

New Music Ensemble

Stefan Asbury, conductor

Monday, December 8, 2025

8:00 p.m.

Burnes Hall

PROGRAM

Jonathan Harvey
(1939–2012)

Mortuos Plangos, Vivos Voco (1980)

Electronics

Britta Byström
(b. 1977)

Rebellion in Greenery (2008)

Amelia Kazazian, flute
Evan Chu, clarinet
Ravani Loushy Kay, violin
Ariana Mascari, viola
Alex Aranzabal, cello
Christian Bartholomew, percussion
Janice Lu, piano

Joseph Bozich, conductor

John Mallia
(b. 1968)

Plexus 2 (2000)

Max Reed, bass clarinet
Shuhan Wang, saxophone
Ian Jiang Johnson, violin
Alyssa Burkhalter, double bass
Dillon Akerman, Christian Bartholomew,
percussion
Brooks Clarke, guitar
Joseph Vasconi, piano

brief intermission

Steve Reich
(b. 1936)

New York Counterpoint for Clarinet and Tape
(1985)

Fast
Slow
Fast

Juhyun Lee, clarinet

Tristan Murail
(b. 1947)

Winter Fragments (2000)

Emma Krause, flute
Colin Merkovsky, clarinet
Joanna Peters, violin
Austin Topper, cello
Janice Lu, piano
Joseph Bozich, synthesizer

Hans Abrahamsen
(b. 1952)

Winternacht (1978)

Winter (dedicated to Georg Trakl)
Autumn (dedicated to M.C. Escher)
Summer (dedicated to Igor Stravinsky)
Spring (dedicated to Georg Trakl)

Alexander Lehmann, flute, piccolo, alto flute
Sarah Cho, clarinet
Caroline Finamore, French horn
William Parrack, cornet
Sungin Cho, violin
Jeehye Lee, cello
Joseph Vasconi, piano

Tianyi Wang and John Mallia, sound engineers

Harvey *Mortuos Plangos, Vivos Voco*

This work is a reflection of my experiences at Winchester Cathedral where my son Dominic was a chorister from 1975-1980. It is based on his voice and that of the great tenor bell. This enormous black bell of superhuman power has inscribed upon it: HORAS AVOLANTES NUMERO MORTUOS PLANO: VIVOS AD PRECES VOCO (I count the fleeing hours, I lament the dead: I call the living to prayers). This serves as the boy's text. The pitch and time structure of my work is entirely based on the bell's rich, irregular harmonic spectrum, a structure neither tonal nor dodecaphonic nor modal in any western or oriental sense, but unique to itself. The eight sections are each based on one of the principal eight lowest partials. Chords are constructed from the repertoire of 33 partials; modulations from one area of the spectrum to another are effected by glissandi. Constant transformations between the spectrum of a vocal vowel and that of the bell are made by internal manipulation of the two sounds' components. The walls of the concert hall are conceived as the sides of the bell inside which is the audience, and around which (especially in the original 8-channel version) flies the free spirit of the boy. The work was commissioned for IRCAM by the Centre Georges Pompidou and first performed at the IRCAM day in the Lille Festival on 30 November 1980. It was made at IRCAM with the helpful assistance of Stanley Haynes in July-August 1980.

— Jonathan Harvey

Byström *Rebellion in Greenery*

Rebellion in Greenery (Revolt i grönska) is a piece inspired by a novel by the Swedish author Walter Ljungquist (1900-1974). It tells the story of a middle-aged couple planning a lovely summer holiday together with a group of teenagers. Very soon, however, trouble starts, and the adults lose control of the young group... I have been inspired by the idea of things starting to fall apart in a beautiful, flowery environment, and how the unexpected events and impulses change the direction of the story, or the music.

— Britta Byström

Mallia *Plexus 2*

"John Mallia created *Plexus 2* (2000) using as a kind of armature an earlier, purely electronic piece, *Plexus*, developed for an audiovisual installation (collaboration with poet Dana Dalton, sculptor Jacques Abelman, and neuroscientist Kara Pratt). Much remains of the earlier work, rethought and recontextualized; some electronic sounds have been transferred to instruments, for example. Integrated with the existing piece is the ensemble, which adds the further dimension of explicit pitched materials. Mallia describes the music's role as creating an environment for the poetic imagery."
— Robert Kirzinger (excerpted from the liner notes to *All in Your Mind: Music of Julia Werntz and John Mallia*, Capstone Records)

Reich *New York Counterpoint*

New York Counterpoint was commissioned by The Fromm Music Foundation for clarinetist Richard Stolzman. It was composed during the summer of 1985. The duration is about 11 minutes. The piece is a continuation of the ideas found in

Vermont Counterpoint (1982), where as soloist plays against a pre-recorded tape of him or her self. In *New York Counterpoint* the soloist pre-records ten clarinet and bass clarinet parts and then plays a final 11th part live against the tape. The compositional procedures include several that occur in my earlier music. The opening pulses ultimately come from the opening of *Music for 18 Musicians* (1976). The use of interlocking repeated melodic patterns played by multiples of the same instrument can be found in my earliest works, *Piano Phase* (for 2 pianos or 2 marimbas) and *Violin Phase* (for 4 violins) both from 1967. In the nature of the patterns, their combination harmonically, and in the faster rate of change, the piece reflects my recent works, particularly *Sextet* (1985). *New York Counterpoint* is in three movements: fast, slow, fast, played one after the other without pause. The change of tempo is abrupt and in the simple relation of 1:2. The piece is in the meter $3/2 = 6/4 (=12/8)$. As is often the case when I write in this meter, there is an ambiguity between whether one hears measures of 3 groups of 4 eight notes, or 4 groups of 3 eight notes. In the last movement of *New York Counterpoint* the bass clarinets function to accent first one and then the other of these possibilities while the upper clarinets essentially do not change. The effect, by change of accent, is to vary the perception of that which in fact is not changing.

– Steve Reich

Murail *Winter Fragments*

As a rule I don't like naming a piece before I've finished writing it, like counting your chickens before they're hatched. The completed piece may well differ considerably from the initial project, which is a concept, ideas, sounds and images, while the finished product is sound, organised within time. There's a gulf between the two. So this title has to be taken for what it's worth. It is at one and the same time an acknowledgement of the festival where the piece was created (Festival: Sounds of Winter and Today), and the experience of a genuine winter last year [1999], particularly where we now live, to the north of New York, a region of lakes and small mountains. The lake in front of our house was frozen over, and there were sixty centimetres of snow all round. For the most part the sun shone brightly and its intense light bathed the house, which is open to nature all round. Sometimes a violent storm would arise, followed by silence, and the blinding light would come back. Perhaps the "fragments of winter" are there.

– Tristan Murail

Abrahamsen *Winternacht*

In a piece like *Winternacht*, it is about the seasons. But here actually, the first movement is winter, and then it goes backwards to autumn, and then to summer, and the last movement is spring. So coming from the first movement, it is actually going forwards from winter to spring, and that is always important for me, that somehow it seems that we go backwards, but actually we go forwards. It represents feelings of cold, warm, movement, growing, decaying; all kinds of things that, for me, is in my music, and has been there since I started writing.

– Hans Abrahamsen

Winternacht was written in 1976-78, and the title was taken from a poem by the Austrian poet Georg Trakl. The four movements, which are all very precise and

dreamingly poetic, are almost classical in terms of clarity and discipline in orchestration and form: hence the dedication of the third movement to Igor Stravinsky. However, the music has a strong impressionistic quality as well: four introverted still lives of the velvety, dark iciness of a silvery winter night (one can veritably sense the fairy-tale-like sleigh ride in the two outer movements).

The second movement is dedicated to the eccentric lithographer M.C. Escher and the first and last movements are both dedicated to Georg Trakl. As in the well-known orchestral work, *Stratifications*, we can enjoy Abrahamsen's fascination with having several events occur simultaneously: a thoughtful as well as playful multilayered quality mirrors the poetic and mysterious worlds of painting, literature, nature and most important of all: music.

– *Wise Classical Music*

Upcoming Concerts at NEC

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NEC Jazz Composers' Workshop Orchestra, Frank Carlberg, director

Tuesday, December 9, 2025 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall

NEC Chamber Singers, Symphonic Winds, Navy Band Northeast

"Into the Holidays" (repeat) - Audio streamed on [wicn](https://www.wicn.org)

Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 12:00 noon, Mechanics Hall, Worcester

Liederabend LXXVIII Cameron Stowe and Tanya Blaich, curators

All-Ravel program

Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m., Williams Hall

NEC Philharmonia, Hugh Wolff, conductor

Handel *Concerto Grosso*, op. 6 no. 4; Bartók *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*;

Beethoven *Violin Concerto in D Major*, op. 61, Joshua Brown AD, violin

Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

Sonata Class Recital, Vivian Hornik Weilerstein, faculty

Thursday, December 11, 2025 at 5:30 p.m., Williams Hall

NEC Conductors' Choir

Works by Chatman, Gilkyson, Hazzard, Parry, Poulenc, Trumbore, and Victoria

conducted by Estel Haejin Park, Noah Scecina-White, and Louis Shriber,

all '27 MM students of Erica J. Washburn

Thursday, December 11, 2025 at 8:00 p.m., Burnes Hall

Upcoming Concerts at NEC

—continued

Adam Newman, *viola* (GD '25)

Student of Kim Kashkashian

Friday, December 12, 2025 at 8:30 p.m., Williams Hall

Faculty Recital: **Paula Robison**, *flute* with **Paavali Jumppanen**, *piano*

"An Hour of Bach and Mozart"

Sunday, December 14, 2025 at 6:00 p.m., Williams Hall

NEC Lab Orchestra

Smetana "*The Moldau*" from *Ma Vlast*; Beethoven *Leonore Overture No. 3*, op. 72b;

Dvořák *Symphony No. 8 in G Major*, op. 88 - Clancy Ellis '26 GD,

Joseph Bozich '27 GD and Leonard Bopp '27 GD conductors

Tuesday, December 16, 2025 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall

Borromeo String Quartet Beethoven Seminar Recital

Wednesday, December 17, 2025 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall

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