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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EASTERN CONNECTICUT SYMPHONY OPENS 77<sup>TH</sup> SEASON OCT. 21  
Blue Attire Suggested for Centennial of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*

The Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra's 77<sup>th</sup> season, comprising six Saturday-evening concerts at the Garde Arts Center, 289 State Street in downtown New London, will begin on Oct. 21, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. Led by Music Director & Conductor Toshiyuki Shimada, the orchestra will play works by Amy Beach, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, George Gershwin, and Tom Myron, shifting into Dixieland mode for a joint performance with the Tom Brown 6. The concert is sponsored by Olde Mistick Village.

Six- and four-concert subscriptions for the ECSO's 2023-24 season may be purchased by calling 860-443-2876 or visiting [ectsymphony.com](http://ectsymphony.com). Tickets for individual concerts—on Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Jan. 27, Feb. 24, March 30, and April 27—go on sale at [gardearts.org](http://gardearts.org) on Sept. 25.

To kick off its 77<sup>th</sup> season, the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra will present a festive program of short works in several styles. First up: a world premiere, *Monhegan Sunrise (Peace Fanfare)*, by Massachusetts-based composer Tom Myron, inspired by dawn on the rocky Maine island. Originally a waltz for solo piano, the 1893 *Bal masqué* by New Hampshire-born Amy Beach, the first successful woman composer in the U.S., will follow, depicting the spirited masked ball of the title.

Closing out the first half, the most famous clarinet "smear" in classical music will signal the start of George Gershwin's jazz-influenced *Rhapsody in Blue*, which turns 100 early

next year. Taking on the solo keyboard part that Gershwin himself played at the 1924 premiere will be versatile Connecticut-based pianist Gary Chapman. Speaking of rhapsodies, *The Bamboula*, composed in 1905 by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, the son of an English mother and an African father, is subtitled *Rhapsodic Dance for Orchestra*. The evening will go out in New Orleans style, with traditional jazz arrangements of familiar tunes performed by the Tom Brown 6, a Dixieland band, led by former ECSO Principal Trumpet Thomas Brown, who was also a U.S. Coast Guard Band member from 2002 until his recent retirement.

Attendees are encouraged to wear blue to celebrate the centennial of Gershwin's masterpiece at the Oct. 21 concert and the post-concert reception.

### **To purchase tickets:**

Subscribing to the ECSO's concert season provides a significant discount versus purchasing individual tickets, secures your seats, and grants you access to complimentary vouchers which you can use to bring along family or friends.

Single tickets to events will be available for purchase through the ECSO and Garde Arts Center website at [gardearts.org](http://gardearts.org) beginning September 25, 2023.

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The Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra is thrilled to announce our 2023-24 season lineup, curated by Music Director & Conductor Toshiyuki Shimada. Season highlights include the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of *Rhapsody in Blue*, The Tom Brown 6, the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Chorus singing Haydn's *Lord Nelson's Mass*, and international guest artists. From early fall to late spring, the 75-plus member professional Symphony Orchestra presents six subscription concerts annually, most of which feature guest soloists. Subscription concerts are primarily performed at the historic award-winning Garde Arts Center on State Street in New London.

Visit [ectsymphony.com](http://ectsymphony.com) for more information and follow us on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube) @ectsymphony. In addition to a range of affordable



single-ticket options—from \$65 to as low as \$12—the ECSO offers those under 40 years of age and active or retired military members \$12 tickets in selected sections.

Founded in 1946 by Norwegian immigrant Victor Norman, the ECSO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving the eastern Connecticut region, including New London, Norwich, Waterford, Groton, Mystic, Old Lyme, and East Lyme. Recent concerts in Norwich, Willimantic, and Stonington reflect our renewed dedication to serving a broader area.

*Our mission is to inspire, educate, and connect our communities through live orchestral music.*