

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Electric Romance – Saturday, February 19, 2022, 7:30pm
Garde Arts Center, 325 State St., New London, CT 06320

The fourth concert of the ECSO's 75th anniversary season features the world premiere of *Scattering* by composer, media artist, and performer Joseph Butch Rován, inaugural faculty director of the Brown Arts Initiative at Brown University, where his focus is the innovative Music & Multimedia Composition program. Rován was quoted on the piece's unique equipment that he designed for the premiere: "...I built a custom instrument for the conductor's left hand that tracks movement, direction, and acceleration. I call the instrument TOSHI (The Orchestra-Synthesis Human Interface), in honor of ECSO's dynamic conductor, Toshi Shimada. At critical points in the exposition, Toshi's gestures produce a scattering of live electronic sounds that both comment on the orchestra and foretell what is to come."

Saxophonist and U.S. Coast Guard Band member Joshua Thomas then takes the Garde Arts Center stage as soloist for a performance of *Rush*, a two-movement concerto for alto saxophone and orchestra by Kenneth Fuchs, professor of music composition at the University of Connecticut. Dmitri Shostakovich's brief *Waltz No. 2*, written as part of the composer's *Suite for Variety Orchestra* around 1956, closes out the first half. Shostakovich's older contemporary Sergei Prokofiev composed the colorful music for *Romeo and Juliet*, a ballet based on William Shakespeare's classic tragedy. Prokofiev later repurposed his score for the ballet into several suites for orchestra, including *Suite No. 2*, which follows intermission.

Covid Policy:

In order to safely celebrate our 75th anniversary season, we are implementing new concert attendance guidelines. All audience members will need to provide proof of a full course of vaccination for COVID-19 or a negative COVID-19 PCR test taken within 72 hours from the start of the concert. Items you should bring for admission to the hall includes a photo ID, photo or copy of your vaccination card, OR a photo, text, or email of a negative test result, where applicable. Masks will be required indoors at all times unless actively eating or drinking. Anyone unable or unwilling to comply with these guidelines may be asked to leave the concert, however refunds will be available in such cases.

Additionally, there will be no pre-concert chats in the hall or post-concert receptions in the upper lobby as there have been in the past until it is deemed safe to resume these once more. These guidelines are subject to change as the circumstances require and if government and venue recommendations evolve.

About Joshua Thomas, saxophone soloist:

Saxophonist Joshua Thomas has built a robust, multi-faceted career based on the foundations of high musical standards, a love of performance and education, and engaging interaction with audiences.

Since winning a coveted position as a full-time musician in the United States Coast Guard Band in 2000, he has performed hundreds of concerts around the world as a featured soloist, chamber musician, and a member of large ensembles. Away from the military, Thomas is active in performance and education. He is a member of the New London Big Band and the new music ensemble, the Bassless Trio. Thomas is currently on faculties at Eastern Connecticut State University, Connecticut College and the Hartt School community division.

A proponent of new music, Thomas has commissioned and premiered over 50 new works, from concertos, to electro/acoustic and unaccompanied works, to chamber music. Currently, he leads Smart Repertoire, a commissioning consortium that cultivates new works for intermediate level saxophonists.

Thomas received his Bachelor of Music Education at Michigan State University, Master of Music in performance at Louisiana State University, Master of Arts in music theory at Connecticut College, and Doctorate of Musical Arts in performance at the University of Hartford's Hartt School of Music.

About Joseph Butch Rován, composer:

Joseph Butch Rován is a composer, media artist, and performer on the faculty of the Department of Music at Brown University, where he helped develop the Music & Multimedia Composition (MMC) program. From 2013-16 he was chair of Music and from 2016-19 he was the inaugural faculty director of the Brown Arts Initiative.

Prior to his work at Brown, Rován was a *compositeur en recherche* with the Real-Time Systems Team at the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique (IRCAM) in Paris, as well as a faculty member at both Florida State University and the University of North Texas, where he directed CEMI, the Center for Experimental Music and Intermedia. Rován worked at Opcode Systems before leaving for Paris, serving as Product Manager for Max, OMS and MIDI hardware.

Rován received his Ph.D. in Music from the University of California at Berkeley, where he studied with Richard Felciano, Olly Wilson, and Jorge Liderman. He has received prizes from the Bourges International Electroacoustic Music Competition, first prize in the Berlin Transmediale International Media Arts Festival, and his work has been performed throughout Europe and the U.S. His interactive installation *Let us imagine a straight line* was featured in the 14th WRO International Media Art Biennale, Poland, and his work *of the survival of images*, for custom GLOBE controller, video and sound, is included on the Computer Music Journal DVD *Sound and Video Anthology*. His music appears on the Wergo, EMF, Circumvention, and SEAMUS labels.

Rován's research includes new sensor hardware design and wireless microcontroller systems. His research into gestural control and interactivity has been featured in IRCAM's journal *Resonance*, *Electronic Musician*, the *Computer Music Journal*, the Japanese magazine *SoundArts*, the CDROM *Trends in Gestural Control of Music* (IRCAM 2000), and in the book *Mapping Landscapes for Performance as Research: Scholarly Acts and Creative Cartographies* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). In 2019 he was awarded a patent with collaborator Peter Bussigel for a new electronic musical instrument design.



ECSO general copy:

We are thrilled to announce our 75th Anniversary Season's lineup, curated by Music Director and Conductor Toshiyuki Shimada. This season marks the 12th year under the musical leadership of Music Director and Conductor Toshiyuki Shimada. Visit www.ectsymphony.com for more information and follow us on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube) @ectsymphony. The ECSO offers a range of affordable seating options from \$65 to as low as \$12 for attendance to one concert. The ECSO will continue to offer those under 40 years of age and active or retired military members \$12 tickets in premium sections.

Founded in 1946 by Norwegian immigrant, Victor Norman, the mission of the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra is to inspire, educate, and connect our communities through live orchestral music.