

# PRELUDE



Official Newsletter of the ECSO



## We're Back!

Toshiyuki Shimada  
Music Director & Conductor

Just as I dreamt, the start of the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra's 75th anniversary season was a great success. With two amazing concerts this fall, it felt good to be back!

On October 23, it was so wonderful to celebrate the return to the Garde Arts Center with Polina Nazaykinskaya's moving symphonic poem *Fenix*, ECSO Principal Trumpet Thomas Brown's memorable performance in Haydn's *Trumpet Concerto*, and the ECSO's thrilling finish with Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5*.



During our second concert on November 20, we honored first responders who have courageously fought the pandemic while protecting the community. We not only honored them, but we had the musically talented among them up on stage to sing during the performance of *You Raise Me Up* backed up by members of the ECSC.

Continued on page 2

## This issue:

Conductor's Corner  
PAGE 01 & 02

Virtual Pre-Concert Chats and  
Digital Program Book  
PAGE 03

Musicians of the Orchestra:  
Amy Butler  
PAGE 04

Board Member Highlight  
PAGE 05

Upcoming Concert Calendar  
PAGE 06

A Message from Caleb;  
75th Season & Gala Updates  
PAGE 07

Photo Contributors: Dario Acosta, Caleb Bailey,  
Tom Bombria, Dan Brandl, Bob Reed



The evening also featured *Danse Nègre*, the final movement of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's *African Suite* and a triumphant *Symphony No. 5* from Tchaikovsky. The highlight was performing two world premieres by Tom Myron, *Bell Harbor* and *New London Skyline Fanfare*. Don't worry if you missed the fanfare. This 75th anniversary celebratory piece will be performed at the beginning of each concert during the season.

It was great to see so many new and familiar faces in the audience. I am so thankful for the patrons who attended our two indoor concerts and showed their enthusiastic support throughout each evening. I am thankful that our donors kept the faith and supported us even when we had to pivot to a different way of performing. I am thankful for the orchestra musicians who have kept up their performance level during the pandemic and were eager to get back to making music for our audience.

The orchestra's first concert of 2022 (and our third of our 75th anniversary season) begins with the U.S. premiere of *Imitation of Life* by award-winning composer Ekaterina Buzovkina, a recent graduate of the State Musical Institute in Moscow. Carrying on the Russian theme is the evening's soloist: Igor Pikayzen. The Moscow-born graduate of the Juilliard School and the Yale School of Music joins the orchestra to play Shostakovich's *Violin Concerto No. 1*. Following intermission, I lead the orchestra in a performance of Sibelius's *Symphony No. 7*.

The fourth concert of the season features the world premiere of *Scattering* by composer, and media artist Joseph Butch Rován. Saxophonist and U.S. Coast Guard Band member Joshua Thomas then takes the stage as soloist for a performance of *Rush*, by Kenneth Fuchs, professor of music composition at the University of Connecticut. Shostakovich's brief *Waltz No. 2*, closes out the first half. Following intermission we perform Prokofiev *Romeo and Juliet: Suite No. 2*. Check out our website for digital program notes and virtual pre-concert chats between me and our guests artists and composers.

I can't wait to see you at all our concerts and events this season. Please join us in celebrating our 75th season. More importantly, let's celebrate that we can gather to enjoy the gift of great music together.

-Toshi

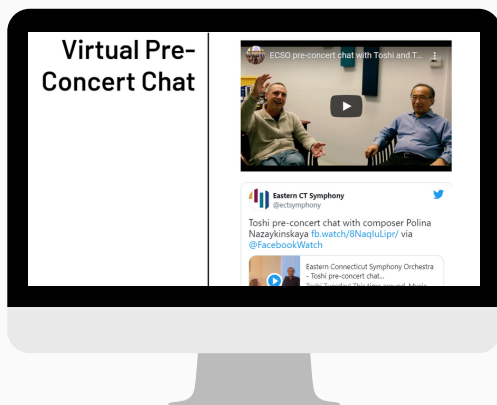


## Virtual Pre-Concert Chats

Want to know more about the upcoming concert? Dive into the music on the concert pages on our website: [www.ectsymphony.com](http://www.ectsymphony.com). There you will find Music Director & Conductor Toshiyuki Shimada moderating discussions with soloists, musicians, and composers. curated Spotify playlists, and fascinating program notes about the composers and guest artists.

As our website remains one of the best ways to inform our fans of what's going on during rapidly changing circumstances, we are thrilled to be able to offer in-depth content about the ECSO and our concerts.

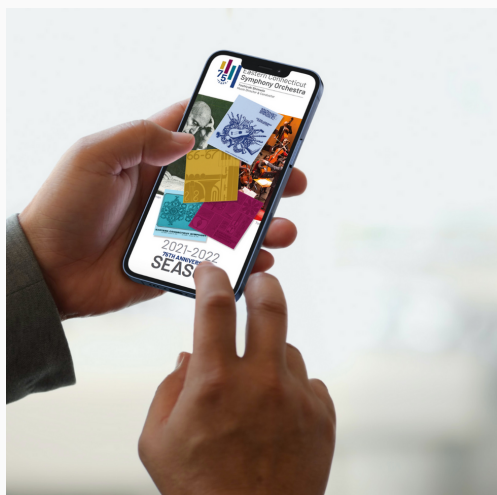
This season pre-concert chats are going to be offered virtually on each concert page of our website as well as our social media pages.

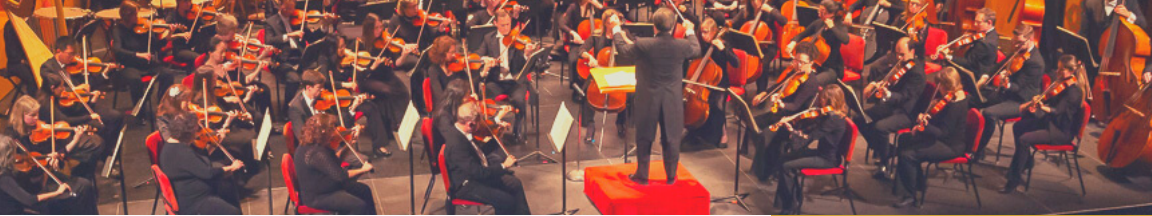


## Digital Program Book

Arrive at our concerts this season with your own program book in your pocket. This digital book contains all the same program notes on the repertoire featured in each concert along with clickable links, and biographies on our guest artists and musicians.

Visit our website to download the interactive PDF or scan the QR code below with your phone's camera to quickly have the ECSO at your fingertips.





## Musicians of the Orchestra: Amy Ward Butler

New Jersey-based cellist, Amy Ward Butler counts herself very fortunate to have had as teachers Orlando Cole in Philadelphia, and Steven Doane and Paul Katz at the Eastman School of Music. At Tanglewood, she played for Yo-Yo Ma in a variety of master classes, including a rare chance to perform "Schelomo" with the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra. She has been a member of the Kennedy Center Opera Orchestra and has performed in the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Harrisburg Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. Besides her position as principal cellist with the ECSO, Ms. Butler is also the principal cellist of the Reading Symphony Orchestra, a founding member of the Tapestry Cello Ensemble and the cellist for the Paper Mill Theater in New Jersey. She performs with the Montclair Orchestra and the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra. She plays on a Raffaele and Antonio Gagliano cello made in Napoli in the early 1800's.

**What don't people know about you?** I'm a really good cook. And I love playing games (I usually win!) I'm also a dog and cat whisperer.

**In May of this season, you will be one of three featured soloists on Beethoven's *Triple Concerto*—with the cello introducing most of the thematic material in each movement. What are your thoughts going into practicing for such a concerto that requires two other soloists?** It's generally agreed that the cello solo part of the Beethoven *Triple* is the hardest of the three. Beethoven composed the piece for a teenage piano student of his (Archduke Rudolf of Austria) and left the musical "heavy lifting" to the other two soloists. The legend goes that the cellist who premiered it, Nicholas Kraft, commandeered all the big melodies for himself. Or it could simply be that Beethoven understood that unless the cello was played in the higher register, the sound would be lost amongst the orchestral accompaniment. Either way, the result is that the cello part is a particularly virtuosic one. I've never played it before...sometimes, I wonder what I've gotten myself into!

This concerto is often performed by established piano trios who have the opportunity to rehearse together and already know one another really well, both personally and musically. Such is not the case for us, as we all live in different parts of the country. We are all practicing our parts on our own. I'm not sure when we will have the chance to practice it together prior to our May series, so it really will be an adventure. Any performance is a leap of faith. This, I admit, will be a big one. I thank Toshi for the opportunity.

**"The first time I performed after winning the job, it was for Toshi's 10th anniversary gala. I loved hearing the other members of the orchestra playing in chamber groups and was so proud that I was a new member of the orchestra."**

AMY WARD BUTLER





## Board Member Highlight

ALICE SOSCIA

An energetic and community-minded leader, Alice is currently the Development Officer at L+M Hospital. Before fundraising for the hospital, she worked as the Director of Campaign and Leadership Giving for United Way of Southeastern CT. Alice received her bachelor's degree in Communications from the University of Tampa and is a former television and radio producer. She has been a member of the Mystic River Boathouse Park and Hart Perry Community Rowing Center, the Town of Stonington Charter Revision Commission, and on the board of Hope in Focus (formerly Sophia Sees Hope.)

“ There is definitely something about live music that is both magical and exciting as well as unpredictable and completely exhilarating. ”

ALICE SOSCIA

**Your first musical memory:** My earliest childhood memories involve music. Our house was always filled with music of all kinds from rock-n-roll to orchestral. In kindergarten, I was introduced to the violin and like many students, the recorder. I played violin and viola through high school in the John Jay High School orchestra. I was also part of the band and played in the percussion section. Music is certainly my happy place. During middle school and high school, I marched in parades throughout New England with my three-cornered hat and white knickers in a local fife and drum corps. I played the fife, the snare, and bass drum.



**How did you get involved with the ECSO?** When asked if I would be interested in joining the board of directors for the ECSO, the decision was an easy one. I consider it an honor to play a small part in promoting the joy of music within our community and share my enthusiasm with all of our dedicated board members. Besides, who wouldn't want to work with Toshi and Caleb (ECSO's Executive Director)?

**What do you enjoy most about an ECSO concert?** There is definitely something about live music that is both magical and exciting as well as unpredictable and completely exhilarating. It's always a joy listening to the musicians as they convey emotion through the notes of the music through the interpretation of our Music Director and Conductor Toshiyuki Shimada.

**What don't people know about you?** My husband and I enjoy boating in the summer. Some other fun facts include: In 1990 I was the first female honored at the Pentagon for the Department of the Army *Civilian Broadcast Journalist of the Year*. I was on the University of Tampa's crew team and won national's in 1987 in Women's Lightweight Four.



# 2022 CONCERTS

**JAN  
22**

**FEB  
19**

**WITH  
PERFORMANCES BY**

Amy Butler, Elissa Lee  
Koljonen, Igor Pikayzen,  
Joshua Thomas, Jason  
Vieaux, & Eva Virsik

**FEATURING  
WORKS BY**

Beethoven, Bizet,  
Buzovkina, Haydn,  
Mendelssohn, Price,  
Prokofiev, Rodrigo,  
Sibelius, Shostakovich,  
Tchaikovsky, & Walker

**AND A WORLD PREMIERE BY**  
Joseph Butch Rován

**MAR  
19**

**MAY  
07**

ALL WORKS, ARTISTS,  
AND DATES SUBJECT  
TO CHANGE

VISIT  
[ECTSYMPHONY.COM](https://ECTSYMPHONY.COM)  
FOR MORE INFO



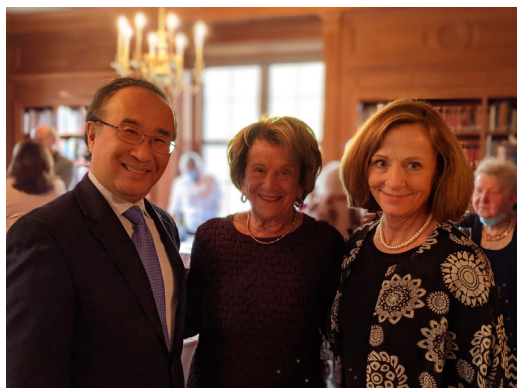
## A Message from Caleb Bailey, ECSO Executive Director



After almost 600 days without performances, 1 year and 7 months without euphonious sounds, and 13,870 hours spent missing an indoor audience, the Eastern Connecticut

Symphony Orchestra returned to its most welcoming home, the Garde Arts Center in New London. The start of our 75th Anniversary Season could not have been better celebrated after having faced such a long period of time marked by a global pandemic. There is no denying the sense of gratitude and joy that filled the hearts of those in the hall to be gathered together in community for a live performance again.

It was a thrill to hear a recital by ECSO Concertmaster, **Stephan Tieszen** performing three Romantic era pieces. He wowed the audience with Beethoven, Wieniawski, and Vaughan Williams.



One of the best moments was when **Patricia Hendel**, our Honorary Event Chairperson, spoke to the audience about the ECSO and its place in her heart and in the community. We thank everyone who was there to celebrate 75 years and look forward to ECSO's bright future and continued growth.



We were so happy to celebrate the start of our 75th anniversary season with a party at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum on Sunday, November, 7, 2021. It was great to reconnect with old friends and welcome new supporters for a wonderful afternoon of hors d'oeuvres, wine, and music.

## Save the Date for our indoor Gala: Saturday, April 9th Mystic Marriott

We are excited to announce the return of our annual Gala on April 9th! Join us for a special celebratory event and performance from Toshi and ECSO musicians.

There will be a silent auction, accessible from your smartphone, tablet, or computer and will be available for bidding in the weeks leading up to our event at the Mystic Marriott.

Stay tuned for more information on our website and an invitation to arrive in your mailbox shortly!

-Caleb





# Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra

Toshiyuki Shimada  
Music Director & Conductor

289 State St. New London, CT 06320

NON PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 284  
NEW LONDON, CT  
06320

