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Staff Pick: Strings, Sax, and a Dash of Sass

Aiming to “mix up genres and provoke the audience,” says A Far Cry violinist Alex Fortes ’07, the chamber orchestra performs Béla Bartók’s Divertimento for strings, then joins saxophonist Harry Allen to explore the 1961 musical work Focus. Composed by Eddie Sauter for Stan Getz, the tenor saxophonist improvises against a score for strings. Why the pairing? Bartók’s piece “broke new ground in form and craft,” Fortes says. Bartók also championed Sauter, whose lead movement in Focus, “I’m Late, I’m Late,” echoes Bartók’s Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta. The self-conducted A Far Cry has 17 young musicians (including Sarah Darling ’02 and Miki-Sophia Cloud ’04) all intent, Fortes says, on “inspiring and enlivening an audience through performance of classical music—broadly defined.” The group has released five albums, performed with Yo-Yo Ma ’76, D. Mus. ’91, among others, and is in residence at the Gardner Museum.

October 2, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston
www.gardnermuseum.org

Lectures
The Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study
www.radcliffe.harvard.edu
Kemper professor of American history and New Yorker staff writer Jill Lepore reveals “How Wonder Woman Got into Harvard.” (October 30)

Film
Harvard Film Archive
www.hcl.harvard.edu/hfa
A retrospective on the Chinese-born director Hou Hsiao-Hsien, a progenitor of Taiwan’s New Wave cinema, highlights the nuanced sophistication of City of Sadness, The Green, Green Grass of Home, and A Time to Live, A Time to Die. (October 2 - November 3)

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