, mina maasta,  
musta mulda me mõlemad,  
ühe maa pääl me elame,  
ühe maa see kokku same,  
maad meil küllalt siis mõlemal.*

Words after the Finnish national epic, *Kalevala*,  
by Augut Annist, adapted and augmented by  
Paul-Eerik Rummo and Jaan Kaplinski.

Killing, killing, with steel and iron!  
Killing, steel and iron, chromium,  
titanium, uranium, plutonium and  
multitudes of elements so war-like.

Ohoi cursed, evil iron!  
Sword, begetter of all warfare!  
Golden guardian of the swamp ore,  
steel that's kith and kin to evil.

Fie upon you, evil iron!  
You and I are from the same seed,  
from the same earth we have sprouted.

From the same good soil we harken,  
you and I, we share this planet,  
bound to share the earth together,  
earth that will us all recover,  
earth enough for all, forever.

*Translation Heli Kopti, Leena Mai Liivet, Ruth  
Veskimets, and Roman Toi.*

## **Holst**

### **Battle Hymn**

King of the earth and ruler of heav'n,  
Greatest of helpers, fearfullest of foes.  
Indra and Maruts fight for us!

Lord of all heroes, Great God of war  
Chief of the strong ones terrible in wrath!  
Indra and Maruts fight for us!

Ye too, O storm-clouds, follow his path  
Comrades in glory, Conquerors in fight!  
Indra and Maruts fight for us!

Now to our aid he rides like the wind,  
Chariot and horses thunder on their way.  
Indra and Maruts fight for us!

*(The text continues on the following page. Please turn the page quietly.)*

Hark to his voice that rings thro' the sky  
See how the earth doth tremble at the sound.  
Indra and Maruts fight for us!

And in reply our war-song we raise  
Lips of a thousand warriors now cry  
Indra and Maruts fight for us!

### **To the Unknown God**

He the Primal one,  
Begetter of the universe,  
Begotten in mystery,  
Lord of created things,  
Lord of heaven and earth.

Who is he?  
How shall we name him when we offer sacrifice?

He, thro' whom are the Primeval waters  
which were before aught else.  
From their depths arose Fire, the source of life.

Who is he?  
How shall we name him when we offer sacrifice?

He, upholder of earth and sea, of snow clad heights,  
encompassing the wide regions of air,  
Ruling the sky and realms of light.  
He whose word is eternal  
Giver of breath and life and power.  
Sole ruler of the universe,  
Dwelling alone in his grandeur:  
to whom the gods bow.  
Lord of Death,  
Whose path is life immortal!

Who is He?  
How shall we name him when we offer sacrifice?

Thou alone cans't fathom Thy mystery;  
There is none beside thee.

*Translations from the Sanskrit by Gustav Holst*

## ***avoonan dbishmayya***

*avoonan dbishmayya  
yitqaddash shmakh  
teetah malkootakh  
yehee sevyonakh  
heykama dbishmayya af bar3a*

*hab lan laHma dsoonqanan yawmana*

*washooq lan Hoveynan  
hekama daf Hnan  
shbaqnan lHayoveynan*

*wlat3eelan linisyoon  
illa pāsyan min beeshta*

*mittol dilakhhee malkoot  
ooHeyla ooteshbooHta  
Balam 3almeen āmeen.*

## ***Hjaðningaríma***

*Hörkkutröllin hræða geð, rimÞursarnir fórnir,  
dvergar álvar dröggar með, dísir völvur nórnir.*

*Min var draumsins merking Það, Málverk skapast  
gjörðu, ef ég fengi frelsistað, fundið hér á jörðu.*

*Lifir í minni lindar frey, líta vann í draumi Þá,  
skóginn inn nám brautir beygja, beztur manna og  
lundinn sá.*

*Hildur dóttir Högna Þá, hörmum slegin stundi,  
sóknar leikinn sér upp á, sat í einum lundi.*

*Hildur var í heftum ströng, hrifin kynngi nauða,  
vísi sjóð með völvu söng, vakti upp all dauda.*

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Our father in heaven  
holy be your name  
Let come your kingdom  
let be your desire  
even as in heaven on earth

give to us bread that we need daily

have compassion to us our offenses  
even as we also have  
had compassion for our offenders

let us not enter into forgetting  
but part us from error

because yours are dominion  
and authority praises  
from ages through ages amen.

## **Rhyme of the Warriors**

The gorse giants frighten the soul, the ancient  
frost giants, and the dwarves, elves, ghosts  
and Nornir.

I knew the meaning of the dream, that  
paintings would be created if I could find a  
place of freedom here on earth.

I live in my memory of the spring, I see the  
dream I saw then, entering the forest where  
its steady paths bend the best of men, and  
saw the grove.

Hildur daughter of Högna, stricken with  
misfortune, sat in that grove.

Hildur was stern in her fury, and fond of  
distress, so with a voluptuous song,  
awakened all the dead.

*(The text continues on the following page. Please turn the page quietly.)*



*Lyfter skildi ljós af grein leiftrar mild um var ma  
Þar sem Hildur eldar ein ástar vild og harma.*

Lyfter left a light from a branch that flashed  
gently around where Hildur cooks alone, in  
love and grief.

*Hörkkutröllin hræða geð, rimþursarnir fórnir,  
dvergar álvar dröggar með, dísir völvur nórnir.*

The gorse giants frighten the soul, the ancient  
frost giants, and the dwarves, elves, ghosts  
and Nomir.

*Stód í brekku stofninn hallt, stór fljót nokkurt  
viður, lima huldu landið allt, laufin, hengur niður.*

The tree stood leaning on a slope at a large  
river's side, its branches shadowed the entire  
land and its leaves hung down low.

*Skógaatröll um vindavöll, vakti sköll hin mestu,  
strauma föll ur storma höll, steiptust öll hin  
verstu.*

The forest giant uttered mighty bellows  
through the field of winds, enormous floods  
of water cascaded from the castle of storms  
(=sky).

*Hörkkutröllin hræða geð, rimþursarnir fórnir...*

The gorse giants frighten the soul, the ancient  
frost giants...

*Hildur dóttir Högna Þá, hörmum slegin stundi,  
sónar leikinn sér upp á, sat í einum lundi.*

Hildur daughter of Högna, then, stricken  
with misfortune, she sat in a grove.

*Hildur var í heftum ströng, hrifin kynngi nauða,  
vísi sjóð með völvu söng, vakti upp all dauda.*

Hildur was stern in her fury, and fond of  
distress, so with a voluptuous song,  
awakened all the dead.

*... dvergar álvar dröggar með, dísir völvur nórnir.*

... and the dwarves, elves, ghosts and Nomir.

Icelandic runic song

## **New England Conservatory Choruses**

Erica J. Washburn, Director of Choral Activities  
Bailee Green, Ying Ting Lena Wong, Henri Youmans,  
and Honghao Howard Zheng - graduate conductors  
Sally Millar, administrator

Hyojeong Ham, Rafe Schaberg, and Ashly Zhang, rehearsal pianists

## **NEC Chamber Singers**

Ryan Carpenter	Hyeona Kim	Rachel Solyn
Gia Cellucci	Amy Li	Matthew Tirona
Coco Chapman	Robert Moorman	Eduard Treshchev
Haijie Du	Olivia Nelson	Valentine Umeh
Kathryn Fernholz	Yuanwei Ni	Sunny Wang
Yuxuan Ge	Ogechi Victoria Okoye	McLain Weaver
Bailee Green	Kaier Pan	Ying Ting Lena Wong
Victor Ikpe	Christina Qu	Henri Youmans
Taitem Johnson	Rafe Schaberg	Honghao Howard Zheng

The **NEC Chamber Singers** is an auditioned ensemble, open to all majors at NEC, of 24-28 musicians who perform challenging works from all style periods, with a particular emphasis on 19th-21st century a cappella works. The choir rehearses three times a week and experiences choral music-making in an intimate ensemble setting, typically in the round. Each NEC Chamber Singer is a musician seeking to understand the principles and nuance of superior choral artistry so that they may be prepared for professional opportunities and expectations outside of the Conservatory. The choristers diligently prepare their music outside of scheduled rehearsals which makes the brief time spent together musically invaluable. The ensemble typically performs eight to ten times each academic year: on campus in the Conservatory's Jordan Hall and at off campus venues in and around greater Boston.

## **Erica J. Washburn**

*Director of Choral Activities*

Conductor and mezzo-soprano Erica J. Washburn has been Director of Choral Activities at New England Conservatory since 2009. Known for her student-centric approach to classroom and rehearsal instruction, and commitment to the performance of new music, she is the recipient of several outstanding alumni awards, including the distinguished honor of induction to the Westminster Choir College Music Education Hall of Fame.

As a conductor, Washburn has worked with Kansas City, MO based Cardinalis, the Yale Schola Cantorum, the East Carolina University Women's Chorale, and the Eastman Women's Chorus. She is a sought-after guest clinician who frequently leads

state and regional festival choruses, and spent five summers as a conductor and voice faculty member for the New York State Summer School of the Arts School of Choral Studies.

Under her direction the NEC choirs have been featured on several live and pre-recorded broadcasts, including the North Carolina based station WCPE Great Sacred Music, WICN Public Radio, and WGBH Boston. The choirs can also be heard in collaboration with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project on the BMOP/Sound recording *Paul Moravec: The Blizzard Voices* and, most recently, with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus and the Boston Symphony Orchestra on their Deutsche Grammophon recording of Shostakovich *Symphony No. 13* (due to be released on October 20)

Washburn's stage credits include appearances as Madame Lidoine in Francis Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Rebecca Nurse in Robert Ward's *The Crucible*, Mother/Allison in the premiere of Lee Hoiby's *This is the Rill Speaking* and others. Her recital and orchestral solo credits are numerous, and her live premiere from Jordan Hall of the late Richard Toensing's *Night Songs and Evening Prayers* with the New England Conservatory Symphonic Winds can be heard on Albany Records.

### **Upcoming Choral Music at NEC**

Visit [necmusic.edu](http://necmusic.edu) for complete and updated concert information

#### *Crawford Seeger/Ives Festival*

"An Evening of Chamber Music"

Ives *Third Violin Sonata* - Donald Weilerstein, violin; Vivian Hornik Weilerstein, piano; Crawford Seeger *Chant, 1930* - NEC Chamber Singers, Erica J. Washburn, conductor; Agócs *Sun and Shield* (US premiere), Melissa Reardon, viola; Katherine Balch *different gravities*; Ives *Piano Trio*, Trio Eris (NEC Piano Trio in Residence)  
**Friday, November 15, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Jordan Hall**

#### **NEC Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Winds and Symphonic Choir**

Joseph Higgins, guest conductor; William Drury, conductor  
G. Gabrieli *Canzon per Sonar Septimi Toni No. 2*; Bernstein *Profanation*  
Copland *Variations on a Shaker Melody*; Hailstork *American Guernica*  
Shaw *and the swallow*; Grantham *Southern Harmony*  
Gulda *Konzert fur Violoncello und Blasorchester*, Amit Peled '99, cello  
Stanford/Bettany *At the Abbey Gate*  
**Thursday, November 21, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall**

**NEC Symphonic Choir and NEC Youth Chorale**, Erica J. Washburn, conductor  
Duruflé *Requiem*, Thomas Handel, organ

**Thursday, December 5, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Church of the Covenant**  
**67 Newbury Street, Boston**

## **Upcoming Choral Music at NEC**

*–continued*

### **NEC Chamber Singers, Symphonic Winds, Navy Band Northeast**

*“Into the Holidays”*

*Monday, December 9, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

### **NEC Chamber Singers, Symphonic Winds, Navy Band Northeast**

*“Into the Holidays” (repeat) - Audio streamed on [wicon](#)*

*Wednesday, December 11, 2024 at 12:00 noon, Mechanics Hall, Worcester*

## **Other Upcoming Concerts at NEC**

### **Liederabend LXXIII, Cameron Stowe and Tanya Blaich, curators**

*“Robert and Clara Schumann in 1840”*

*Monday, October 28, 2024 at 7:00 p.m., Williams Hall*

### **Faculty Recital: Anthony Coleman**

*Tuesday, October 29, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall*

### **NEC Philharmonia, Stefan Asbury, guest conductor**

*Smetana *Vyšehrad* from *Má Vlast*; Tania León *Pasajes*;*

*Shostakovich *Symphony No. 11, “The Year 1905”**

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

### **NEC Jazz Residency: Theo Bleckmann, composer, singer**

*Wednesday, October 30, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Burnes Hall*

### **Faculty Recital: Minsoo Sohn, piano**

*Bach *Prelude and Fughetta in G Major, BWV 902*; *Goldberg Variations**

*Thursday, October 31, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

### **First Monday at Jordan Hall, Laurence Lesser, artistic director - 40<sup>th</sup> season**

*Bach *Trio Sonata in G Major, BWV 1039*; *Clarke Piano Trio (1922)*;*

*Schoenberg *Verklärte Nacht**

*Monday, November 4, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

### **NEC Philharmonia, Hugh Wolff, conductor**

*Lee Sukkot *Through Orion’s Nebula*; Schumann *Piano Concerto in A Minor, op. 54*,*

*Song Hyeon Kim, piano; Tchaikovsky *Symphony No. 2 “Ukrainian”**

*Wednesday, November 6, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

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