

The
Boston
New
Music
Initiative

Nathan Lofton, *Music Director*

2011 – 2012
Season Finale

Featuring the works of:

Emily COOLEY
Aaron KIRSCHNER
Ezra DONNER
Michael LEE
Peter KLATZOW
Charles HALKA

Saturday, June 9, 2012
8 pm
The Lily Pad
1353 Cambridge Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts

ABOUT BNMI

The Boston New Music Initiative is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to maintaining an international network of composers, performers, conductors, directors, and champions of music in order to generate new music concerts, compositions, collaborations, and commissions. Incorporated in 2010, the organization aims to advance the careers of its members in the field of new music by serving as a resource for networking, commissioning, collaboration, and programming.

The Boston New Music Initiative, Inc.

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Our organization strives to deliver top-notch performances on each and every one of our concerts, which would not be possible without the constant dedication and effort from all of our performers. We are still very much a growing organization attempting to accomplish very big things in a short period of time and our performers have been crucial in our ability to continue moving forward. Our goal is to provide all performers at least modest stipends in exchange for their time, effort, transportation, and instrument maintenance costs while continuing to provide our audiences with professional-caliber performances.

In order for this to be possible, we need your help! We have created the Concert Series Performance Fund in order to support our performers as much as they support us. We realize these are hard economic times for us all, but if you have enjoyed our concerts, we ask that you consider making a contribution to the Performance Fund, which will be used exclusively for performer stipends on future concerts and cannot be used for any other organization purposes.

If you would like to contribute to our organization outside of the Performance Fund, we always welcome any support we can receive. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit public charity, we rely upon support from the general public to continue our operations, and are always in need of assistance with venue, instrument, and equipment rentals, as well as general operating expenses. Any and all donations made to the organization are tax-deductible under Section 170 of the IRS code.

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THE BOSTON NEW MUSIC INITIATIVE

Concert Series

2011-2012 Concert Season
The Lily Pad

June 9, 2012
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Variations on a Theme from “Wit” (2010)

Emily COOLEY
(b. 1990)

Stephanie Skor, *violin*
Chris Welch, *violoncello*
Joseph Turbessi, *piano*

Three Bagatelles (2010)

Aaron KIRSCHNER
(b. 1988)

Deirdre Viau, *flute*
Yhasmin Valenzuela, *clarinet*
Trevor Berens, *piano*
Nora Karakousoglou, *violoncello*

¡Cigarra! (2010)

Ezra DONNER
(b. 1986)

Claire DiVizio, *soprano*
Yhasmin Valenzuela, *clarinet*
Abigale Reisman, *violin*
Jeff Stern, *bongos*
Trevor Berens, *piano*

– I N T E R M I S S I O N –

The Sun That Breathes by the Riverside (2010)

Michael LEE
(b. 1987)

III. Scherzo

IV. A chant amongst chaos

Abigale Reisman and Stephanie Skor, *violins*
Foxman James, *viola*
Nora Karakousoglou, *violoncello*
Eileen Huang, *piano*

Dances of Earth and Fire (1987)

PETER KLATZOW
(b. 1945)

I. Dark and heavy

II. Con brio

Jeff Stern, *marimba*

Trio (2007)

Charles HALKA
(b. 1982)

Stephanie Skor, *violin*
Chris Welch, *violoncello*
Joseph Turbessi, *piano*

Program Notes

Variations on a Theme from “Wit”

Emily Cooley

“Variations on a Theme from Wit,” for violin, cello, and piano, is based on a theme from an earlier piece. In 2006, I composed incidental music for a production of Margaret Edson's "Wit," a play that explores ideas of life and death, illness, and the power of the mind. That music was for solo piano, and I used it as the basis for this chamber piece. This piece explores various textures and interplay between the three instruments. Throughout these varied contexts, however, the theme—or fragments of it— can always be heard.

Three Bagatelles

Aaron Kirschner

Three Bagatelles (2010) is a set of three miniatures that each explore different ideas of the linguistic implications of their form. The shortest of the three, the first piece sprung from the concept of a singularity, attempting to pack the most complexity into the smallest amount of space. By contrast, the total amount of information presented in the second piece is rather small, while time is dilated around it. The final piece draws on the techniques of musical minimalism, while combining it with rhythms more common to Eastern European folk music. The resultant piece thus contains “miniature” traces of diverse musical styles.

¡Cigarra!

Ezra Donner

Perhaps it was inevitable that, after visiting Mexico for the first time in the summer of 2010, I would return with the idea of using a Spanish text as the basis for a musical composition. For inspiration I turned to Federico García Lorca (1898–1936), a celebrated and influential Spanish poet of the Twentieth Century. As Lorca was heavily influenced in his early career by the music of Richard Wagner, this text seemed to call for the most romantic musical setting I could create: melodic lines are built from narrow, expressive intervals, and dynamic swells create the effect of sighs and sobs. The music is at times atmospheric and ethereal, at times driving and incessant, with pungent harmonies built from fourths and tritones, and a continuing rhythmic *ostinato* in the bongos evoking a ritual-like character. The clarinet and voice each span an enormous melodic range, while the piano and violin supply important harmonic notes and

add texture. Above all, this piece is meant to be sexy! *¡Cigarra!* was composed for Existential Pilot and was premiered in Bloomington, Indiana on March 1, 2011.

The Sun That Breathes by the Riverside

Michael Lee

“The Sun that Breathes by the Riverside” (2010) is a four movement piano quintet originally written for friends/musicians at the Yale School of Music. The four movements, or themes, are reflections of myself living in New York City at that time. When I wrote this composition, I was highly influenced by the excitement of experimenting with various polyrhythms and gradual developing of chords and textures by repetition and postminimalist-like qualities. The two movements to be premiered for the first time are the scherzo (III) and the finale (IV). The scherzo is a display of confusion, hysteria displayed with the harsh chromaticism. The finale is subtitled 'A chant amongst chaos' to show the polyrhythms and dissonant chords as chaos and the melody as a sign of hope and emotion. The finale develops further into a final section where 16th century chant-like themes, still governed by various rhythmic techniques, take over and ends with a grand coda.

Dances of Earth and Fire

Peter Klatzow

These two ritualistic pieces reflect on the one hand the solidity and all-embracing gravity of the Earth itself, and the evanescent flickering of flame, which always seeks to rise upwards and escape into the beyond. These become metaphors for life and death, or earth-bound; spirit-bound forces.

Nevertheless the very concept of fire implies a destruction of that which is physical into a new, re-created form. This process creates energies of both heat and light, and that equal metamorphosis is created by the player through movement and action, in the realization of this piece. Similarly, "earth" implies immutability, revolving but unchanging, a sub-tempo Rondo of immeasurable spans. This timelessness is a component of the first movement, in which pulse seems suspended, and silences are more important than sounds.

Trio

Charles Halka

In my compositions I often find myself returning to those musical qualities which initially inspired me as a young American musician concerned more than anything with the sheer thrill, raw physicality, and emotional freedom that accompanies performing on stage. This trend is most evident in my *Trio* for violin, cello, and

piano, which in retrospect I consider the manifestation of many of my earliest musical experiences and inspirations.

Dominated by a syncopated and motor-like ostinato, the first movement draws directly from my experience performing with a jazz-rock band in high school, yet it is counterbalanced by a lyrical, dramatic, and almost Romantic theme pointing perhaps to my early aspirations of becoming a professional concert pianist. The second movement, marked by musical irony and thoughtfully placed clichés, is probably the best reflection of my favorite performance experiences, both in the classical and the popular music world, as well as my own sense of humor and casual personality. And the final movement, an aggressive onslaught of jagged rhythms and relentless energy, is the perfect vehicle for the physicality and vigor of performance I relished so much as a young musician.

Biographies

Nathan Lofton

Music Director

Composer and conductor Nathan Lofton is quickly establishing himself as one of the most versatile classical musicians of his generation. Since making his professional conducting debut at age 20 in 2006, Nathan has appeared with ensembles in the United States and Europe leading a repertoire ranging from the choral masterworks of Bach to the most recent contemporary music. Currently the Music Director of the Boston New Music Initiative, Nathan was formerly Assistant Conductor of Arosa Musik Theatre, a professional opera company in the Alpine resort town of Arosa, Switzerland, and has appeared with Avian Music, Blue Spruce Theatre, Urbanity Dance, and the Oregon Bach Festival Orchestra and Chorus. Nathan has also conducted ensembles at the New England Conservatory, Brandeis University, Boston University, The Longy School of Music, and the Curtis Institute.

Also active as a composer and arranger, Nathan's works have been performed by Quintet Royale, Vento Chiaro, the New England Conservatory Symphony, the United States Navy Band, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Nathan's chamber orchestra arrangement of Humperdinck's *Hansel und Gretel*, premiered in Switzerland in 2009, is published by Sonus Mundi Musikverlag of Munich, a division of Ricordi. Since 2008 Nathan has worked closely with composer Michael Gandolfi, and is currently in the process of preparing piano reductions of many of Gandolfi's works.

A native of San Francisco, California, Nathan has lived in Boston for most of the past decade. Nathan is a graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music where he studied composition with Michael Gandolfi and Scott Wheeler, and conducting with Charles Peltz, Bill Drury, and Hugh Wolff. Additionally, he has participated in masterclasses with John Adams, Helmuth Rilling, Leon Botstein, Otto-Werner Muller, and John Oliver.

Trevor Berens

Piano

A native of Los Angeles, Mr. Berens received his Bachelor's Degree in Music (Piano Performance and Composition) and Psychology from Loyola Marymount University and his Master's of Fine Arts in Piano Performance and Composition from the California Institute of the Arts. Mr. Berens specializes in new music and led the Los Angeles Wholesale Orchestra for two years, which commissioned several new works. He has also commissioned and premiered several works for solo piano. Mr. Berens has recently received his Master's of Arts from Lesley University, studying Music Therapy. This is Mr. Berens' third concert with the Boston New Music Initiative. www.trevorberensmusic.com

Emily Cooley

Composer

Emily Cooley was born in 1990 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She is a recent graduate of Yale University, where she studied with Kathryn Alexander and Michael Klingbeil, and was awarded the 2011 Abraham Beekman Cox Prize from the Yale Music Department. In the fall of 2012, she will pursue a Master of Music degree at the University of Southern California. She has received awards and recognition from the National Federation of Music Clubs, the MacDowell Club of Milwaukee, the Vancouver Chamber Choir, the Music Educators National Conference, Interlochen Arts Camp, the Huntsville Youth Orchestra, and ASCAP. She was recently named the winner of the 2012 Tribeca New Music Young Composers Competition, and her winning composition *Etched* for string quartet was performed in New York's Merkin Hall. Her pieces, which often take inspiration from literary sources and the visual arts, have been performed internationally at concerts and festivals. Details about upcoming performances can be found at www.emilycooley.com.

Claire DiVizio

Soprano

Praised by the Ann Arbor News for her "marvelous voice," soprano Claire DiVizio's wide-ranging repertoire extends from Renaissance chamber music to contemporary opera and encompasses nearly everything in between. Most recently, she was seen in April at the University of Louisville as Dorabella in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. She is currently preparing the role of Giorgetta in Puccini's *Il Tabarro*, to be performed in July at the Bay Area Summer Opera Theatre Institute. An avid performer of new music, Claire has created four opera roles in the last three years: Ismene in Ezra Donner's *Antigone*, Sheva Haddas and Hannah in Ben Moore's *Enemies: a Love Story*, and Sister 2 in Stephen Eddins's *Why I Live at the P.O.* In 2010, Claire was selected as a winner of the Michigan District in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and a year later won 2nd-place in the Hugo Kauder International Vocal Competition. In March of 2012, she was chosen as the 2nd-place winner of the Mid-South Regional National Association of Teachers of Singing Competition.

Claire is also an active arts administrator. In 2011, she created Thompson Street Opera Company, which is dedicated to producing premieres of new operas by both emerging and established composers. Previously, she was a member of the executive board of the University of Michigan Gilbert & Sullivan Society from 2007-2011.

Claire is a graduate of the University of Michigan, and holds both a Bachelor of Music with High Honors in Voice Performance and a Bachelor of Arts with Distinction in English Literature. She is currently pursuing her Masters of Music in Voice Performance at the University of Louisville, where she is the only student in the department supported by a full merit scholarship and teaching fellowship.

Ezra Donner

Composer

Ezra Donner (b. 1986) is an American composer, pianist, and educator. His music has been described as “energetic and good humored” (*The Big City*), “fun and uplifting” (*Betsy’s View*) and with “energy to spare” (*Miss Music Nerd*), and his works have been performed in Europe, Canada, Mexico, Turkey, and throughout the United States. Awards and recognition have come from the Midwest Graduate Music Consortium, the Catholic University of America, the Tobenski-Algera Concert Series, ClefWorks, MTNA, and the University of Michigan. His one-act opera *Antigone* (2010) integrates Ancient Greek and Medieval music with elements of a post-Modernist musical vocabulary, and his four-movement choral work *A Requiem* (2010) brings together sharply dissonant atonal chords, neo-tonal four-voice chorale writing, expressive melodic material, and Eastern-influenced pentatonicism into a work exploring concepts of life and death.

As a pianist, Ezra’s work can be heard on the new CD and .mp3 release *Steel Sky*, available on iTunes, Amazon, and CDBaby.com, featuring original works for solo piano composed between 2009–2011. Profits will be donated to VH1 Save the Music, supporting music education in schools.

From May 20 to June 6, 2012, Ezra will be a Fellow at the John Duffy Composers’ Institute in Norfolk, Virginia, where he will work with professional composers, music directors, and stage directors in the production of scenes from *Ile* (2012), a new chamber opera. From June 18 to August 20, Ezra will be a Fellow at Brevard Music Center, where he will work with composer David Dzubay and manage *itcb*, Brevard’s new music ensemble.

Ezra is currently pursuing a Doctor of Music Degree in Composition at Indiana University. He holds degrees from Indiana University, the University of Michigan, and Interlochen Arts Academy, and his teachers have included Don Freund, Claude Baker, P. Q. Phan, William Bolcom, Bright Sheng, Betsy Jolas, Michael Colgrass, and Tania Leon. www.ezradonner.com

Charles Halka

Composer

Charles Halka’s compositions have been performed in the United States, Mexico, Russia, and Lithuania, and upcoming and past performances include those by *counter)induction* (New York), *ONIX Ensemble* (Mexico), the *Boston New Music Initiative*, *Boston Metro Opera*, the chamber choir *Jauna Muzika* (Lithuania), the *Armonas Trio* (Lithuania), *In Spe* (Lithuania), *Pictures on Silence* (Baltimore), *New Dischord* (Chattanooga), and the *California State University Northridge Symphony*. As a 2008–09 U.S. Fulbright grantee, he spent a year in Vilnius, Lithuania researching Lithuanian music and writing an opera in collaboration with director and librettist Marija Simona Šimulynaitė. The opera, *Julius*, received its premiere in 2010 in Vilnius, and a choral excerpt from the opera, *Dipukų Rauda*, was recently chosen for performance at the ISCM World Music Days 2012 in Belgium. In March of 2011, *Round*

and Round, based on a work by the American music patron Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, was premiered at the Coolidge Auditorium of the Library of Congress. He is the 2011-12 Artist-in-Residence at the Foundation for Modern Music (Houston).

Charles has studied at conservatories in the United States, Russia, and Lithuania and holds degrees in piano and composition from the Peabody Conservatory, where he studied piano with Brian Ganz and composition with Michael Hersch. He is now completing coursework towards a Doctor of Musical Arts at the Shepherd School of Music, where he has studied composition with Richard Lavenda, Kurt Stallmann, and Pierre Jalbert, and piano with Brian Connelly.

Visit www.charleshalka.com for more information.

Eileen Huang

Piano

Eileen Huang is an alumna of the Juilliard School Pre-College Division and the Aspen Music Festival and School, where she studied piano with Herbert Stessin. Eileen made her concerto debut at age 11 with the Battleground Arts Center Symphony Orchestra and has been featured as a chamber musician in the “Wednesdays at One” series at Lincoln Center. As a soprano in the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, Eileen participated in the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s Grammy award-winning recording of Ravel’s *Daphnis et Chloé* and had the honor of singing at Senator Edward Kennedy’s funeral. Eileen holds a Bachelor’s degree in Chemistry from MIT.

Foxman James

Viola

Nora Karakousoglou

Violoncello

Aaron Kirschner

Composer

Composer and clarinetist Aaron Kirschner (b. 1988) received his Masters of Music in composition from Boston University and his Bachelor of Music in clarinet performance from the University of Iowa. His music has been presented by the Boston New Music Initiative, the Oregon Bach Festival Composers Symposium, and the Des Moines Symphony Orchestra String Quartet. In 2010, he won Boston University’s Wainwright Prize in composition for his *Forty Winters*, a setting of Shakespeare for voice with bass clarinet and harp. As a performer, Mr. Kirschner is strong advocate for new music, and has premiered over a dozen solo and chamber works. In the fall, Mr. Kirshner will begin Ph.D. studies at the University of Utah, under the direction of Miguel Chuaqui, Morris Rosenzweig, and Steve Roens. He has previously studied clarinet with Maurita Murphy

Mead and composition with John H. Wallace, Ketty Nez, John Eaton, David Gompper, and Christopher Gainey.

Peter Klatzow

Composer

Peter Klatzow was born in Springs, Transvaal, in 1945. After his school years at St Martin's School, Johannesburg, he spent a year teaching music and Afrikaans at the then newly established Waterford School, Swaziland.

The award of the Southern African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) scholarship for composers in 1964 took him to the Royal College of Music in London, where he studied composition with Bernard Stevens, piano with Kathleen Long, and orchestration with Gordon Jacob. In that year he won several of the College composition prizes as well as the Royal Philharmonic prize for composition, which was open to any Commonwealth composer under 30. He spent the following years in Italy and Paris, where he studied with Nadia Boulanger. He remained on very cordial terms with her until the time of her death.

Returning to South Africa in 1966, he worked at the SABC in Johannesburg as a music producer, and in 1973 was appointed to the University of Cape Town, where he is presently Professor in Composition. In 1986 he was elected to the rank of Fellow of the University of Cape Town for "having performed original distinguished academic work of such quality as to merit special recognition." In 2002 he was awarded the distinguished Molteno Gold Medal from the Cape Tercentenary Foundation for lifetime services to music.

He was awarded his DMus for published work in Composition, in 1999, and in 2007 he was appointed Director of the South African College of Music at the University of Cape Town.

One of the few South African composers to achieve international recognition, Peter Klatzow has won prizes in Spain, Toronto, and Stroud and his works have been performed in various European centres and in the United States. In South Africa he was awarded the prestigious Helgard Steyn prize worth R45, 000 for his piano suite *From the Poets*.

Michael Lee

Composer

A graduate of the Eastman School of Music and the Juilliard School, Michael is one of four winners of the 2012 Juilliard Orchestral Composition Competition. His *Contrasting Visions* (2011) for orchestra is the winner of the 2012 Arthur Friedman Award for best new orchestral work and the 2012 ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer's Award. Michael was a finalist in the 28th ALEA II International Composition Competition, chosen amongst 201 applicants, where his piano quintet "The Sun that Breathes by the Riverside," represented the U.S. In 2011, he was awarded a \$1,500 Private Fellowship for a Juilliard

composer. Michael's piano quintet, selected from over 200 applicants, was chosen to be performed by the Boston New Music Initiative (summer 2012), and his "Capriccio for Violin and Piano" is currently being sold on Amazon and iTunes. Michael is also a recipient of a letter of praise from BMI for a "promising work for the future" on his *Metropolis Piano Concerto* (2009). His *Dance Preludes* (2006) is the winner of the Bernard Rogers Memorial Prize (Eastman School) and the prestigious Howard Hanson Award from the Chamber Music of Rochester, which was performed in the same program with the Van Cliburn Gold medalist, Jon Nakamatsu. Michael's orchestral music has been performed and recorded by professional orchestras in Europe. Michael will be studying with Samuel Adler and Derek Bermel at the 2012 Bowdoin International Festival. Primary teachers: Samuel Adler, Derek Bermel, Jonathan Dawe and Milton Babbitt. For more information please visit www.michaelmleecomposer.com.

Abigale Reisman

Violin

Stephanie Skor

Violin

Jeff Stern

Percussion

Jeff Stern is emerging in the field of contemporary percussion for his "precision and impressive attention to timbral detail." A native of Philadelphia, Jeff quickly gained recognition as he was selected from high school music students nationwide to perform alongside the Virginia Symphony Orchestra for President George W. Bush at America's 400th birthday celebration in Jamestown. This past May, he was an artist in residence at the Yellow Barn music festival in Putney, Vermont. The residency focused on the exploration of Gérard Grisey's hour-long percussion sextet, *Le Noir de l'Etoile*, and culminated in a rare, outdoor performance. As an endorser of Vic Firth sticks and mallets, Jeff will soon be featured on their website for his performance of Manoury's marimba duo from *Le Livre des Claviers*. In June of 2011, Jeff performed at the Make Music New York Festival in a presentation of John Luther Adams' large-scale percussion work *Inuksuit* for 99 percussionists, an event that made *New York* magazine's top ten classical performances of the year. He will be recording the piece this summer for an album to be released by Canteloupe Music in 2013. He has also been involved with the Boston New Music Initiative and gave the New England premiere of Kyong Mee Choi's *Sublimation* for marimba and electronics at their concert last fall. Jeff has participated in the Sō Percussion Summer Institute, the Chosen Vale International Percussion Seminar, and the McCormick Marimba Festival. He has performed in masterclasses for artists including Robert van Sice, Michael Burritt, and Daniel Druckman. Jeff recently completed his Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Massachusetts Amherst where he studied with Ayano Kataoka and Thomas Hannum. This fall, he will be relocating to Baltimore to begin graduate work at the Peabody Conservatory under the tutelage of marimba virtuoso Robert van Sice.

Joseph Turbessi

Piano

Joseph Turbessi is active in the greater Boston area as a solo and collaborative pianist, organist, and chamber musician. He has performed with Boston area ensembles such as Boston New Music Initiative, Juventas, and Lorelei; and has performed solo recitals on the Jamaica Plain and Equilibrium concert series. He is a strong advocate for new music, has premiered a number of works by young composers and has performed in new music festivals in Oregon and Italy. Turbessi also accompanies choirs at MIT and the Boston Conservatory, and serves as music director at Belmont United Methodist Church.

Yhasmin Valenzuela

Clarinet

Yhasmin Valenzuela, native of Peru, earned her bachelor's degree at the Lima Conservatory "Josafat Roel Pineda" in both clarinet performance and music education. She continued her studies in the United States at Texas Christian University, where she received her Master's Degree in clarinet performance. Following this, she obtained a Graduate Performance Diploma with distinction at the Longy School of Music.

Yhasmin is an active chamber music and orchestral performer. Currently, she can be heard playing with the Waltham and Nashua Symphony Orchestras, Quinta Esencia Ensemble and The Boston New Music Initiative. She is a founding member of Quinta Esencia, an ensemble that performs Latin music and works by living composers.

Deirdre Viau

Flute

Deirdre Viau received a Graduate Performance Diploma in Flute from the Longy School of Music. She studied flute with Julia Scolnik and Vanessa Mulvey, and jazz improvisation with Peter Cassino. Ms. Viau is a founding member of the chamber ensemble Quinta Esencia, which performs an eclectic mix of Latin American, classical, and modern music. The group regularly commissions new works. She maintains a private flute studio in the Boston area.

Chris Welch

Violoncello

Chris Welch grew up in England, spending his collegiate years in the U.S. He received his undergraduate degree from Stetson University in Florida, then his Masters in Cello Performance from Longy School of Music. Chris has had a wide variety of music experiences, ranging from hillside concerts on an Italian island, playing at The BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, an impromptu concert at Bayeux Cathedral and various jazz concerts in a variety of ensembles. Chris's interest in new music began in his undergraduate years, where he was constantly working with composers on new compositions, as well as composing and performing his own works.

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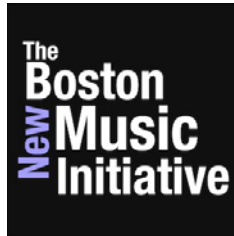


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