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NEC Wind Ensemble

Matthew Marsit, guest conductor

Tuesday, March 31, 2026 | 7:30 p.m. | NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

Luis Serrano Alarcón
(b. 1972)

***Duende* (2010)**
Allegro giusto
Animato
Cadenza a piacere; molto sentito
—Lento evocativo
Tempo di Bularia

Michael Colrass
(1932–2019)

***Winds of Nagual* (1985)**
The desert: Don Juan emerges from
the mountains
Carlos meets Don Juan:
first conversation
Don Genaro satirizes Carlos
Carlos stares at the water and
becomes a bubble
The gait of power
Asking twilight for calmness and
power
Juan clowns for Carlos
Last conversation and farewell:
Carlos leaps into the unknown
and explodes into a thousand
views of the world

~ *Intermission* ~

H. Owen Reed
(1910–2014)

La Fiesta Mexicana
Prelude and Aztec Dance
Mass
Carnival

Alarcón *Duende*

The term *Duende* is used in flamenco to refer to this state of inspiration and supreme perceptiveness, almost magic, which is only reached by the performer on a few occasions. It's also used, in extension, to define a person when someone has a special grace, something difficult to define but that makes him different from the rest. The use of the word *Duende* as the title of this collection of symphonic preludes, independently of its poetic significance, is mainly based on the fact that I found my principal inspiration for this composition in Spanish popular music: listening to the piece, the listener can hear, among other features, the symphonic energy of de Falla's scores, the intimacy of *Iberia* by Albeniz, the magic of the guitar played by Tomatito or Paco de Lucía, the festive happiness of Granadine Sacromonte (a popular flamenco neighborhood in Granada), but specially, and I insist on this one, the obvious presence of winks to other music styles, such as jazz or latin music. With this style fusion, I want to reflect in a symbolic way what our Spanish society stands for nowadays: a society with many traditions, but at the same time a cosmopolitan and modern community, which cannot be different in these modern times in which we are living.

— Luis Serrano Alarcón

Colgrass *Winds of Nagual*

Winds of Nagual is based on the writings of Carlos Castaneda about his 14-year apprenticeship with Don Juan Matis, a Yaqui Indian sorcerer from Northwestern Mexico. Castaneda met Don Juan while researching hallucinogenic plants for his master's thesis in anthropology at UCLA. Juan became Castaneda's mentor and trained him in pre-Colombian techniques of sorcery, the overall purpose of which is to find the creative self -- what Juan calls the nagual.

Each of the characters has a musical theme: Juan's is dark and ominous, yet gentle and kind; Carlos's is open, direct and naïve. We hear Carlos's theme throughout the piece from constantly changing perspectives, as Juan submits him to long desert marches, encounters with terrifying powers and altered states of reality. A comic aspect is added to the piece by Don Genaro, a sorcerer friend of Juan's, who frightens Carlos with fantastic tricks like disappearing and reappearing at will. The score is laced with programmatic indications such as "Juan entrances Carlos with a stare," "a horrible creature leaps at Carlos," "He feels a deep calm and joy," etc.

The listener need not have read Castaneda's books to enjoy the work, and I don't expect anyone to follow any exact scenario. My

object is to capture the mood and atmosphere created by the books and to convey a feeling of the relationship that develops as a man of ancient wisdom tries to cultivate heart in an analytical young man of a technological age.

— Michael Colgrass

In a 1991 interview, Colgrass described his approach to *Winds of Nagual* stating, "Important to me in this piece is the sudden change of styles and feelings and moods and tempos. These characteristics are indigenous to the books, where a humorous situation will be followed instantly by a terrifying one. I tried to capture these changes and moods in the music."

Winds of Nagual was commissioned by the New England Conservatory Wind Ensemble and is respectfully dedicated to its director, Frank Battisti.

Reed *La Fiesta Mexicana*

In 1948, H. Owen Reed spent six months in Mexico while on a Guggenheim Fellowship, during which time he studied folk music and composed. *La Fiesta Mexicana* was a result of his time in the country and reflects his observations of the culture. The composer provides these comments:

Prelude and Aztec Dance — The tolling of the church bells at midnight officially announces the opening of the Fiesta, which has previously been unofficially announced by the setting off of fireworks, the drinking of tequila and pulque, and the migration of thousands of Mexicans and Indians to the center of activity — the high court surrounding the cathedral. After a brave effort at gaiety, the celebrators settle down to a restless night, until the early quiet of the Mexican morning is once more shattered by the church bells and fireworks. At mid-morning a band is heard in the distance. However, attention is soon focused upon the Aztec dancers, brilliantly plumed and masked, who dance in ever-increasing frenzy to a dramatic climax.

The second movement, *Mass*, presents the tolling of the bells, reminding that the Fiesta is a religious celebration. The rich and poor slowly gather within the walls of the old cathedral for contemplation and worship. Mexico is at its best on the days of the Fiesta in which passion governs the love, hate and joy of the Mestizo and the Indio.

The third movement, *Carnival*, reflects the entertainment for both young and old — the itinerant circus, the market, the bullfight, the town band, and always the cantinas with their band of mariachis.

Matthew M. Marsit is an active conductor and clarinetist that has led ensembles and performed as a solo, chamber, and orchestral musician throughout the United States. He became chair of instrumental studies at Boston Conservatory at Berklee in 2018, and also serves as artistic director of the Charles River Wind Ensemble. Marsit has previously held conducting positions at Dartmouth College, Ithaca College, Cornell University, Drexel University, Symphony Nova, Chestnut Hill Orchestra, Bucks County Youth Ensembles, Performing Arts Institute of Wyoming Seminary, and Eastern U.S. Music Camp.

A champion for new music and advancing the wind ensemble repertoire, Marsit has led premiere performances of works by Christopher Marshall, Louis Andriessen, Daniel Basford, Christopher Theofanidis, Richard Marriott, Michael Gandolfi, Matthew Herman, Edward Green, and Thomas Miller, among others.

As a clarinetist, Marsit has performed with many ensembles including The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Fairmont Chamber Orchestra, and Cornell University's Ensemble X, and has made solo appearances with the Keene State College Concert Band, Dartmouth College Wind Ensemble, Handel Society of Dartmouth College, Cornell University Jazz Ensemble, Performing Arts Institute of Wyoming Seminary, Drexel University Symphony Orchestra, and Chestnut Hill Orchestra. Marsit has served as clarinet faculty at Plymouth State University.

An advocate for the use of music as a vehicle for service, Marsit has led ensembles on service missions that collect and donation instruments to schools, as well as performing concerts and workshops to benefit struggling arts programs. His work at Dartmouth College allowed him to complete outreach projects with rural schools in New Hampshire and Vermont. This work included stimulating interest in performing arts programs like the highly successful Dartmouth Youth Wind Ensemble, where members of the Dartmouth College Wind Ensemble mentor and perform alongside middle school students throughout the region. In 2014, Marsit led the Dartmouth College Wind Ensemble on their first international service and performance tour to San José, Costa Rica. This tour

partnered with the National Institute of Music in Costa Rica and the University of Costa Rica, as well as several Sistema Nacional de Educación Musical Schools throughout the country. Students were allowed to share and exchange with young students in low-income communities. Following the first tour in 2014, the Dartmouth College Wind Ensemble returned again in 2017.

A native of Hazleton, Pennsylvania, Marsit first completed his studies in music at Temple University in Philadelphia, where he graduated summa cum laude. He studied clarinet performance under the tutelage of Anthony Gigliotti and Ronald Reuben, and conducting with Luis Biava and Arthur Chodoroff. Additionally Marsit has studied conducting with some of the world's most prominent instructors, including Mark Davis Scatterday at the Eastman School of Music, Timothy Reynish at the Royal Northern College of Music in the United Kingdom, and Gianluigi Gelmetti at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Italy. Marsit completed a M.M. in conducting from Boston Conservatory in 2012.

NEC Wind Ensemble Matthew Marsit, guest conductor

Flute

Meredith Daly ‡
 Amelia Kazazian
 Subee Kim
 Alexander Lehmann *
 Nina Zeya Ma
 Sara Wen ^
 Yuzuka Williams

Piccolo

Rylan Collins ^
 Meredith Daly ‡
 Amelia Kazazian
 Subee Kim
 Alexander Lehmann *

Alto Flute

Alexander Lehmann ‡
 Sara Wen

Oboe

Yuhsi Chang *
 Annie Jung
 Timothy Zhang ^

English horn

Timothy Zhang

Clarinet

Lauren Enos *
 Eugene Jung ‡
 Juhyun Lee
 Robert Ray ^
 Haoran Sun
 Frank Tao
 Tain Yi

E-flat Clarinet

Robert Ray

Alto Clarinet

Xunan Chen

Bass Clarinet

Rohan Miovic

Contra Alto Clarinet

Eugene Jung

Contrabass Clarinet

Xunan Chen

Bassoon

Valerie Curd ^
 Jialu Wang *

Contrabassoon

Daniel Arakaki

Saxophone

Andrés Almirall (A)
 Yiyuan Ding (A, Bs)
 Shengjie Lu (T)
 Jia Dong Ou (B)
 Shuhan Wang (A, S)

French horn

Elijah Barclift ^
 Chi-Yu Ashley Chiang
 Mathys Elbaz
 Caroline Finamore ‡
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 Mauricio Martinez
 Karlin Rhees
 Jaden Rudnicki

Trumpet

Kayla Adams ‡
 Maxwell DeForest
 Sarah Flynn
 Jake Hepler ^
 Harry James II
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 Anry Ramirez
 Gavin Waterman

Flugelhorn

Evan Jones

Euphonium

Zev Barden *‡
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Trombone

Becca Bertekap
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 Alex Russell ‡

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 Jason Sato ‡^

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Percussion

Dillon Akerman
Camden Briggs ‡
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Chris Koo
Jackson Kowalczyk ^
Raina Liao *
Brandon Topolski
Mingcheng Abel
Zhou

Harp

Ji Ma

Keyboard

Julian Durr

Double Bass

Yushu Mei

Principal players

* Alarcón

‡ Colgrass

^ Reed

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