

Concert Program



First Monday at Jordan Hall

Forty-first Anniversary Season

Nicholas Cords, Soovin Kim, and HaeSun Paik, *co-curators*

Monday, October 6, 2025
7:30 p.m.
NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

Dmitri Shostakovich
(1906–1975)
arr. Lera Auerbach

from **24 Piano Preludes, op. 34**
No. 22: Adagio
No. 21: Allegretto poco moderato
No. 3: Andante
No. 9: Presto

Kim Kashkashian, viola
* Evren Ozel, piano

Sofia Gubaidulina
(1931–2025)

Dancer on a Tightrope (1993)

* Gabriela Díaz, violin
* Ji Yung Lee, piano

Maurice Ravel
(1875–1937)

Sonata for Violin and Cello, M. 73

Allegro
Très vif
Lent
Vif, avec entrain

Soovin Kim, violin
* Claire Deokyong Kim, cello

Intermission

Jules Massenet
(1842–1912)

Élégie

Jingdan Dani Zhang '26 AD, soprano
* Yeesun Kim, cello
* Ji Yung Lee, piano

Dmitri Shostakovich

Piano Quintet in G Minor, op. 57

Prelude: Lento – Poco più mosso – Lento

Fugue: Adagio

Scherzo: Allegretto

Intermezzo: Lento – Appassionato

Finale: Allegretto

* Kristopher Tong, violin

Joshua Brown '26 AD, violin

Kim Kashkashian, viola

* Yeesun Kim, cello

* Evren Ozel, piano

* *NEC alum*

Upcoming First Monday at Jordan Hall concerts

Haydn *Trio No. 43 in C Major*, Hob. XV:27

Schuller *Meditation*

Britten *Winter Words*, op. 52

Brahms *Clarinet Quintet*, op. 115

Monday, November 3, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.

Mozart *Grand Sextet Concertante* (arr. Schuller)

Monday, December 1, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.

Welcome to season forty-one of First Monday at Jordan Hall! This evening, our first as newly appointed co-curators, we celebrate both great music and our remarkable musical family here at New England Conservatory. We also pay special homage to First Monday's inimitable founder, Laurence Lesser.

Tonight is bookended by the music of **Dmitri Shostakovich**, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of his passing. Opening the program is a selection of his Preludes for solo piano, Op. 34 (1933), here arranged for viola and piano by composer/conductor/pianist Lera Auerbach. And we end with a performance of Shostakovich's enduring piano quintet (1940), one of the composer's most popular works within his lifetime, receiving the inaugural Stalin Prize. Shostakovich himself would have performed these works as pianist many times; the Preludes were intended as a vehicle to return to the concert stage following his unsuccessful attempt in the first Chopin Competition in 1927, while performances of the quintet were so in demand that Shostakovich's ability to compose was seriously curtailed for many months. If you're curious to open a time capsule, a 1940 radio broadcast recording features Shostakovich himself along with the Beethoven Quartet.

Hailing from the Republic of Tatarstan, **Sofia Gubaidulina** was cryptically advised by Shostakovich on the occasion of her graduation from the Moscow Conservatory to "stay on your mistaken path." Most likely delivered with a knowing wink! The message of this otherworldly work from 1993 is perhaps as meaningful as ever, the music communicating "a desire to break away from the confines of everyday life, inevitably associated with risk and danger." Having passed away in March, we celebrate her long lifetime of fearless creativity.

The two French works on the program celebrate the legacy of First Monday and the tireless efforts of our outgoing founder and artistic director. The **Ravel** Sonata for Violin and Cello was featured in one of the very early First Monday concerts with Larry and Arnold Steinhardt, then first violinist of the Guarneri String Quartet. Additionally, it is a work that was performed many times over the years by Larry and his late wife and beloved member of the NEC family, Masuko Ushioda. And we are told that a 1931 recording of **Massenet's** *Élégie* with the sublime Russian bass Feodor Chaliapin and British cellist Cedric Sharpe is a personal favorite, both for its extraordinary vocal performance and the formative association Chaliapin had with Larry's cello teacher, Gregor Piatigorsky. We offer both the Ravel and Massenet in special recognition of Larry.

But even more than the music, it is the performers on stage that speak to the enduring spirit of First Monday and Larry's legacy as performer and educator. First, the program features long-standing faculty relationships. Kim Kashkashian first met Larry before he came to NEC some five decades ago, and has been a familiar First Monday presence over the years. Yeesun Kim and Kris Tong have both been longstanding faculty colleagues, but Yeesun has the added distinction of also being a former student! Indeed, one of the important hallmarks of First Monday has been to amplify the great artistry of our students. So tonight, we invite another (more recent)

former student of Larry's, Claire Deokyong Kim, and we applaud her new appointment to the New York Philharmonic. Our Artist Diploma students Joshua Brown, Dani Jingdan Zhang, Evren Ozel ('25) are already making tremendous impact in the world. As are alums like Gabriela Díaz, who recently joined the Kronos String Quartet, and Ji Yung Lee, who shares her many talents right here in the Opera Studies Department.

We are honored to continue First Monday's tradition of great music and music-making on the Jordan Hall stage. Creating a shared space for our ever-expanding musical family and all of you, our beloved First Monday audience, is a joy and a privilege. Thanks for being here tonight and we look forward to welcoming you throughout the season!

— Nick, Soovin, HaeSun

Gubaidulina *Dancer on a Tightrope*

The title stems from a desire to break away from the confines of everyday life, inevitably associated with risk and danger. The desire to take flight, for the exhilaration of movement, of dance, of ecstatic virtuosity.

A person dancing on a tightrope is also a metaphor for this opposition: life as risk, and art as flight into another existence.

In this piece what interested me was to create the circumstances for the play of contrasts, where the precise dance rhythm of the violin overcomes its inclusion in the eventful course of the piano part.

For example, this is achieved by the deformation of this rhythm by playing on the strings of the piano with a glass tumbler; by the gradual transformation of these transparent harmonic sounds into aggressive fortissimo on the bass strings by the serrated bottom of the tumbler; by the menacing sound of this rhythm when it is performed by the pianist using metal thimbles and, finally – the main event in the form of the piece by the transition by the pianist from strings to keyboard.

All these events are overcome by the violinist in an ecstatic dance that ascends finally to the upper register of the instrument to tremolo double harmonics; risk, overcoming, the flight of fantasy, art, dance.

— Sofia Gubaidulina

Massenet *Élégie*

Ô doux printemps d'autrefois, vertes saisons,
vous avez fui pour toujours! Je ne vois plus le ciel
bleu; je n'entends plus les chants joyeux des
oiseaux! En emportant mon bonheur, Ô bien-aimé,
tu t'en es allé! Et c'est en vain que revient le
printemps! Oui! Sans retour, avec toi, le gai soleil,
les jours riants sont partis! Comme en mon cœur
tout est sombre et glacé, tout est flétri pour
toujours!

Louis Gallet

O sweet Spring of yesteryear, green seasons,
you have fled forever! I no longer see the blue
sky; I no longer hear the joyous songs of the
birds! You have fled, my love, and with you
has fled my happiness. And it is in vain that
the spring returns! For along with you, the
cheerful sun, the laughing days have gone! As
my heart is dark and frozen, so all is withered
for evermore!

*Translation © Richard Stokes, author of A French
Song Companion (Oxford University Press)
provided via Oxford International Song Festival
(www.oxfordsong.org)*

Artist biographies

Violinist **Joshua Brown** has been praised by audiences and critics worldwide for his “richness of sound, elegance of reading...commitment of every moment at the service of the work...” (*La Libre*). Winner of a 2025 Avery Fisher Career Grant, Joshua gained international attention after winning the 2nd Prize and both Audience Awards at the 2024 Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels. Other international competition successes include the 1st Prize at the inaugural 2023 Global Music Education International Violin Competition in Beijing, China, as well as the 1st Prize and Audience Award at the 2019 International Violin Competition of Leopold Mozart in Augsburg, Germany.

Joshua was first recognized for his debut performance with the Cleveland Orchestra, of which *ClevelandClassical* wrote, “Brilliantly played and expertly paced, Brown’s performance checked into every emotional corner... Brown was spell-binding throughout his entire time on stage.” Joshua has gone on to perform regularly with orchestras around the world, including the Munich Radio Orchestra, MDR Sinfonieorchester, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Civic Orchestra, East Coast Chamber Orchestra, Belgian National Orchestra, and Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège, among others, continually garnering praise from critics.

A passionate recitalist and chamber musician, Joshua has also appeared regularly in series such as Chicago’s Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series, Festival Musiq3 in Brussels, the Tchaikovsky Festival in Moscow, the ProMusica series in Mexico, the Matinée Musicale series in Cincinnati, the Jupiter Chamber Players series in New York City, and the North Shore Chamber Music Festival in Chicago.

Joshua is currently pursuing his Artist Diploma at the New England Conservatory of Music studying under Donald Weilerstein. He is grateful to be

playing an outstanding Nicolo Amati violin from Cremona, circa 1635-1640, on extended loan through the generosity of the Mary B. Galvin Foundation and the efforts of the Stradivari Society, a division of Bein & Fushi, Inc.

Gabriela Díaz began her musical training at the age of five, studying piano with her mother, and the next year, violin with her father. A childhood cancer survivor, Gabriela is committed to supporting cancer research and treatment as a musician. In 2004, she was awarded a grant from the Albert Schweitzer Foundation to organize a series of chamber music concerts in cancer units at various hospitals in Boston, this project is now a part of her chamber music organization, Winsor Music (winsormusic.org).

A fierce champion of contemporary music, Gabriela has worked closely with many significant composers, including Pierre Boulez, Joan Tower, Jessie Montgomery, Tania León, and Helmut Lachenmann. In 2024 Gabriela joined the Kronos Quartet, a revolutionary string quartet that has commissioned over 1300 new works and has performed all over the world, from Sesame Street to Carnegie Hall. Gabriela is also a member of The International Contemporary Ensemble, A Far Cry, Castle of Our Skins, Sound Icon, and appears frequently with other chamber music ensembles throughout the United States. Gabriela teaches at Wellesley College and the Longy School of Music at Bard College. Critics have acclaimed Gabriela as “a young violin master,” and “one of Boston’s most valuable players.” Lloyd Schwartz of the *Boston Phoenix* noted, “...Gabriela Díaz in a bewitching performance of Pierre Boulez’s 1991 *Anthèmes*. The come-hither meow of Díaz’s upward slides and her sustained pianissimo fade-out were miracles of color, texture, and feeling.” Others have remarked on her “indefatigably expressive” playing, “polished technique,” and “vivid and elegant playing.” Gabriela can be heard on New World, Centaur, BMOPSound, Mode, Naxos, and Tzadik records. Her recording of Lou Harrison’s *Suite for Violin and American Gamelan* was highlighted in the *New York Times* article, “5 Minutes That Will Make You Love Classical Music.” Gabriela is proud to be a core member of the team that created Boston Hope Music, bringing music to patients and frontline workers during the pandemic. Earlier this year, the Kronos Quartet collaborated with a star-studded cast of artists that included Ringo Starr, Allison Russell, Willie Nelson, Laurie Anderson, Ocean Vuong, and many others on a cover of Bob Dylan’s *A Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall*. This project was released to mark the 80th anniversary of the Trinity Test, the first detonation of an atomic weapon, and to address the ongoing global threat of nuclear war.

More info can be found at gabrieladiazviolin.com and kronosquartet.org.

Kim Kashkashian made history when she won the coveted Grammy Award - the first ever given to a violist – for her ECM recording of Ligeti and Kurtág solo viola works.

She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the Royal Academy of Music.

Hailed as “an artist who combines a probing, restless intellect with enormous beauty of tone,” Kim Kashkashian has forged a unique path as a performing and recording artist.

Ms. Kashkashian has appeared as soloist with the orchestras of Berlin, London, Vienna, Milan, Amsterdam, New York and Cleveland in collaboration with Eschenbach, Mehta, Welser-Moest, Kocsis, Dennis Russel Davies, Blomstedt, and Holliger.

She is a member of Trio Tre Voce, and the long-standing duo partner of pianist Robert Levin performing in the great halls of Vienna, Rome, Paris, Berlin, Munich, Tokyo, Athens, London, New York, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco and Philadelphia.

Ms. Kashkashian worked closely with György Kurtág, Krzysztof Penderecki, Alfred Schnittke, Giya Kancheli, and Arvo Pärt and commissioned compositions from Eötvös, Ken Ueno, Betty Olivero, Thomas Larcher, Lera Auerbach, Tigran Mansurian, and Toshio Hosokawa.

More than 25 solo albums on ECM label have garnered a Grammy, a Cannes Classical Award, the Edison Prize and the Opus Klassik Prize.

Ms. Kashkashian is Founder of “Music for Food”, a musician-led hunger relief initiative that offers a model for all musicians who wish to act as artist -citizens in their home communities. Music for Food has created more than one and a half million meals for people in need.

To learn more, please go to musicforfood.net or kimkashkashian.com

Born and raised in South Korea, **Claire Deokyoung Kim** began playing the cello at age six. Her principal teachers have included Laurence Lesser, Lluís Claret, and Myungwha Chung.

Kim earned her bachelor’s, master’s of music, and graduate diploma from the New England Conservatory, where in her second year she won the Concerto Competition and performed with the NEC Philharmonia at Jordan Hall. She has participated in numerous international festivals, including the Verbier Festival Soloists & Ensembles program in 2023, where she was awarded the Prix Jean-Nicolas Firmenich prize as the most promising young cellist. She is also a laureate of the 2022 Isang Yun Competition, receiving third prize.

An accomplished soloist and collaborator, Kim has appeared with leading orchestras including the Boston Pops, Atlantic Symphony Orchestra, Korean Symphony Orchestra, Gangnam Symphony Orchestra, Gwangju Symphony Orchestra, Prime Philharmonic Orchestra, Tongyeong Orchestra, and Suwon Philharmonic Orchestra, among others.

Since May of 2024, Kim has been a member of the cello section of the New York Philharmonic.

Soovin Kim enjoys a broad musical career, regularly performing Bach sonatas and Paganini caprices for solo violin, sonatas for violin and piano ranging from Beethoven to Ives, conducting Mozart and Haydn concertos and symphonies, and

performing world premieres of new works almost every season. When he was 20 years old Mr. Kim received first prize at the Paganini International Violin Competition. Among his many commercial recordings are his “thrillingly triumphant” (*Classic FM Magazine*) disc of Paganini’s demanding *24 Caprices*.

Soovin Kim is the founder and artistic director of the Lake Champlain Chamber Music Festival (LCCMF) in Burlington, Vermont. In addition to its explorative programming and extensive work with living composers, LCCMF created the ONE Strings program through which all 3rd through 5th grade students of the Integrated Arts Academy in Burlington study violin. The University of Vermont recognized Soovin Kim’s work by bestowing an honorary doctorate upon him in 2015. In 2020 he and his wife, pianist Gloria Chien, became Artistic Directors of Chamber Music Northwest in Portland, Oregon. The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center awarded Gloria Chien and Soovin Kim the Award for Extraordinary Service to Chamber Music for the more than 100 performances, lectures, interviews, and masterclasses they presented for online audiences around the world since the beginning of the COVID pandemic.

Mr. Kim has immersed himself in the string quartet literature for 20 years as the first violinist of the Johannes Quartet and now performs piano trios with Gloria Chien and cellist Paul Watkins in the Chien-Kim-Watkins Trio. Soovin Kim spent summers at and maintained a close relationship with the Marlboro Music Festival for 25 years. Mr. Kim is a full-time violin faculty member at NEC and also teaches at the Yale School of Music.

Cellist **Yeesun Kim** is a member of the Borromeo String Quartet, New England Conservatory’s quartet-in-residence. Hailed by the *New York Times* for her “focused intensity” and “remarkable” performances, Kim enjoys worldwide acclaim as a soloist, chamber musician and teacher. A founding member of the Borromeo String Quartet, Kim has performed in over 20 countries, and in many of the world’s most illustrious concert halls and festivals.

Kim has performed throughout Europe and Asia with the Borromeo, in duo with violinist Nicholas Kitchen, and as a soloist, including engagements with the Philharmonie in Berlin, the Tonhalle, the Opera Bastille, Wigmore Hall, the Concertgebouw, Suntory Hall and Casals Hall in Japan, the Saejong Cultural Center in Korea, Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Jordan Hall in Boston, the Library of Congress and Kennedy Center.

A much sought-after chamber musician, she has been invited to perform at many festivals, including Spoleto in the United States and Italy, Ravinia, Marlboro, Santa Fe, La Jolla, Rockport, Music at Menlo, the Prague Spring Festival, the Vancouver Chamber Music, the Stavanger Festival in Norway, the Evian and Divonne Festivals in France, and the Sejong Spring Festival in Korea.

As a member of the Borromeo Quartet since its inception in 1989, Kim has had extensive involvement with NPR’s “Performance Today”, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in New York, and the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Her radio and television credits also include “Live from Lincoln Center” and numerous

appearances on WGBH in Boston, Radio France, and NHK Radio and Television in Japan. Recording credits include *Bach Well-Tempered Clavier Book 2* (2021), Beethoven quartets Op. 131 and Op. 130 (2020), *Bach Well-Tempered Clavier Book 1* (2017), *Native Informant* - featuring music of Mohammed Fairouz (2013), *As it was, Is, And will be* - featuring music of Gunther Schuller (2011), String Quartets by Robert Maggio (2011), *Speak Like the People, Write Like the King* - featuring music by Steve Mackey (2009), *Soul Garden: The Chamber Music of Derek Bermel* (2002), *Beethoven: Serioso* (2002), and *Ravel: String Quartet and Sonata for Violin & Cello* (1999).

Kim currently serves on the faculty of New England Conservatory, in the cello and chamber music departments, and teaches in the summers at the Taos School of Music, Heifetz Institute and Ravinia Institute. She has also taught at the Four Seasons Chamber Music Festival, McGill International String Quartet Academy in Canada, the Suntory Hall Fellows Academy in Japan, at the Seoul National University and National University of Arts in Korea.

Kim is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, with advanced degrees from New England Conservatory. Her mentors include Laurence Lesser, David Soyer, Peter Wiley, Hyungwon Chang, and Minja Hyun as well as Felix Galimir, Louis Krasner and Eugene Lerner for chamber music studies.

She plays a Peregrino Zanetto cello, circa 1576, one of the oldest in the world.

Ji Yung Lee, hailed by *Gramophone* for her “beautiful playing” and “intimate internal dialogues,” is a versatile pianist and the 2nd Prize and Special Award winner of the Salieri-Zinetti International Chamber Music Competition in Italy. She has appeared at Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Weill Hall, and the John F. Kennedy Center. She currently serves as a music staff member at Boston Lyric Opera, where in March 2025 she received special recognition in *The Boston Globe* for stepping in on minutes’ notice to conduct the world-premiere production of *The Seasons* from the harpsichord after the music director was unexpectedly unavailable. Other recent highlights include serving as choral pianist for *Tosca* at Tanglewood, appearances in the Dame Myra Hess Concert Series, Rockport Chamber Music Festival, Harriman-Jewell Series as well as a video production for Tonebase with cellist Laurence Lesser and WQXR’s Christmas Concert with tenor Stephen Costello. Lee has collaborated with Victory Hall Opera, Boston Arts Song Society, and Juilliard Drama. She has participated as a vocal piano fellow at Music Academy of the West, Aspen Music Festival and School, SongFest, and Hawaii Performing Arts Festival and as a conducting fellow at Pehlivanian Opera Academy. Lee earned her master’s degree with academic honors from New England Conservatory, and Graduate Diploma from The Juilliard School.

American pianist **Evren Ozel** has been described as “an absolute wow” (*Third Coast Review*) and “an artist capable of lifting everyone to another level” (*LaScena Musicale*), praised for his blend of technical mastery and compelling artistry. He is the Bronze Medalist of the 17th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition (2025), where he also received the special prize for the Best Performance of a Mozart Concerto. Ozel has performed extensively throughout the United States and internationally, and is

the recipient of a 2023 Avery Fisher Career Grant and a 2022 Salon de Virtuosi Career Grant. He is currently represented by Concert Artists Guild as an Ambassador Prize Winner of the 2021 Victor Elmaleh Competition.

Since making his orchestral debut with the Minnesota Orchestra at age 11, Ozel has appeared as soloist with the Cleveland Orchestra, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, and Jacksonville Symphony, performing under conductors such as Marin Alsop, Carlos Miguel Prieto, Hugh Wolff, and Ruth Reinhardt. His debut album—Mozart concertos recorded with the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra and conductor Howard Griffiths—was released in 2025 on Alpha Classics.

Highlights of Ozel's 2025–26 season include solo recitals for Portland Piano International, the Chopin Society of Minnesota, and Chamber Music Detroit. He has previously performed for the Harvard Musical Association, La Jolla Music Society, Cal Performances, and The Gilmore. A laureate of both the Cleveland International Piano Competition and the Dublin International Piano Competition, Ozel gave recitals at Salle Cortot (Paris) and Brandenburgische Sommerkonzerte (Germany) during the 2024–25 season as part of a series of international performances resulting from the Cleveland Competition, and will continue with an appearance at the Vilnius Piano Festival (Lithuania).

A committed chamber musician, Ozel collaborates with artists including David Finckel and Wu Han, Stella Chen, Zlatomir Fung, Paul Huang, Kim Kashkashian, Daniel Phillips, and Marcy Rosen. He spent four summers at the Marlboro Music Festival, and is currently a 2024–27 Bowers Program Artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, with upcoming appearances at Alice Tully Hall. He will also perform in 2025–26 for the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society.

Ozel resides in Boston and holds bachelor's, master's, and Artist Diploma degrees from the New England Conservatory, where he studied with Wha Kyung Byun. His other important mentors include Jonathan Biss, Imogen Cooper, Richard Goode, András Schiff, and Mitsuko Uchida.

Kristopher Tong has been hailed as a performer of “exceptional insight and creative flair” (*Boston Globe*). As second violinist of the Borromeo String Quartet, he has performed in hundreds of concerts across the United States and around the world to critical acclaim. Recent engagements include appearances at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, including premieres of works by Aaron Jay Kernis and Sebastian Currier.

In addition to his concertizing with the Borromeos, Tong is an active recitalist, chamber musician, and teacher. A member of the violin and chamber music faculties at the New England Conservatory, he also serves as Co-Chair of the String Department. Tong has taught and performed at numerous festivals, including the Taos School of Music, Four Seasons Chamber Music Festival, Music@Menlo, and at the Heifetz Institute. Tong has performed on such radio programs as NPR's “Performance Today,” WGBH's “Classical Performance,” and was featured on WGBH's “Classical Connections” in a series entitled “Why Mass.?”

From 2002–2004, Tong was Principal Second Violin with the Verbier Festival

Orchestra, with whom he toured throughout Europe, Asia, and the Americas. He has played under the baton of some of the world's premier conductors, including James Levine, Christopher von Dohnanyi, Kurt Masur, Mstislav Rostropovich, Wolfgang Sawallisch, and Charles Dutoit. He has also performed with Mizayaki Festival Orchestra in Japan, the New York String Orchestra, and as a guest soloist with the Verbier Chamber Orchestra under Dmitri Sitkovetsky and Yuri Bashmet. Tong was also a member of the original cast of *Classical Savion* at the Joyce Theater in New York City, a collaborative project with tap dancer Savion Glover.

Kristopher Tong began his violin studies in a public elementary school program in Binghamton, New York. He currently resides in Brighton, Massachusetts with his wife, pianist Miki Sawada, and their dog Shakira. He is a 2:44 marathoner.

Soprano **Dani Jingdan Zhang** made her debut with Opera Hong Kong as Norina in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* at Hong Kong City Hall, followed by an acclaimed performance as Musetta in Puccini's *La Bohème* at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Grand Theatre. Her other operatic roles include Poppea (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*), Ruth Baldwin (*Later the Same Evening*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*), Cleopatra (*Giulio Cesare*), and Nedda (*I Pagliacci*). She has also performed partial roles such as Nannetta (*Falstaff*), Micaëla (*Carmen*), Euridice (*Orfeo ed Euridice*), and Cunegonde (*Candide*). She most recently sang Agnes in Ulysses Kay's *Frederick Douglass* with Odyssey Opera and Valencienne in Franz Lehár's *The Merry Widow* with Opera Hong Kong. In 2025-2026 season, her upcoming engagements include performing the role of Zhu Yingtai in the world premiere of contemporary opera *The Butterflies* with Sichuan Symphony Orchestra, Adina in *The Elixir of Love*, and Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* at New England Conservatory.

As a concert soloist, she made her debut under the baton of Yu Long with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil), singing the soprano solo in Fauré's *Requiem* at HKU MUSE. During the HK Phil's 50th anniversary season, she was invited to perform in Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Sylvia Chang and Lio Kuokman, and later appeared as soprano soloist in Poulenc's *Gloria* with Chloé Dufresne. In addition, Dani performed Bach's *Mass in B minor* in collaboration with the Hong Kong Bach Choir conducted by Jerome Hoberman. In Macao, she performed Bach's *Easter Oratorio* and excerpts from Handel's *Messiah* with the Macao Orchestra and Learners Chorus. She also featured in the Opera Hong Kong 20th Anniversary Gala Concert and performed as soprano soloist in *Carmina Burana* with the Sichuan Symphony Orchestra under Shinik Hahm at the Sichuan Cultural and Arts Center. Recently at NEC, Zhang appeared as soprano soloist in the Philharmonia's performance of Mahler's *Symphony No. 4* under Hugh Wolff.

Dani has been recognized in both international and national competitions, winning the Finalist Award at the 2022 Donizetti International Singing Competition (Italy), the Gold Award at the 2023 PREMIA International Young Artists Music Festival Competition—which also invited her to perform at the Prizewinners Gala Concert at Carnegie Hall in New York—and First Place at the 14th Chinese Golden Bell Award for Music (Hong Kong competition area). A star of Radio Television

Hong Kong's 2019 Young Music Makers, she has been featured in numerous television and radio productions, including The Sound of Art, The GBA Concert Hall, and the interview series Musicians' Terrace. As an emerging artist, she performed at the Beijing Great Wall Cultural Festival and the Shenzhen Cultural Center.

Dani is currently pursuing an Artist Diploma in Opera Studies at NEC under the tutelage of Professor Bradley Williams. Apprenticed under Professor Nancy Yuen, she received her bachelor's (Honours) and master's degrees with distinction from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. She has participated in masterclasses led by renowned artists including Susan Graham, Diana Damrau, Sumi Jo, José Carreras, Nelly Miricioiu, Graham Johnson, Heidi Stober, Shenyang and Warren Mok.

Upcoming Concerts at NEC

all programs subject to change

Visit necmusic.edu for complete and updated concert information

Tuesday Night New Music

New music by NEC student composers, performed by their peers

Tuesday, October 7, 2025 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall

NEC Chamber Orchestra, Donald Palma, artistic director

Strauss *Sextet for Strings* from *Capriccio*; Mozart *Serenade No. 6 in D Major*;

Weinberg *Symphony No. 7*, op. 81

Wednesday October 8, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Symphonic Winds, Sylvia Alimena, guest conductor

Works by Arnold, Danielpour, Hazo, Ticheli, Jager, Broughton, Holst, and Thomas

Thursday, October 9, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

Faculty Recital: Max Levinson, piano

Schubert *Sonata in A Major*; Mussorgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition*

Friday, October 10, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Composers' Series: Arthur Berger Memorial Concert

Sid Richardson, curator; Berger *Five Settings of European Poets*; Agócs *Hyacinth Curl*;

Mallia *Alone*; Lister *Ordinary Heartbreaks and Other Poems of Michael Blumenthal*;

Richardson *Inscribed on a Lintel*; Richardson *How Do I Love Thee?*

Wednesday, October 15, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Jazz Orchestra, Ken Schaphorst, director

"Dreamkeeper: Music of Carla Bley"

Thursday, October 16, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

Upcoming Concerts at NEC

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Tuesday Night New Music

New music by NEC student composers, performed by their peers

Tuesday, October 21, 2025 at 8:00 p.m., Burnes Hall

Liederabend LXXVII, JJ Penna, curator

Wednesday, October 22, 2025 at 6:00 p.m., Williams Hall

NEC Symphony, David Loebel, conductor

Tower Sixth Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman; Haydn Symphony No. 85, “La Reine”;

Franck Symphony in D Minor

Wednesday, October 22, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

Perkin Opera Scenes

Thursday, October 23 & Friday, October 24, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.,

Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre

Sonata Night 57, Pei-Shan Lee, director

Thursday, October 23, 2025 at 6:30 p.m., Burnes Hall

NEC Chamber Singers, Erica J. Washburn, conductor

“Beyond Boundaries and Borders”, works focusing on refugee issues

and awareness, police brutality, victim recognition, and more by Shaw,

von Bingen, Thompson, Curenton-Simpson, Bussewitz-Quarm, and Boulanger

Thursday, October 23, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

Faculty Recital: Cameron Stowe

Monday, October 27, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

Faculty Recital: Borromeo String Quartet

Tuesday, October 28, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Philharmonia, Hugh Wolff, conductor

Bacewicz Overture; Shostakovich Piano Concerto No. 1;

Prokofiev Symphony No. 5 in B-flat Major, op. 100

Wednesday, October 29, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Trombone Choir, James Markey, director

Tuesday, November 4, 2025 at 6:00 p.m., Burnes Hall

Upcoming Concerts at NEC

—continued

NEC Philharmonia, NEC Symphonic Choir, David Loebel, conductor

Mozart *Symphony No. 31, “Paris”*; Debussy *Nocturnes*;

Boulinger *Psaume 129*; Poulenc *Gloria*

Wednesday, November 5, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Composers’ Series: “Home”

Sophia Szokolay ‘19, ‘25 DMA, violin and Sid Richardson, co-curators

An exploration of cultural identity and belonging, shaped by the experiences of migration and the quest for a sense of home in the midst of dissonance – works by Sam Wu, Marc Migó, Richardson, Mallia, Sanlikol, Minakakis, and Gandolfi

Thursday, November 6, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Undergraduate Opera Seminar: Opera Scenes, Michael Meraw, director

Thursday & Friday, November 6 & 7, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.

Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre

NEC Chamber Orchestra, Donald Palma, artistic director

Stravinsky *Apollon musagète*; Dvořák *Serenade in E Major*, op. 22

Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

BSO Prelude: What I Hear - Tania León

Thursday, November 13, 2025 at 5:30 p.m., Brown Hall

Sonata Night 58, Pei-Shan Lee, director

Thursday, November 13, 2025 at 6:30 p.m., Burnes Hall

NEC Wind Ensemble, William Drury, guest conductor

Minakakis *Vykinon* (world premiere), Stephen Drury and Yukiko Takagi, piano

Mahler *Songs of a Wayfarer*; Huling *Blood Moon: Concerto for Tenor Saxophone*

and Wind Ensemble; Heiss/Wiese *A Place in New England: Prelude for Auburndale*;

Stanford *Symphony No. 5* (mvts. 3, 4)

Thursday, November 13, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Baroque Orchestra, Guy Fishman, director

Monday, November 17, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Brown Hall

NEC Festival: “Chamber Music + Sonatas: Schuller and the Spirit of Collaboration”

Ken Schaphorst and Ara Gregorian, co-curators

Monday, November 17, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan 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;
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 2025-26 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 the performances of our students, faculty, and guest artists uplift you.

Above all, we thank you for supporting our students as they cultivate their artistry and contribute to the world through music.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

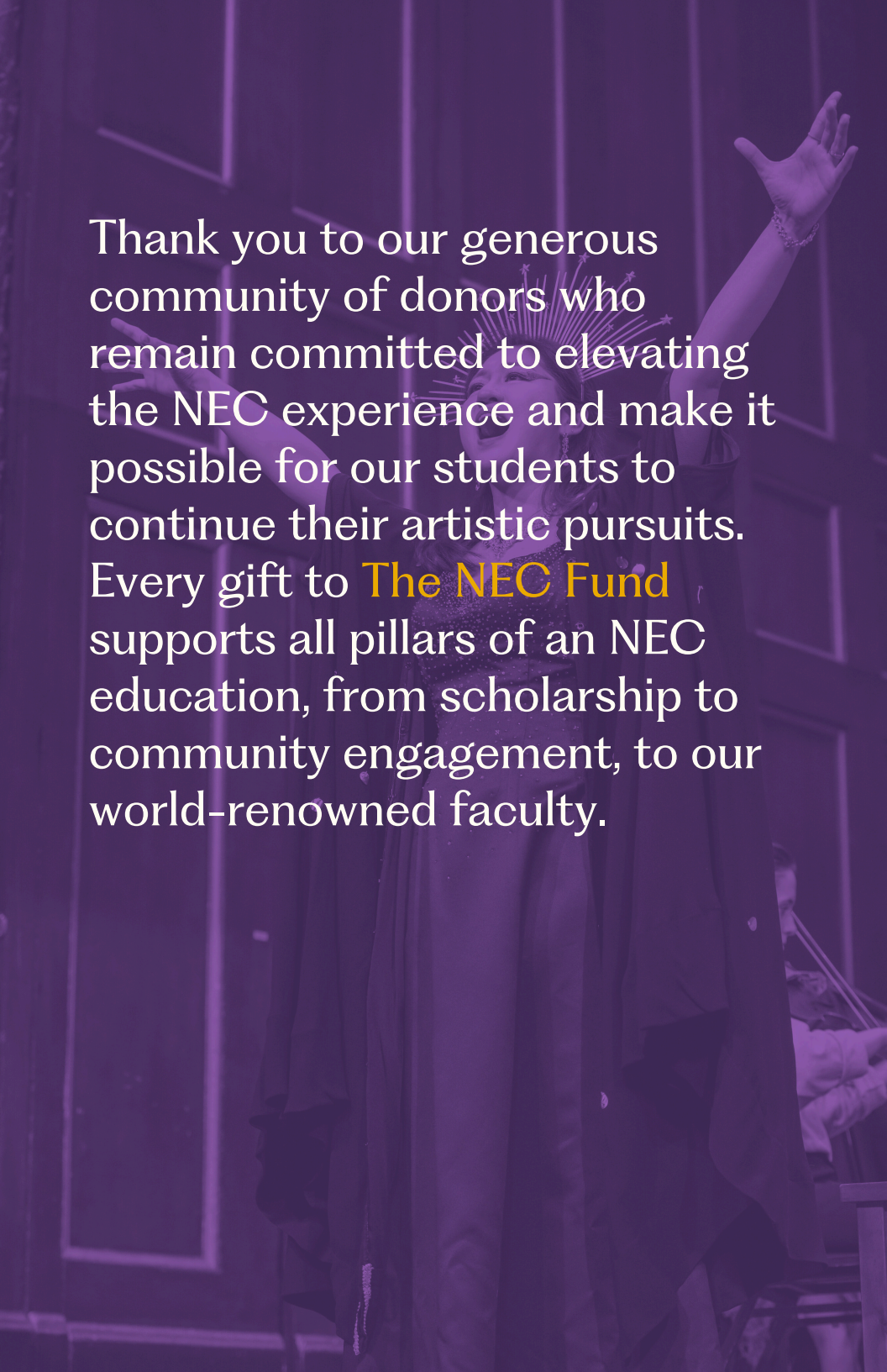
Andrea Kaylin
President

A large orchestra is performing in a grand hall with ornate wood paneling and a high ceiling. The stage is lit with warm, golden light. A conductor in a dark suit stands on the right, facing the orchestra. A soloist in a bright red jacket and dark pants stands on the left, holding a microphone. The audience is seated in the foreground, seen from behind. A large white rectangular box is overlaid on the upper half of the image, containing text.

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A woman in a black dress with a starburst headpiece, arms raised in a celebratory gesture, against a purple background.

Thank you to our generous community of donors who remain committed to elevating the NEC experience and make it possible for our students to continue their artistic pursuits. Every gift to **The NEC Fund** supports all pillars of an NEC education, from scholarship to community engagement, to our world-renowned faculty.

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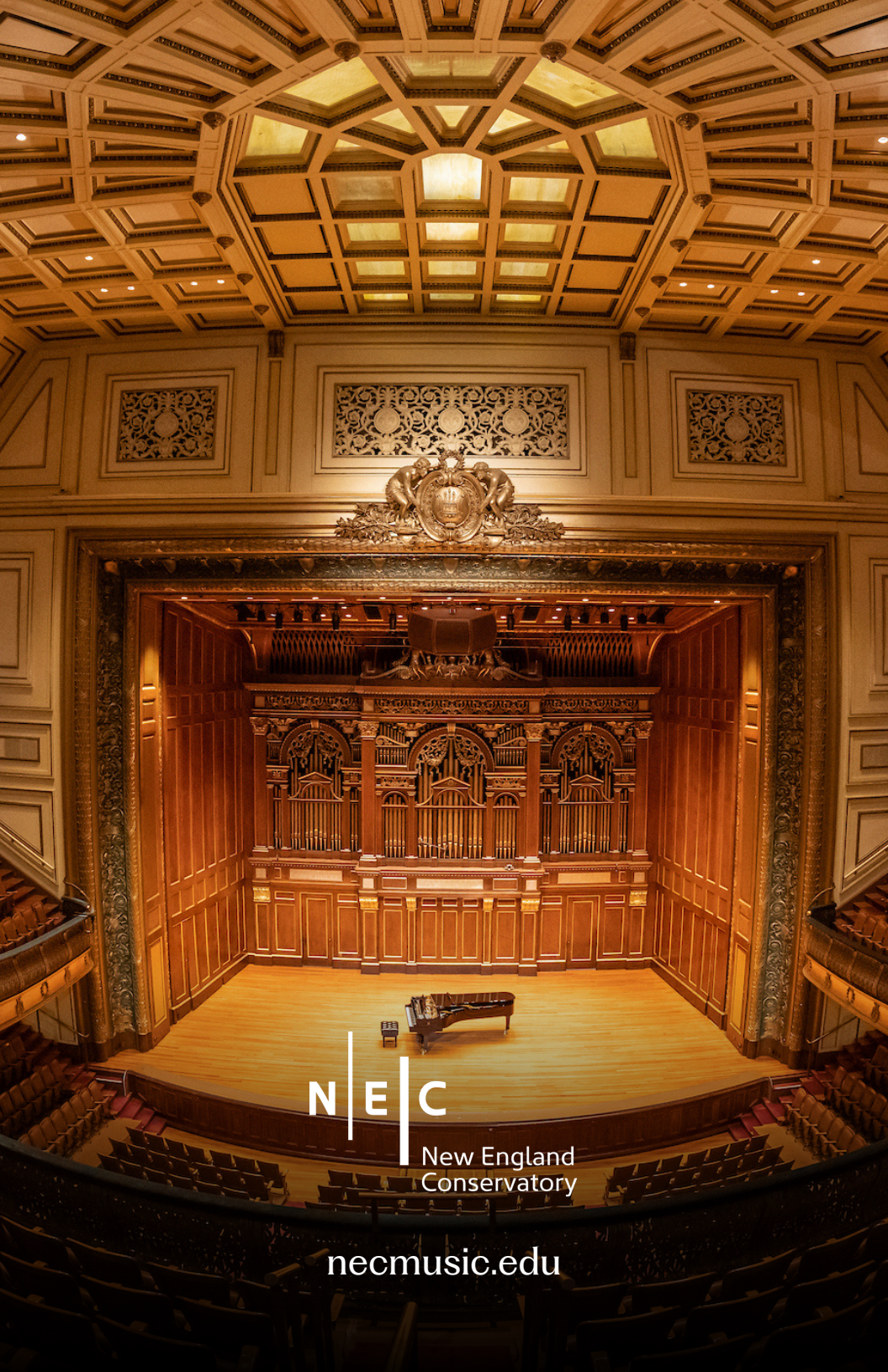
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