



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**MENDELSSOHN & DEBUSSY– Saturday, April 22, 2023, 7:30 pm**  
**Garde Arts Center, 325 State St., New London, CT 06320**

In celebration of Earth Day, the concert will open with *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* by Felix Mendelssohn, a German composer, pianist, organist, and conductor of the early Romantic period. Mendelssohn's "Calm Sea" lacks the eerie "dead silence" and instead takes a more inclusive view, placing us in the scene by ambiguously interweaving objective imagery with emotional responses --the vague anxiety in the groping lines and the fervent prayer in the urgent but hesitant lyricism. Shirley Kim, ECSO's 2022 Instrumental Competition winner will then perform *Schelomo: Rhapsodie Hébraïque*, composed by Ernest Bloch. According to Bloch's description, the solo cello in *Schelomo* is the personification of King Solomon, and the orchestra represents the world around him, and his life.

After the intermission, *Voices Shouting Out*, composed by Nkeiru Okoye, who specializes in composing in a variety of musical styles, will be performed; this piece is considered her response to the 9/11 tragedy, reflecting the determination of a people to move forward in faith and unity. ECSO will also perform *Jeder Baum spricht* (Every Tree Speaks) by Iman Habibi, an Iranian-Canadian composer and pianist. Inspired by Beethoven's ideas about nature, Iman Habibi composed *Jeder Baum spricht*, which aims to explore climate change.

Finally, ECSO's season will conclude with *La mer* by French composer Claude Debussy, whose work depict the sea perfectly, expressing its ever-changing shapes, shimmering surfaces and mysterious depths. Although some call *La mer* a symphony, it may be more accurately described as an anti-symphony, as it deliberately eschews traditional symphonic forms. Instead, it erodes those traditions by revealing alternatives, just as the waves have reshaped even the most rugged shores.

Soloist bios and headshots are included and attached to the press release email.

**Shirley Kim, Cello for Bloch:**

Shirley Kim is currently pursuing her master's degree in orchestral performance at the Manhattan School of Music with Alan Stepansky. Prior to studying at the Manhattan School of Music, Shirley completed her undergraduate studies at the Eastman School of Music with Steven Doane and Rosemary Elliot. At Eastman, Shirley served as principal cellist of the Philharmonia and was part of the honors quartet. An avid chamber musician, she was selected as the recipient of the 2021 Celentano chamber award for excellence in chamber music at Eastman.

Her other notable chamber prizes include 2nd prize at the MTNA chamber competition and 1st prize at the Pasadena Conservatory of Music Chamber Competition in 2017. Shirley is a Los Angeles native and she began the cello at age four with Nancy Yamagata at the Colburn School and studied with Dr. Richard Naill in her highschool years. She served as principal cellist of the Colburn Youth orchestra in 2017 and in 2016, she was the prizewinner of their 2016 concerto competition in which she performed Lalo's Cello Concerto at the LACMA's Bing Theater.



Shirley has performed in venues such as Walt Disney Concert Hall, Zipper Hall, and the Morgan Library Museum. During the summers Shirley has attended Music Academy of the West, Sarasota Festival Orchestra, Heifetz International Music Festival, Chautauqua Festival Orchestra, Bowdoin International Festival, and Orford Musique. Shirley enjoys hiking and cooking in her free time.

**Covid Policy:**

New concert attendance guidelines have been implemented in order for concertgoers to safely enjoy the new season. While ECSO maintains its commitment to the importance of COVID-19 vaccination and encourages patrons to be up to date with their vaccinations according to their personal health requirements, as of August 11, patrons are no longer required to show proof of vaccination or negative proof of COVID-19 testing at ECSO for events. It is not mandatory to wear a mask while indoors, but you may choose to wear one.

We will continue to review the current situation and any updated guidelines from the CDC and the State of Connecticut to determine what changes may be necessary.

**ECSO general copy:**

We are thrilled to continue our 22-23 Season's lineup, curated by Music Director and Conductor Toshiyuki Shimada. This season marks the 13th year under the musical leadership of Music Director and Conductor Toshiyuki Shimada. Visit [www.ectsymphony.com](http://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. ECSO is also active in promoting music education in New London by offering educational programs, watch our website for details.

*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.*