

NEC Composers' Series  
and The Robert Ceely Electronic Music Studio,  
Sid Richardson and John Mallia, curators  
present

# Transient Canvas

Amy Advocat, bass clarinet  
Matt Sharrock, marimba

Wednesday, January 14, 2026  
7:30 p.m.  
Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre

## PROGRAM

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*Tonight's performances of works composed in 2025 are world premieres.*

**Genie Alvarado** *Between Us* (2025)  
'27

**Samuel Mincarelli** *Flower Beyond the Flame* (2025)  
'27

**Yuanwei Ni** *Ardente* (2025)  
'27

**Benjamin Lichter** *Embracing Chaos* (2025)  
'27 MM

**Chris Zacharias** *Breathe* (2025)  
'27 MM

**Dan VanHassel** *Epidermis* (2017)  
'03 MM

*Transient Canvas*  
Amy Advocat ('04, '06 MM), bass clarinet  
Matt Sharrock, marimba

## Program Notes

### Alvarado *Between Us*

*Between Us*, written for Transient Canvas, explores the idea of secrets. Trusting others with our secrets is a high-risk investment, and while the connection between two people can be fulfilling, the consequences if it is shared can be devastating."

— Genie Alvarado

### Mincarelli *Flower Beyond the Flame*

The piece *Flower Beyond the Flame* refers to ecological succession after a volcanic eruption. The first part consists of a gradual accumulation of tension, where register ascends and texture thickens to indicate the prelude to a volcanic eruption.

Eventually the texture breaks, leading to a new section with a very different textural scheme. The second section is free-composed, exploring various gestures and harmonies. This section represents the reclamation of the scorched earth by the life that once dominated. Similar to how ecological succession is a gradual process, the piece does not regain the intense textures of the beginning, instead concluding with blooming gestures from the instruments, similar to how a small flower is among the first to reclaim the barren land following a catastrophe."

— Samuel Mincarelli

### Ni *Ardente*

"Ardente" is an Italian word meaning "burning." This piece is dedicated to a dog who passed away earlier this year.

The composition approaches loss as a physical experience rather than a purely emotional one. Musical gestures are shaped by sensation and movement, with changes in texture, register, and intensity reflecting how memory is triggered by external stimuli such as light, scent, and weather.

Instead of depicting grief as resolution, the work treats it as a continuous state. Energy is sustained and transformed throughout the piece, suggesting how attachment persists through motion and sound.

— Yuanwei Ni

### Lichter *Embracing Chaos*

*Embracing Chaos* was written about the chaotic experience of beginning to understand parts of my identity, particularly my relationship with Judaism. Although I am not particularly religious, many Jewish traditions are very important to me, yet I am often reluctant to tell others about this part of my identity. Anti-semitism is an increasingly common occurrence in the news, and on top of that Judaism is frequently attached to political opinions I disagree with. I don't want people making assumptions about me because I am Jewish. Because Judaism is not a visible identity, it is easy to hide, yet hiding oneself is an uncomfortable process.

By gradually incorporating various gestures, rhythms, and other elements found in klezmer music, *Embracing Chaos* shows the process of coming to terms with my complex relationship with this part of my identity. The first distinctly klezmer

gesture to make it into the piece is the *krehkt*, a breaking or sobbing sound between notes. Another common element of some styles of klezmer is chaos. Throughout the piece, gestural ideas begin overlapping and rhythms become disjunct, embracing the chaos of identity.

— Benjamin Lichter

### **Zacharias   *Breathe***

*Breathe* seeks to embody a respiratory form, a living cycle of expansion, suspension, and release. Rather than unfolding through linear argumentation or teleological development, the work evolves through gradual shifts in density, register, and timbre, mirroring the continuous negotiation between tension and openness inherent in breathing itself. Acoustic materials are allowed to emerge, overlap, and recede with a sense of temporal flexibility, while the fixed media articulates more rigid structural shifts in texture. Together, these layers are treated with equal agency, each participating in cycles of inhalation and exhalation that shape the work's temporal and textural flow, resulting in a form functioning as an ongoing physiological process rather than a sequence of discrete events.

— Chris Zacharias

### **VanHassel   *Epidermis***

In *Epidermis* the bass clarinet and marimba merge into a single machine-like entity playing funky rhythmic patterns made up of percussive sounds with electronics forming a noisy protective layer around the players. At the beginning of the piece the acoustic and electronic sounds are closely aligned, but as the piece progresses they begin to move apart. Repeating melodic patterns begin to appear in the bass clarinet and marimba, while the electronics become noisier and more abrasive. This piece was commissioned by Transient Canvas and premiered in November 2017 with funding provided by the Johnstone Fund for New Music.

— Dan VanHassel

The music of composer and multi-instrumentalist **Dan VanHassel** has been described as “energizing” (*Wall Street Journal*), “a refreshing direction” (*I Care If You Listen*), and “an imaginative and rewarding soundscape” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*). His works create a uniquely evocative sound world drawing from a background in rock and heavy metal, Indonesian gamelan, free improvisation, and classical music.

VanHassel has received commissions from groups including: the Washington National Opera, Splinter Reeds, pianist Jihye Chang, 48 St. Stephen Duo, Splice Ensemble, Transient Canvas, UC Santa Cruz Wind Ensemble, Shanghai Conservatory, and Dinosaur Annex. His compositions have been featured all over the world including: the MATA Festival, Gaudeamus Music Week, International Computer Music Conference, Bowling Green New Music Festival, UnCaged Toy Piano Festival, Shanghai Conservatory Electronic Music Week, and the Bang on a Can Summer Festival. Recordings of his works can be found on releases from New Focus, Soundset, and Thinking OutLoud labels. VanHassel’s work has received funding from the Boston Foundation, New Music USA, Chamber Music America, the Barlow Endowment, and the Johnstone Fund for New Music.

As an electric guitarist, VanHassel has performed with leading contemporary groups including the Callithumpian Consort, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, New England Philharmonic, Multiverse Concert Series, Castle of Our Skins, Enigma Chamber Opera, and Kadence Arts. He was a founding member and artistic director of contemporary chamber ensemble Wild Rumpus in San Francisco (now Ninth Planet) and is the founder, artistic director, and guitarist of Hinge Quartet.

VanHassel received degrees in composition from the UC Berkeley, New England Conservatory, and Carnegie Mellon University. He has taught composition and electronic music at MIT, Brandeis University, UC Berkeley, Clark University, and Connecticut College and is currently Assistant Professor of Composition at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee.

For over a decade Boston-based contemporary duo **Transient Canvas** has been thrilling audiences with their “engaging musicality and easy sense of ensemble” (*Cleveland Classical*) and “superb” performances (*Boston Globe*). Bass clarinetist Amy Advocat and marimbist Matt Sharrock relish the creative potential of working with living composers, with the *San Francisco Chronicle* lauding “the versatile imagination they both display and inspire in others.” With a commissioned repertoire of over 90 works, they have released three albums on New Focus Recordings: *Right now, in a second*, named a top-ten local album of 2020 by the *Boston Globe*; *Wired*, “a must-add to any new music lover’s library” according to I Care If You Listen; and *Sift*, which KLANG New Music called “one of the more refreshing things I’ve heard in recent years.”

Highlights of recent seasons include collaborations with composers Angélica Negrón, Marti Epstein, and LJ White, and the world premiere of Elliott Miles McKinley’s *Pale Blue Dot* for bass clarinet, marimba, and string quartet; concerts at the Vienna Summer Music Festival (Austria), Alba Music Festival (Italy), Dancz Center for New Music (Georgia), North Carolina NewMusic Initiative, ICA Low Clarinet Festival (Arizona), and New Music at the Short North Stage (Ohio); residencies at Penn State, Kent State, East Carolina, and Cleveland State Universities, the University of Georgia, the University of North Texas, and the University of Northern Iowa. Past seasons include featured performances at Music on the Edge, Composers, Inc., Charlotte New Music Festival, FeNAM, New Music Miami, SoundNOW Festival, Music at the Forefront, Outpost Concert Series, New Music Nights at Spectrum, the Corwin Chair Concert Series, Nevermind the Noise, Ethos New Music, New Hampshire Music Festival, Re:Sound, the New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, and the Guerrilla Composers Guild, among others. They have performed and presented at several professional conferences including PASIC, ICA Clarinetfest, SEAMUS, SCI National Conference, and two New Music Gatherings. In Boston, they have been featured on the Equilibrium, Original Gravity, Opensound, New Gallery, Lowell Lecture, and Times Two concert series.

Equally dedicated to educating the next generation of performers and composers, Transient Canvas has presented masterclasses and composition

workshops at colleges, universities, and conservatories across the U.S. including the University of Southern California, Oberlin Conservatory, Baldwin Wallace, Chapman, James Madison, Kennesaw State, Kent State, Lawrence, New York, Northern Illinois, Ohio, Otterbein, Rutgers, St. Lawrence, and San Jose State Universities, UC Berkeley, UC Santa Barbara, UC Riverside, University of Maine, Cal Poly Pomona, UNC Pembroke, University of the Pacific, University of Southern Maine, UW Green Bay, UW Madison, and Virginia Tech. They have also held residencies with the composition departments at Harvard, Northeastern, Brandeis, East Carolina, and Tufts Universities, CCM, the University of Florida, the University of Georgia, the University of Miami, Mizzou, UMKC, the Vermont College of Fine Arts, Boston Conservatory at Berklee, Divergent Studio at Longy School of Music, the Alba Music Festival Composition Program, and the New York Philharmonic Very Young Composers, among others. Since 2017, they have hosted their paid Composer Fellowship Program that is free and open to composers of all ages.

Transient Canvas proudly endorses Henri Selmer Paris clarinets and Marimba One marimbas and mallets.

For more information, visit [www.transientcanvas.com](http://www.transientcanvas.com).

### **Upcoming NEC Composers' Series Concerts**

*all programs subject to change*

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

#### **ECCE Arts Ensemble**

Stratis Minakakis, curator; Grant Beale *Autophagos III*; Agócs *Ambrosiana Richardson Astrolabe*; Minakakis *Skiagrafies IV*; Mallia *Dangerous Passing* Janmohammadi *We ran into a shelter filled with tears and sounds I had hidden* Gandolfi *Lowell Songs*

*Thursday, January 22, 2026 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

#### **DMA Composers' Showcase**

A showcase concert of music by NEC DMA composers featuring a wide variety of chamber music ranging from solo piano to string quartet and beyond; works by Devin Cholodenko, Ying Gao, Mathew Lanning, Yunqi Li, Lingbo Ma, Alex Matheson, Tianyi Wang, and Yangfan Xu

*Monday, February 9, 2026 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

#### **New Music Ensemble + Malcolm Peyton Residency**, Stefan Asbury, director

2026 Malcolm Peyton composer-in-residence Colin Matthews *Postludes*, *Little Continuum* from *Two Tributes*; Messiaen *Oiseaux exotiques*; Ligeti *Etudes for Piano: No. 5 "Arc-en-ciel", No. 8 "Fém", No. 11 "En suspens", No. 12 "Entrelacs"*; Karen Tanaka *Techno Etudes*; Peyton *Piece for Solo Cello*

*Wednesday, March 11, 2026 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

## Other Upcoming Concerts at NEC

**Callithumpian Consort**, Stephen Drury, artistic director and conductor

Christian Wolff: *Look She Said; What If; Hold the Line*; Tristan Murail *Lachrymae*

John Cage *Concert for Piano and Orchestra with Aria*

*Thursday, January 15, 2026 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

### **Borromeo String Quartet Guest Artist Award Concert**

2025-26 Guest Artists Evan Johanson (violin), William Sotiriou (viola), Tommy Lim (cello), Dominic Panunto (bassoon) and Subin Lee (harp) will join the members of the Borromeo String Quartet in Brahms *Sextet*, Françaix *Divertissement*, and Debussy *Danses sacrée et profane*

*Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

**Faculty Recital: Michael Meraw**, baritone, with **Leonardo Ciampa**, piano

Art songs by Tosti, Donaudy and Ciampa

*Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

**Faculty Recital: Joel Ayau**, piano, with **Jeremy Crosmer**, cello

Teagan Faran *Flaschblume*; Poulenc *Sonata for Piano and Cello*; Alice Hong *Address to the Moon*; Gershwin (arr. Canellakis) *Three Preludes*; Schuller *Duo Concertante for Cello and Piano*; Nikolai Kapustin *Three Pieces*; Crosmer *Threnody*

*Thursday, January 22, 2026 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

**Faculty Recital: Mehmet Ali Sanlikol**

Classical Ottoman/Turkish repertoire, Byzantine music and his own compositions, culminating in his work for jazz orchestra

*Saturday, January 24, 2026 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

**Faculty Recital: Rachel Childers**, French horn and **Christopher Elchico**, clarinet

Jane Vignery *Sonata for Horn and Piano*; Brahms *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano*

Brahms *3 Intermezzi for Piano*; Carl Reinecke *Trio for Piano, Clarinet and Horn*

Jiayan Sun, piano

*Monday, January 26, 2026 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall*

### **Tuesday Night New Music**

New music by NEC student composers, performed by their peers

*Tuesday, January 27, 2026 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall*

**NEC Philharmonia**, David Loebel, conductor

Cindy McTee *The Unquestioned Answer* from *Double Play* (2011)

Barber *Symphony No. 1 in One Movement*, op. 9

Schumann *Symphony No. 2 in C Major*, op. 61

*Wednesday, January 28, 2026 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.

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