

Former Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis joins the New England Philharmonic to ‘investigate’ the case of ‘The Usual Orchestral Suspects’ on December 10

The Usual Orchestral Suspects — Annual Family Concert
Tsai Performance Center | December 10, 3 p.m.

BOSTON — “There’s dreadful news from the symphony hall—the composer is dead!” That’s how **Lemony Snicket’s** adventurous whodunit, **“The Composer Is Dead,”** begins. The [New England Philharmonic](#) (NEP), under the direction of **Richard Pittman**, will perform Nathaniel Stookey’s 2006 work of the same name (created as a CD companion to the book) on December 10 at the Tsai Performance Center for their annual family concert.

Former Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis will be putting his 40-plus years of investigative experience to use as the narrator and ‘inspector’ who will work with the audience to solve the case. With a dead composer backstage and each section of the orchestra having an ample motive for committing the crime, and a curious alibi, he’ll have his work cut out for him. As the author proclaims, “If you’ve ever heard an orchestra play, then you know that musicians are most certainly guilty of something.”

The NEP will also perform John Adams’ “Short Ride in a Fast Machine” and Aaron Copland’s “Old American Songs, Set 1” with the [Cambridge Children’s Chorus](#), Wendy Silverberg, Director.

The afternoon will also feature **Violinist Keila Wakao**, 11, winner of the **NEP’s 32nd Annual Young Artist Competition**, who will perform Pablo de Sarasate’s “Zigeunerweisen” (Gypsy Airs) Op. 20. Despite her young age, Wakao has proven herself as a serious and competitive violinist. At the age of seven, she won the Forte International Music Competition in New York, followed by a 1st place win at the 8th Yokohama International Music Competition in Japan. Other recent accolades include: winner of Waltham Symphony Orchestra Young Artist String Competition and winner of the New England Conservatory Prep Concerto Competition.

Additionally, the concert will feature a gift drive to benefit **Cradles to Crayons** and an **Instrument Petting Zoo**, courtesy of Johnson Strings. Cradles to Crayons is asking for new, unwrapped toys and clothing for children aged 0 to 16. Boots, hats, gloves and coats are especially in demand this winter.

About the New England Philharmonic: Now performing its 41st season, the NEP, under the direction of Richard Pittman, is internationally renowned for its daring programming encompassing both contemporary and traditional works. The volunteer orchestra has earned nine ASCAP awards for Adventurous Programming and was named Best Local Musician(s) of the Year in 2016 by The Arts Fuse. The orchestra’s illustrious past includes the installation of three landmark programs. The NEP became the first orchestra of its size to support a composer-in-residence (1985), introduce a Call for Scores program (1985), and establish a Young Artist Competition (1994), legacies that endure today.

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