

Concert Program



NEC Festival

Contemporary Musical Arts Today: A Global Vision Realized

Produced by Hankus Netsky and Eden MacAdam-Somer

Tuesday, November 18, 2025 7:30 p.m. NEC's Jordan Hall

NEC Festival 2025

This performance is part of the NEC Festival, which will celebrate the legacy of Gunther Schuller, president of NEC between 1967 and 1977 with a week-long series of concerts and discussions. In addition to reflecting on his work as a composer, conductor and scholar, the legacy of Gunther Schuller's influence on NEC will be demonstrated through a range of collaborative presentations.

Learn more about the NEC Festival here.

PROGRAM

Introductory Music:

Ran Blake's *The Spiral Staircase* (1980, Arista Novus)
featuring Ran Blake, piano with members of the Third Stream department
Hankus Netsky, oboe; Paul Meyers, electric guitar, electric bass; Jon Hazilla,
George Schuller, drums; Daryl Lowery, saxophones; Chris Pasin, Spencer MacLeish,
Ingrid Monson, Frank London, trumpets; Ed Jackson, alto saxophone;
Christopher Brooks, electric guitar; Pat Hollenbeck, percussion;
Norman McWilliams, trombone, and special guests John Heiss, flute and Ted Curson, trumpet

Hildegard von Bingen

(1098–1179) Caroline Kuhn Gaudete

Anju Madhok, Carla Kihlstadt, Cristi Catt, Eden MacAdam-Somer, Farayi Malek,

Kayden Carter, Lucy Geller,

Keilani Bolhuis, Stella Sokolowski, voice

Rejoice, friends, the age-old snake is bound!

Lavtacı Andon/

Hüseyni Saz Semaisi/Dere Geliyor Dere

(d.1925) Anonymous

Recomposed by

Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol

(b. 1974)

Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol, Renaissance 17, oud Mal Barsamian, clarinet

Mal Barsamian, clarinet Mark Tipton, trumpet

James Heazlewood-Dale, electric bass

George Lernis, drums

Yontev Ehrlich, Traditional

Yosef Mokir Shabes

NEC Jewish Music Ensemble
Hankus Netsky, director
Gitty Jakubowicz, voice
Lucy Geller, voice
Kayden Carter, flute
Jake Wise, clarinet
Miles Kennedy, violin
Hangyeol Cho, cello
Peter Vazquez, piano
Andy Messier, guitar
Bug Jaffe, bass
Yilin Chen, marimba

Samandar Dehghani '26 MM

Three Drummers Walked into a Bar

Samandar Dehghani, daf Yilin Chen, Chinese percussion Moises St. Fort, drums

Ornette Coleman

(1930-2015)

Ornette Plays the Blues

Peter Vazquez, piano Bug Jaffe, bass

Cecil Taylor

(1929-2018)

African Violets from Looking Ahead! (1958)

Elfie Shi, vibraphone Kazuki Tsubakida, piano Cosmo Lieberman, electronics

Lee Miller '27 GD Rebecca Tillinghast

That Old Remember When

Tinley Gorman, Andy Messier, voice Keilani Bolhuis, fiddle, voice Lee Miller, guitar

Avi Randall '27 MM

Curiosity Killed the Cat

(based on Gunther Schuller's "Magic Row")

Avi Randall, piano

Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton

Frog-I-More

(1890-1941)

Itay Dayan, clarinet Anthony Coleman, piano Paul July Joseph, drums

Brief Remarks: President Andrea Kalyn

Carl Sigman

Crazy, He Calls Me

(1909–2000)

Lyrics by Bob Russell arr. Sam Srithongkum

Stella Sokolowski, voice, guitar Sam Srithongkum, piano Othniel Privat, electric bass Paul July Joseph, drums

Sweet Honey in the Rock

Breaths

CMA Department and Friends

Samandar Dehghani

Nagme-Isfahan

Crossroads Ensemble

Samandar Dehghani, voice, tar

Bella Navarro, violin Sam Srithongkum, piano Solomon Caldwell, bass Nick Charlton, drums

David Warren Harewood '26 GD

Ruby Row

(based on Gunther Schuller's "Magic Row")

David Harewood, piano Nick Charlton, drums

Frantz Casseus arr. William Wei

Merci Bon Dieu

Woody Pierre, Nick Abraham, trumpet Flynn Ewer. French horn Peter Vazquez, tenor saxophone Hankus Netsky, alto saxophone Julian Quinones, Zixuan Weng, trombone Isaias Fabian, tuba Hao Tian, Tom Chu, guitar

This Haitian song, made popular by Harry Belafonte, is a favorite of our department's emeritus Chair, Ran Blake.

von Bingen, Kuhn Gaudete

Polymath Hildegard von Bingen was a prolific composer, theologian, mystic visionary, herbal healer, scientist, poet, and more. She was a respected figure who advised popes, kings, and bishops, conducted preaching tours throughout Germany (at a time when women were banned from interpreting scripture), and in 2012 was officially named a Doctor of the Catholic Church. Tithed to the church as a child, she eventually became the Abbess of a community of wealthy women and, through her celebrity status, established an abbey for them in which, on feast days, they adorned themselves in white robes and jewels as "brides of Christ." She was a fascinating woman, unafraid of speaking her mind to authority figures and eager to share her revolutionary thoughts with the world on everything from spirituality to medicine. During her lifetime, she made careful plans to ensure the preservation of her works, which is why we have both music and text for her sacred musical drama the *Ordo Vitutum* (Order of the Virtues), the only medieval musical drama with both text and music attributed to a named composer. In the *Ordo*, a soul struggles between the Devil and salvation, aided by 17 Virtues, who redeem the soul and bind the Devil.

The composition that we are singing tonight was written by NEC alumna singer/songwriter/music director Caroline Kuhn, based on a line of chant from the end of the *Ordo* - "Rejoice friends, the age-old snake is bound!" I can't imagine a better way to begin this program than by calling in the good spirits with music written by these two incredible women.

— *Eden MacAdam-Somer*

Andon/ Sanlıkol Hüseyni Saz Semaisi/Dere Geliyor Dere

Among the many things Gunther Schuller gave to NEC, one of the most meaningful was the presence of distinguished musicians and scholars who represented microtonal music traditions from around the world. In 1974, Schuller brought to NEC the highly respected Hindustani music performer and scholar Peter Row—who would later serve as both Dean and Provost. A decade later, in 1984, Peter brought in Robert Labaree, an ethnomusicologist who reconstructed the long-forgotten Ottoman

harp, the *çeng*. Together, Row and Labaree invited numerous artists from around the world to NEC, and often performed alongside them, showing our community that excellence in musicianship—as performer-scholars—was equally possible in non-Western musical traditions as well.

Meanwhile, when Gunther Schuller hired Joe Maneri in 1970, a different side of microtonality entered NEC. Hearing Joe play traditional Greek music on the clarinet was truly unforgettable, but Joe also offered something entirely different: for decades: he taught a course on microtonal music that was not grounded in modal non-Western traditions, but instead explored dividing the octave into more than twelve equidistant pitches—approaching microtonality from a contemporary Western perspective.

I studied with all of these masters. They were amazing scholar-performers—and, just as importantly—genuinely kind people. I learned so much from each of them, and I will never forget the email Peter wrote to me on February 27, 2018, just a month before he passed away. In that email, he essentially asked me to continue their legacy at NEC... Seven years have passed since then, and I am deeply grateful to the CMA Department for giving me the opportunity to represent the legacy of these masters tonight. To honor them, we will begin with an Ottoman/Turkish traditional piece, reflecting the non-Western musical traditions they so passionately represented. We will then transition to a folk song I recomposed, in which I will perform on my digital microtonal keyboard, the SANLIKOL Renaissance 17 (Patent 12,334,044).

- Mehmet Sanlıkol

Erlich, traditional Yosef Mokir Shabes

Gitty learned this song with lyrics from the legendary Hassidic folk poet and singer, Yontev Ehrlich, when she was very young, growing up in Hassidic Williamsburg, Brooklyn. My arrangement is based on Lev Cogan's arrangement of *Dos Freylekhe Shnayderl* (The Happy Tailor), by Soviet Jewish poet Yosef Kerler, a song that uses the same Bessarabian-Jewish folk melody.

— Hankus Netsky

Hear my story, dear friends,
There was once a very poor man.
His name was Yosef, who honored the Sabbath.
He wore old, worn clothes,
And ate bread with water,
And saved all his money
Ay, ay...

The children and his wife Were happy just the same. The house was truly empty, But everyone already knew, That Thursday morning early, He'd tell his wife, full of joy: "Hurry, my good wife Take the basket and go, Take all the money we own, And buy whatever you wish—The finest fish, Big, fat, and fresh!" Ay, ay...

And Friday night,
He sang songs full of grace:
"A woman of valor, who can find?"
There is truly nothing like the sabbath.
And a little farther away,
Right across from Yosef's little house,
Stood a palace, locked and grand.
There lived a man of great wealth
who was not fond of Jews,
Who had lived many years—
Perhaps eighty or more.
He was stingy
He wouldn't look at a poor man.
It didn't take long—

The wealthy man fell very ill. And in the middle of the night, They brought a stargazer. And the man said to him: "All that you own Will be inherited By that pious Jew across the street Who keeps the Sabbath." The wealthy man heard this And was greatly troubled. He brought a buyer, And sold everything he had that night, And with all the money He bought a diamond, The largest in the world. Ay, ay...

Then he left. And sailed to a foreign shore. On the bridge, a wind arose— It caught his hat, And flung it into the sea. A fish came. Gave the water a swish, Fishermen caught it, And hauled it into their net. And Friday afternoon, They brought the fish to shore. They searched here and there, But no buyer could be found. Said Reb Yosef, "What a pity! My wife has no strength left." Said his wife, "Don't worry at all -I still have one empty pot." He cut open the fish's belly— And she began to cry out: "A diamond! A diamond!" "But THAT has nothing to do with the Sabbath!" said Yosef.

Dehghani Three Drummers Walked Into a Bar

Three Drummers Walked Into a Bar is a rhythmic encounter that celebrates cultural authenticity while exploring new common ground. Each artist draws from the rhythmic language of their own tradition—whether rooted in Chinese classical and folk percussion patterns, or the Afro-Caribbean pulse of Haiti, or in Persian mystic cycles—engaging in a compositional and improvisational approach that honors their origins while addressing differences between traditions, the similarities, and places of natural overlap.

— Samandar Dehghani

Coleman Ornette Plays the Blues

Gunther Schuller was an early champion of Ornette's music. In 1959, Ornette was invited to study with Schuller and others at the Lenox School of Jazz on scholarship, where Ran Blake was also in attendance. Schuller took a chance on Ornette, no matter how divisive a figure he was, and they remained working together closely for years to come. In studying the writings of Ornette Coleman, interviews, and rehearsal tapes, one thing we determined is that Ornette's musical philosophy is inextricable from his philosophy on life. When he says that every member of his band is free to express themself totally, he means total freedom and equality for every human being. At the same time, with some hindsight, we can hear that there is a very clear hierarchy in Ornette's music, with himself audibly in charge. This struggle is one we are hoping to explore in our performance.

— Peter Vazquez, Bug Jaffe

Taylor African Violets from Looking Ahead! (1958)

"What's music all about?". Cecil shared his opinions with us in his interviews. He said that music is about joy; music is everything that you do, and this album comes from his early period when he was still on the way to figuring that out. So, there are not only chord changes to preserve his jazz soul but also solos to show his free spirits.

Gunther Schuller was one of his biggest supporters at that time, and there's no doubt that the Third Stream would play his piece again and slightly add some new things. So, here is my understanding and electronic version of this song, *African Violets*.

— Elfie Shi

Miller That Old Remember When

That Old Remember When is a modern Americana song that pays tribute to an Appalachian feeling, and the memory of a love lost a long time ago.

When something fades to nothing Leaves you wondering Where you've been Tomorrow won't hurt like That old remember when

When forgetting leads to giving Keeps you feeling Who you've been Tomorrow won't seem like That old remember when

Remember when you loved him Remember when you flew Remember when all you had was you Remember the laughter Remember the years Remember you're living as you wipe away tears

Sunshine fades to moonlight Peace is thundering in the din and Tomorrow won't hurt like That old remember when

Morton Frog- I-More

Frog- I-More (or *Froggie Moore*) is one of Jelly Roll Morton's earliest and most important compositions. The transitional nature of Morton's early work can be heard in the way that the three-strain structure is derived from Classic Ragtime, while the

use of riffs and rhythmic patterns clearly point out Early Jazz's expansion from (and simplification of) Ragtime, in its move towards an Improvisation and Blues-based vocabulary.

As is often the case in early Morton works, the third section is reserved for the large portion of the improvising. I like to call these sections "Morton Chorales", because they start out relatively rhythmically square, and then build, chorus by chorus, towards a (hopefully) inexorable climax.

Gunther Schuller devoted a chapter of his book *Early Jazz* to Morton, calling him Jazz's First Great Composer. Although Schuller was not the first to write about Morton analytically, *Early Jazz* is a key work in the history of the establishment of a Jazz Canon.

Sigman Crazy He Calls Me

Crazy He Calls Me was composed in 1949 by Carl Sigman with lyrics by Bob Russell. Shortly after, the song was first recorded by Billie Holiday, whose rendition made it a famous hit. The song portrays a woman's unwavering love for a man who calls her "crazy," yet she doesn't mind because, to her, love transcends everything.

In this arrangement, the inspiration comes from the soulful sound of Billie Holiday, who expressed the song's meaning so beautifully through both lyrics and melody, as well as from the neo-soul groove of Erykah Badu—an artist who herself drew significant influence from Holiday. This arrangement aims to blend the richness and emotional depth of Holiday's version with the smooth, contemporary groove inspired by Erykah Badu's neo-soul style.

Sweet Honey in the Rock Breaths

We were introduced to this Sweet Honey in the Rock song by Assistant CMA Chair Farayi Malek, singer/songwriter/fiddler/composer/educator extraordinaire (I could go on, but I'd run out of room), and it is such a powerful reminder to stop and reconnect with nature and with those who came before us. Please join us on the chorus.

Chorus:

Listen more often to things than to beings Listen more often to things than to beings 'Tis the ancestor's word When the fire's voice is heard 'Tis the ancestor's word In the voice of the waters Ah-ahh, wshh, ahh-wshh

Those who have died have never, never left The dead are not under the earth They are in the rustling trees They are in the groaning woods
They are in the crying grass
They are in the moaning rocks
The dead are not under the earth, so...

Those who have died have never, never left
The dead have a pact with the living
They are in the woman's breast
They are in the wailing child
They are with us in the home
They are with us in the crowd
The dead have a pact with the living, so...

Dehghani Naqme Isfahan

Inspired by a melody from the Persian *radif*, this composition explores a shared musical language where modal aesthetics interact with elements of jazz. Through a dialogue between improvisation and structured form, the work highlights new expressive possibilities. This piece reflects a collective artistic effort by the ensemble, offering a contemporary bridge between cultures while honoring their original essences.

— Samandar Dehghani

We, the elated drunk with hearts long lost to love, Are confidents of passion, breathing with the wine above. Many have aimed the bow of blame toward us in vain, For by our Beloved's grace, all knots of fate we did unchain.

Harewood Ruby Row

Ruby Row is inspired by Gunther Schuller's "Magic Row" and the unique compositional / improvisational style of Thelonious Monk, constructed using four 3-note cells of the row and imbedding them within the harmonic structure of the bop/ post bebop paradigm. It is reminiscent of the Monk composition Ruby, My Dear as well as the music of Duke Ellington and Charles Mingus.

— David Harewood

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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.





Welcome to NEC!

I am thrilled to welcome you to New England Conservatory's 2025–26 concert season — a celebration of the power that music has to inspire and connect us to 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.



Andrea Kalyn President



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

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