

11-21-2008

Jewel Box Series: Nov. 21, 2008

Jewel Box Staff

Follow this and additional works at: <https://neiudc.neiu.edu/jewel>

Recommended Citation

Staff, Jewel Box, "Jewel Box Series: Nov. 21, 2008" (2008). *Jewel Box Series*. 67.
<https://neiudc.neiu.edu/jewel/67>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Publications at NEIU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Jewel Box Series by an authorized administrator of NEIU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact neiudc@neiu.edu.



S. entice

*The Arts at
Northeastern Illinois University*

2008 • 2009

Northeastern Illinois University, Jewel Box Series
Friday, November 21, 2008
Recital Hall

Vanessa Perez

Piano

J.S. BACH Partita No. 2 in C minor, BWV 826

Sinfonia
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Rondeau
Capriccio

ALBÉNIZ Two Selections from *Iberia*

Evocation (Book I)
Triana (Book II)

VILLA-LOBOS *A Lenda Do Caboclo*

Selections from *Prôle do Bêbé*, Series One

Branquinha (The Porcelain Doll)
Moreninha (The Paper Doll)
A Pobresinha (The Rag Doll)
O Polichinelo (The Punch Doll)

INTERMISSION

CHOPIN Ballade No. 1 in G minor, Op. 23
Ballade No. 2 in F major, Op. 38
Ballade No. 3 in Ab major, Op. 47
Ballade No. 4 in F minor, Op. 52

Exclusive Management:
John Gingrich Management, Inc.
P.O. Box 1515
New York, NY 10023
(212) 799-5080; FAX (212) 874-7652
www.gingrich.com

Thank You to our Sponsors

Northeastern Illinois University would like to welcome Jesús Rodríguez Espinoza, Consul General of the Bolivarian Republic of Bolivariana of Venezuela in Chicago.

Tonight's concert was made possible by support from the **Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela** and Chevron's program **Venezuelan Sounds**. A special thanks to the Embassy's Cultural Attaché Patricia Abdelnour.

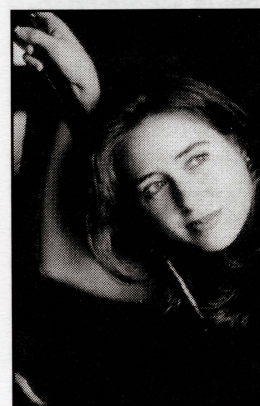


Tonight's concert is being broadcast live over WFMT Radio 98.7 FM. Please turn off all audio devices including pagers and cellular phones. Additionally, flash photography and recording devices are prohibited. We appreciate your cooperation.

— Subscribers —

Please join us in the Golden Eagle Room after the performance for a reception with the artist.

Vanessa Perez



Venezuelan-American pianist Vanessa Perez has already been recognized as a "virtuosa" of the keyboard, endowed with an extraordinary interpretative power that captivates audiences.

She began her studies at the age of seven in Caracas, Venezuela. Since the age of eight, she has appeared in solo recitals and with orchestras in concert halls around the world.

Legendary pianist Claudio Arrau heard Ms. Perez in 1989, and described her as "a pianist whose technique, musicality, and intelligent

approach to the music she plays made a profound impression on me. It is not possible to find a young artist today better equipped with all of the necessary qualities that my school of pianists requires from a performer."

At the age of 11, she gave her official debut in Caracas, playing the Grieg Piano Concerto with the Orquesta Sinfonica Municipal conducted by Carlos Riazuelo in front of an audience of 2500 people.

After winning top prizes at numerous young artist competitions in South America, the United States and Europe, Ms. Perez continued performing in concert halls and festivals throughout the world including the Montpellier Festival - Radio France; Schauspielhaus, Berlin; Kammermusiksaal - Beethoven-Haus, Bonn; Festival Settembre Musica, Turin; Schubertiade at Sotheby's in London; Keyboard Concerts Series, Fresno; Gothic Hall in Brussels; Rios Reina in Caracas; Luis Angel Arango in Bogota and Wertheim Performing Arts Center Concert Hall, Miami.

Ms. Perez performed on the La Jolla Music Society "Discovery" series in San Diego and at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall in New York City in 2004. Recordings of her performances have recently been featured on various media, including Robert Sherman's Young Artists' Showcase on WQXR-FM in New York City; WFMT 98.7FM in Chicago; WGBH in Boston; and Washington's NPR station.

Ms. Perez recorded with the Berliner Symphoniker Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1 in C major, and in October 2001, Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 in d minor (K466) together with the

Venezuelan conductor Eduardo Marturet. She also toured with the Berliner Symphoniker in their 2001 Latin American tour performing as guest soloist in The Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires; in Montevideo-Uruguay, and in Monterrey-Mexico. Other orchestras with whom she has performed as soloist are L'Orchestra "Pro Arte" Marche in Italy, the most important Orchestras in Venezuela, and in London with the Royal Academy of Music Symphony Orchestra.

Performances in 2006 -2007 took place in London, Puerto Rico, the 2006 New York International Keyboard Institute & Festival, in Colombia with the Filarmonica de Bogota under Diazmunoz, recitals in Mexico, in the U.S. concerto performances with conductor Gustav Meier and the Bridgeport Symphony, with the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, Miami Symphony orchestra, a tour in Germany with conductor John Axelrod and the Luzerne Sinfonie Orchester and with conductor Gustavo Dudamel in Caracas and the Orquesta de la Juventud Venezolana Simon Bolivar.

In chamber music collaborations, she has performed at the Wigmore Hall, London; Schnitke Festival at the RAM, London; and Montpellier Festival, France; she has also collaborated with renowned Spanish Soprano Isabel Rey and have performed together at the Opernhaus, Zurich; Dresdner Musik Festspiele, Dresden; and for the Lirica privanza's 3er Cicle d' Opera in Barcelona, Spain. In March of 2002, she received a unique invitation by Grammy award trumpeter and composer Arturo Sandoval to perform at "The Blue Note" in New York, where she was introduced by him to perform his work for piano titled "Sureña."

Actively involved in 20th century and New music, Ms. Perez has performed works and collaborated with composers such as by Paul Moravec, Suzanne Farrin, Lowell Liebermann, and Alfred Schnittke among others.

In 1998, she was awarded the Jose Felix Ribas Prize, highest honor given by the president of Venezuela to a young artist who has contributed to the enhancement of the country.

In the U.Ss she studied with Rosalina Sackstein and Ena Bronstein. At the age of 17 she was awarded a full scholarship by the Royal Academy of Music, London, studying with Christopher Elton. After graduating she continued her studies in Italy at the Accademia Pianistica "Incontri Col Maestro" in Imola with pianists Lazar Berman, and Franco Scala. Later on she completed postgraduate studies at Yale University with Hungarian pianist Peter Frankl.

Among other musicians who have strongly contributed to her musical growth are Richard Goode, Tamas Vasary, Claude Frank, Boris Berman, Lynn Harrell, Zubin Mehta, Lev Naumov and Dimitri Bashkurov.

Engagements in 2008 include collaborations with Cellist Jan Vogler, violinists Colin Jacobsen and Mira Wang, for TQ producciones in Peru a duo recital with pianist Gabriela Montero, solo recitals in the U.S., and in Puerto Rico's Casals Festival in March 2008 performed as soloist with the Orquesta de La Juventud Simon Bolivar and conductor Diego Matheuz.

Future performances include a recital in Llao Llao, Argentina, recitals in the U.S., concerts at the Moritzburg Festival in Germany, and a tour in Spain among others.

Her first of a series of recital CD's for the label VAI was released in 2005. Her most recent recording was made with cellist Jan Vogler and the Moritzburg Ensemble which was released by Sony in August 2008.



The Rose Ensemble
Friday, December 19 at 8 p.m.
 NEIU Recital Hall

Performing: *Slavic Wonders—*
Feasts & Saints in Early Russia,
Poland & Bohemia

Slavic Wonders includes stunning 12-part Baroque motets from the Russian Orthodox tradition, medieval Latin chants for Slavic saints and powerful double-choir works from the Polish Renaissance.

Tickets: \$25, \$15, 10
 773-442-4636
www.tickets.com

Notes

by Dr. Richard E. Rodda

Partita No. 2 in C minor, BWV 826
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

With the condescending pronouncement, "Since the best man could not be obtained, mediocre ones would have to be accepted," City Councilor Platz announced the appointment of Johann Sebastian Bach in 1723 as Cantor for Leipzig's churches. Platz's "best man" was Georg Philipp Telemann, then the most highly regarded composer in all Germany, and the local disappointment at not being able to pry him away from his post as Hamburg's music director was only one of the many difficulties that Bach faced during his first years on the job in Leipzig. Bach's new duties centered on directing the music for the Sunday worship at the town's four churches, principally St. Thomas, where the service usually stretched to four hours and required copious amounts of music, a sizeable portion of which the new Cantor was required to compose. Bach was responsible to the city's ecclesiastical Consistory in fulfilling these duties, which he had to balance with his teaching at the church's school, run by the town council. He was also charged with providing some of the music for Leipzig University's chapel, administered by that institution's board of governors. His dealings with none of these bodies was eased by his volatile, sometimes even belligerent temper, and his relations with his superiors were almost constantly strained. The most serious of these animosities erupted in a petition to the land's highest authority, Augustus "the Strong," Elector of Saxony, asking him to adjudicate a dispute over his assignments and pay with the University authorities, who were much concerned with Bach's paucity of formal education. Bach lost.

Much of Bach's early activity in Leipzig was carried out under the shadow of the memory of his predecessor, Johann Kuhnau, a respected musician and scholar who had published masterly translations of Greek and Hebrew, practiced as a lawyer in the city, and won wide fame for his keyboard music. In 1726, probably the earliest date allowed by the enormous demands of his official position for new sacred vocal music, Bach began a series of keyboard suites that were apparently intended to compete with those of Kuhnau. In addition to helping establish his reputation in Leipzig, these pieces would also provide useful teaching material for the private students he was beginning to draw from among the University's scholars, who

were less hampered by bureaucratic exigencies than their superiors in recognizing Bach's genius. (Most of his secular cantatas were written for commissions from the University students.) The Partita No. 1 in B-flat major (BWV 825) issued in that year was the first of his compositions to be published, with the exception of two cantatas issued during his short tenure in Mühlhausen many years before (1707-1708). Bach funded the venture himself, and he even engraved the plates (to save money) with the help of his teenage son Carl Philip Emanuel, who was then learning that exacting craft. (Copies could be had directly from the composer, cash in advance.) Bach published an additional Partita every year or so until 1731, when he gathered together the six works and issued them collectively in a volume entitled *Clavier-Übung* ("Keyboard Practice"), a term he borrowed from the name of Kuhnau's keyboard suites published in 1689 and 1692. The Partitas of what became Part I of the *Clavier-Übung* were well received; Johann Nikolaus Forkel, in the first full biography of Bach (1802), reported that "the works made in their time a great noise in the musical world. Such excellent compositions for clavier had not been seen or heard before, so brilliant, agreeable, expressive, and original are they. Anyone who could play them well could make his fortune in the world thereby, and even in our times, a young artist could gain acknowledgement by doing so." Bach continued his series of *Clavier-Übung* with three further volumes of vastly different nature: Part II (1735) contains the Italian Concerto, the ultimate keyboard realization of that quintessential Baroque orchestral form, and an *Ouverture (Suite) in the French Manner*; Part III (1739), for organ, the *Catechism Chorale Preludes*, several short canonic pieces, and the "St. Anne" Prelude and Fugue; and Part IV (1742), the incomparable *Goldberg Variations*.

The term "partita" was originally applied to pieces in variations form in Italy during the 16th century, and the word survived in that context into Bach's time. The keyboard Partitas of the *Clavier-Übung*, however, are not variations but suites of dances, a form that in France occasionally bore the title of *Partie*, meaning either a movement in a larger work or a musical piece for entertainment. The French term was taken over into German practice in the late 17th century as *Parthie* to indicate an instrumental suite, and Bach's "Partita" seems to have been a corruption of this usage.

The *Sinfonia* that opens the Partita No. 2 in C minor comprises three continuous sections: a slow introductory passage whose pompous dotted rhythms are borrowed from the French overture; an austere two-voice exercise of sweeping scales supported by a walking bass;

and a lively fugue in two parts. The next two movements follow the old custom of pairing a slow dance with a fast one: an *Allemande* (here marked by swiftly flowing rhythms and active dialogue among the voices) is complemented by a *Courante*, a dance type originally accompanied by jumping motions. The stately *Sarabande* that follows is balanced by a quick *Rondeau* based on a leaping theme and a closing *Capriccio* whose brilliance rivals some of Bach's concerto movements.

Two Selections from Iberia

Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909)

Composed 1906-1909.

Isaac Albéniz's compositions are imbued with the idioms and ethos of the indigenous music of his native Spain. He seldom quoted existing melodies, but rather integrated their essential characteristics into his works to create idealized versions of Spanish songs and dances that not only came to represent and popularize the music of his country among listeners throughout the world, but also served as the model and inspiration for his colleague Granados and for the succeeding generation of Falla and Turina. Albéniz's masterpiece is *Iberia*, his set of twelve pieces for piano depicting places and scenes in his native country, written between 1906 and 1909. "While composing my music, I thought of nothing but Spain and the Spanish," he explained. "Iberia is the Alhambra, it is the Castilian plain, it is the Catalan coast ... it is something that speaks of a glorious past and a dolorous present." Debussy held that *Iberia* was Albéniz's best work: "Never has music achieved such diversified, such colorful impressions.... One closes one's eyes, dazzled by the sight of such a wealth of images." Blanche Selva overcame her fear that the music's technical difficulty made it "unplayable," and gave the acclaimed premieres of each of the four volumes of *Iberia* as they were published between 1907 and 1909.

Evocation, the atmospheric gateway to the suite, is in the style of a *fandanguillo* ("little fandango") utilizing two broadly lyrical melodies in swaying triple meter. *Triana* portrays the colorful and exotic ancient Gypsy quarter of Seville through the traditional *paso-doble* woven together with a strain reminiscent of a *marcha torero* ("toreador march").

A Lenda do Caboclo

Selections from Próle do Bêbé for Piano, Series One

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

Composed in 1920 and 1918.

Heitor Villa-Lobos' *A Lenda do Caboclo* — "*The Legend of the Caboclo*" — of 1920 joins two streams of influence that resonate throughout his work: the sinuous, sensuous rhythms of Brazilian dance and the dedication to expressing in music the qualities of the country's people and culture. A *Caboclo*, an expression meaning "one who came from the forest" in *Tupi*, the indigenous Brazilian language, is used in Brazil to describe a person of mixed native Amerindian and European descent.

Artur Rubinstein was one of Villa-Lobos' greatest champions, and a prime mover in the international spread of his reputation. Their first meeting took place in 1918 in, of all unlikely places, a Rio movie theater, where the aspiring composer was playing in the orchestra. The French composer Darius Milhaud, who was waiting out the end of World War I in South America as secretary to the poet Paul Claudel, then France's ambassador to Brazil, was the instrument of their introduction. Milhaud warned the pianist that Villa-Lobos was given to unconventional behavior, a contention proven when the composer later showed up under Rubinstein's hotel window with a band of his pit-orchestra colleagues to serenade the world-famous virtuoso with some of his own music. Rubinstein was impressed and took on the ambitious young musician as a protégé. Soon after their meeting, Villa-Lobos set to work on a suite of short pieces incorporating fragments of Brazilian children's songs for Rubinstein titled *Próle do Bêbé* ("*The Baby's Family*"), which were meant as musical portraits of a child's doll collection; Rubinstein premiered the work when he returned to Rio de Janeiro on July 5, 1922 and thereafter regularly included it on his recitals. The *Próle do Bêbé* was just one of a surprisingly large number of pieces associated with children that Villa-Lobos wrote following his marriage to the teacher and pianist Lucília Guimarães in 1913: two additional piano suites with the same title — one (1921) inspired by dolls representing various animals, the other (1926, but never published) evoking children's games; two *Suites Infantils* for piano; a set of eight piano pieces based on children's songs titled *Carnaval das Crianças Brasileiras* ("*Carnival of the Brazilian Children*"), depicting the merry-making of youngsters during Rio's annual Carnival celebration; *Mômoprecóce* for piano and orchestra, whose title means both "precocious lad" and "young Momus," i.e., the King of the Carnival;

a series of instrumental *Cirandas*, based on a traditional Brazilian and Portuguese children's singing game; and many songs and educational pieces for school use. That Heitor and Lucília had no children and separated in 1936 attaches a certain biographical poignancy to all these works.

Villa-Lobos used a distinctly Brazilian dialect of Claude Debussy's Impressionist harmonic language in his *Próle do Bêbé*, a quality that facilitated his acceptance into Parisian musical life when he arrived there in 1923. *Branquinha* ("*The Porcelain Doll*") suggests both music-box innocence and winking wit. *Moreninha* ("*The Paper Doll*") is appropriately fluttery and nearly hyperactive. *A Pobresinha* ("*The Rag Doll*") draws a touching melancholy from its simple melodic components. *O Polichinelo* ("*Punch*") represents the fierce, crafty character in traditional Italian commedia dell'arte distinguished by his black-and-white costume and his long nose.

Ballades in G minor (Op. 23), F major (Op. 38),

A-flat major (Op. 47) and F minor (Op. 52)

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

Composed 1835-1842.

A "ballad," according to the *Random House Dictionary*, is "a simple, narrative poem of popular origin, composed in short stanzas, especially one of romantic character and adapted for singing." The term was derived from an ancient musico-poetic form that accompanied dancing ("*ballare*" in medieval Latin, hence "ball" and "ballet"), which had evolved into an independent vocal genre by the 14th century in the exquisitely refined works of Guillaume de Machaut and other early composers of secular music. The ballad was well established in England as a medium for the recitation of romantic or fantastic stories by at least the year 1500; it is mentioned by Pepys, Milton, Addison and Swift, often disdainfully because of the frequently scurrilous nature of its content. The form, having adopted a more elegant demeanor, became popular in Germany during the late 18th century, when it attracted no less a literary luminary than Goethe, whose tragic narrative *Erkönig* furnished the text for one of Schubert's most beloved songs. Chopin seems to have been the first composer to apply the title to a piece of abstract instrumental music, apparently indicating that his four Ballades hint at a dramatic flow of emotions such as could not be appropriately contained by traditional Classical forms. (Such transferral of terms between artistic disciplines was hardly unknown during the Romantic era. Liszt, the first musical artist in history with enough nerve to keep an entire public program

to himself, dubbed his solo concerts “musical soliloquies” at first, and later gave them the now-familiar designation, “recitals.” — “How can one recite at the piano?” fumed one British critic. “Preposterous!”) Brahms, Liszt, Fauré, Grieg, Vieuxtemps and Frank Martin all later provided instrumental works with the title Ballade.

The first ideas for the Ballade No. 1 (G minor, Op. 23) were sketched in May and June 1831, when Chopin was living anxiously in Vienna, almost unknown as a composer and only slightly appreciated as a pianist. By the time that the work was completed four years later, however, he had achieved such fame and fortune in Paris that he could dedicate the piece to Baron de Stockhausen, the Hanoverian ambassador to France, whom he counted among his noble pupils. Robert Schumann called this Ballade “the most spirited and daring work of Chopin,” and reported that it was inspired by Mickiewicz’s *Konrad Valenrod*, a poetic epic concerning the battles between the pagan Lithuanians and the Christian Knights of the Teutonic Order. The work exhibits both the ingenious conflation of sectional, sonata and rondo forms and the voluptuous, wide-ranging harmonic palette that mark all of the Ballades.

The Ballade No. 2 (F major, Op. 38) was the product of 1838, when Chopin had retreated to Majorca with George Sand; it was published by Breitkopf und Härtel two years later. The composer thought highly enough of the piece to include it on his recital at the Salle Pleyel on April 26, 1841, the first time he had played in public in six years. The composition was dedicated to Schumann, whose review (“Hats off, gentleman! A genius!”) of the 1827 *Variations on Mozart’s “Là ci darem la mano”* was among the earliest recognitions of Chopin’s talent. Undeterred by the lack of a firm literary foundation, the Russian pianist and pedagogue Anton Rubinstein erected upon the Second Ballade the following slightly lurid program, so characteristic of the 19th-century quest to invest mere musical notes with visual import: “A field flower, a windstorm, the wind caressing the flower, stormy fight of the wind, pleading of the flower — the flower lies broken. Or, paraphrased, the flower can be regarded as a country lass, the wind as a knight.”

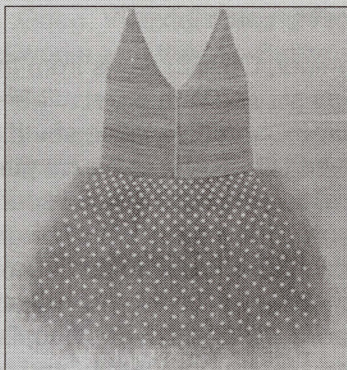
The Ballade No. 3 (A-flat major, Op. 47), one of Chopin’s best-loved creations, was composed during the quiet and happy period he spent with George Sand in Paris in 1840-1841. The work was said to have been derived from Mickiewicz’s *Ondine*, which Laurent Cellier paraphrased: “On the shores of a lake, a young man pledges fidelity to a young girl. Doubting the faithfulness of men, despite the protestations of her lover, she disappears and returns in the

bewitching form of a water sprite. As soon as she tempts the young man, he succumbs to her charms. To expiate his sin, he is dragged to the bottom of the water and condemned to a breathless pursuit of the sprite, whom he can never catch.”

The Ballade No. 4 (F minor, Op. 52) dates from the summer of 1842, when Chopin was staying with Sand at her country villa in Nohant, near Châteauroux, some distance south of Paris in the province of Berry; she and Delacroix, a house guest at the time, provided the work’s first audience. No poetic source is known for the Fourth Ballade, nor is one really needed for this music of drama and authority which is so richly expressive of feelings hardly capturable by words. It is a fitting capstone to this superb collection of masterworks, of which Frédérick Niecks wrote, “None of Chopin’s compositions surpass in masterliness of form and beauty and poetry of content his Ballades. In them he attains, I think, the acme of his power as an artist.”

©2008 Dr. Richard E. Rodda

Now Showing in the Fine Arts Center Gallery:



Habitual Ritual

Curator: Kim Ambriz, Instructor of Printmaking

October 27 — November 21

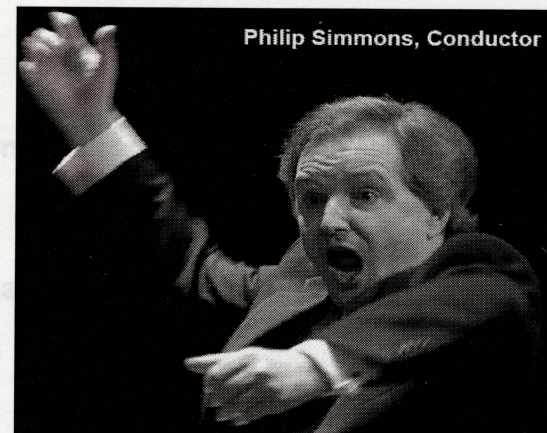
Closing Reception: Friday, November 21, 6-9 p.m.

FINE ARTS CENTER GALLERY

www.neiu.edu-art/gal.html

h-weber@neiu.edu

For more information on the Fine Arts Center Gallery call
Heather Weber, gallery coordinator, at 773-442-4944



Philip Simmons, Conductor

Lincolnwood Chamber Orchestra Performs at Northeastern Illinois University

Saturday, November 22 at 7:00 p.m.
Auditorium

Conducted by Philip Simmons, the concert will include
Beethoven's Symphony No. 1, the *Concierto de Aranjuez* of
Joaquin Rodrigo performed by guitarist Denis Azabagic, and a
new medley of Bosnian folk music by Ilya Levinson.

Tickets: \$25, call 847-920-9569
www.americanmusicfestivals.com

Upcoming Events

Friday, December 19 at 8:00 p.m.

The Jewel Box Series presents **The Rose Ensemble**
Recital Hall - Tickets \$10-\$25

Saturday, December 20 at 8:00 p.m.

The Performing Arts Series presents **Ensemble Español**
Auditorium - Tickets \$10-\$25

Thursday, January 8 at 7:30 p.m.

The Performing Arts Series presents
The Ryan Cohen Jazz Sextet
Recital Hall - Tickets \$10-\$25

Thursday, January 15 at 1:40 p.m.

The Presidential Lecture Series presents
poet, novelist, essayist **Judith Ortiz Cofer**
Recital Hall - Admission Free

Friday, January 16 at 8:00 p.m.

Pablo Ziegler Trio for New Tango
Auditorium - Tickets \$10-\$25

Wednesday, March 11 at 8:00 p.m.

The Presidential Lecture Series presents
poet, novelist, essayist, & author of *The Guardians*, **Ana Castillo**
Recital Hall - Admission Free
(rescheduled from October)



neu recital hall



neu auditorium

N Northeastern
Illinois
University

5500 NORTH ST. LOUIS AVENUE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60625-4699

OFFICE OF CULTURAL EVENTS
WWW.NEIU.EDU