



american composers orchestra

news release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 6, 2016

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American Composers Orchestra & Beijing Modern Music Festival



Roger Zare Wins Beijing EarShot Composers Competition, Part of the China-U.S. Composers Project

Eos Repertoire Orchestra
Yong Yan Hu, conductor
Beijing Concert Hall | Beijing, China

American Composers Orchestra:
www.americancomposers.org

Beijing Modern Music Festival:
<http://bmmf.ccom.edu.cn/EN/index.aspx>

New York, NY – Composer **Roger Zare** (Evanston, IL) is the winner of the first ever **EarShot China – U.S. Composers Project Emerging Composers Competition**, which took place on May 31, 2016 at **Beijing Concert Hall**. The competition is part of the China – U.S. Composers Project, presented by **American Composers Orchestra (ACO)** and the **Beijing Modern Music Festival**. Zare is also the recipient of the 2008 American Composers Orchestra Underwood Commission, and his winning piece *Time Lapse* was premiered by ACO in January 2010. The EarShot China – U.S. Composers Project Emerging Composers Competition, the first international EarShot program to date, was open to composers who were Chinese citizens residing anywhere in the world, and composers of Chinese-American descent who were U.S. citizens or non-citizens lawfully and permanently residing or studying full-time in the United States. The other six composers selected to participate in the competition were Chris Hung (Hong Kong), Quingqing Wang (San Diego, CA), Xinyan Li (Livingston, NJ), Liu Qiqi (Chengu, China), Shiqi Geng (Steiermark, Australia), and Wenhui Xie (Beijing, China).

Zare won for his piece *Fractal Miniatures* and was presented the Competition Grand Prize by mentor composers Ye Xiaogang, Xiaogang Ye (Director of Beijing Modern Music Festival), Sola Liu (Award-winning composer of film and television scores), John Corigliano (Pulitzer-Prize winner, faculty member The Juilliard School and Lehman College), Robert Beaser (ACO Artistic Director Laureate & Chair of Composition at The Juilliard School) and Chen Yi (ACO Artistic Advisor & Distinguished Professor of Composition, University of Missouri-Kansas City), Danbu Chen (Director of YCP Beijing Modern Program), Xia Guan (Director, China National Symphony Orchestra), and Liguang Wang (President, China Conservatory). The Competition Grand Prize includes the honor of a U.S. premiere performance of the winning piece by American Composers Orchestra in New York City as part of a major

festival of Chinese and Chinese-American composer's music. Taking place over three seasons or more, with multiple performances and exchange activities in both Beijing and New York City, the China-U.S. Composers Project will be one of the most significant cultural exchange projects ever undertaken between China and the U.S., and a major international exploration of the work of contemporary composers to date.

Roger Zare has been praised for his "enviable grasp of orchestration" (*New York Times*) and for writing music with "formal clarity and an alluringly mercurial surface." He was born in Sarasota, FL and has written for a wide variety of ensembles, from solo instruments to full orchestra. Often inspired by science, mathematics, literature, and mythology, his colorfully descriptive and energetic works have been performed in five continents by such ensembles as ACO, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Sarasota Orchestra, the Australian-based Trio Anima Mundi, the Donald Sinta Quartet, and the New York Youth Symphony. An award winning composer, Zare has received the ASCAP Nissim Prize, three BMI Student Composer Awards, an ASCAP Morton Gould award, a New York Youth Symphony First Music Commission, a 2010 Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Copland House Residency Award, Grand Prize in the inaugural China-US Emerging Composers Competition, and many other honors. An active pianist, Zare performed his chamber work, *Geometries*, with Cho-Liang Lin, Jian Wang, and Burt Hara at the 2014 Hong Kong International Chamber Music Festival. He has been composer in residence at the Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival, the Salt Bay Chamber Music Festival, the Chamber Music Festival of Lexington and currently serves with the SONAR new music ensemble.

Zare holds a DMA ('12) from the University of Michigan, where he studied with Michael Daugherty, Paul Schoenfield, Bright Sheng, and Kristin Kuster. He holds degrees from the Peabody Conservatory (MM '09) and the University of Southern California (BM '07), and his previous teachers include Christopher Theofanidis, Derek Bermel, David Smooke, Donald Crockett, Tamar Diesendruck, Fredrick Lesemann, and Morten Lauridsen.

The Emerging Composers Competition was just the first activity in the China – U.S. Composers Project's three components, each of which intended to develop mutual understanding and international friendships:

NEW MUSIC READINGS AND COMPETITIONS of music by young and emerging composers from China and the U.S. will be produced in China and the U.S. and introduce talented young composers from both countries, promote their work and careers. Readings will take place on an ongoing basis over the next several seasons. A unique facet of the project, with the potential for deep connections between the young people of the U.S. and China, these Readings will give young composers the chance to have their music workshopped, rehearsed and performed, and to gain the very rare opportunity to work with a professional orchestra. Readings provide important career-building exposure and experience. Composers also learn from each other and from more established mentor-composers. The Readings will keep dialogue and exchange going between the two countries over an extended period, providing a long-term connection between their musical worlds.

A major **FESTIVAL** in New York City that brings together delegations of Chinese and American composers for performances and professional exchange will focus attention on these composers and their music. The festival will feature a delegation of 12-15 Chinese composers and 12-15 American composers in attendance; two concerts by ACO, featuring music by Chinese and Chinese-American composers and led by ACO Music Director George Manahan; chamber music and traditional music performances by guest ensembles from both China and the U.S. in collaboration with major cultural venues in New York; and educational partnerships with the area's top institutions.

CONCERTS by American Composers Orchestra at the Beijing Modern Music Festival introducing an array of innovative American composers to Chinese audiences, and introducing these composers to their counterparts in China. These concerts will feature premieres by 10-12 American composers, led by ACO's Music Director George Manahan.

ACO has appointed composer **Chen Yi** as artistic advisor for the project to help conceive programs and select participating composers. Yi is in a unique position to provide artistic insights for the project: she is a well-respected composer, a Chinese-American, who is familiar and well-liked by composers in both China and the U.S. Within ACO, Yi will collaborate with ACO's senior artistic staff: composer/Artistic Director **Derek Bermel**, and the award-winning composer and ACO Artistic Director Laureate, **Robert Beaser**, who also serves as chairman of the composition department at the Juilliard School. Renowned composer **Xiaogang Ye**, artistic director, assisted by **Shaosheng Li**, project director for the Beijing Modern Music Festival, will co-curate on behalf of the Beijing Modern Music Festival. The senior artistic leaders of both organizations have already developed strong bonds on which to build their relationship. Both Beaser and Bermel have been guests at the Beijing Modern Music Festival, and Beaser and Ye have a close working relationship over many years. Shirley Young serves as a special advisor to the project.

ACO has a rich history of facilitating international cultural exchange, particularly by producing *Sonidos de las Américas*, six annual festivals devoted to the music of different Latin American countries, and *Coming to America: Immigrant Sounds/Immigrant Voices*, an exploration of the ongoing evolution of American music through the work of immigrant composers.

The orchestra has commissioned and performed works by many of today's Chinese-American composers, including Tan Dun, Ge Gan-ru, Fred Ho, Wang Jie, Bun-ching Lam, Zhou Long, Wang Lu, Fang Man, Huang Ruo, Hsueh-Yung Shen, Chen Yi and others. ACO's collaboration with the Beijing Modern Music Festival will continue this work to enrich the orchestral landscape by exploring works by American and Chinese composers.

About ACO

Now in its 39th season, American Composers Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world dedicated to the creation, performance, preservation, and promulgation of music by American composers. ACO makes the creation of new opportunities for American composers and new American orchestral music its central purpose. Through concerts at Carnegie Hall and other venues, recordings, internet and radio broadcasts, educational programs, New Music Readings, and commissions, ACO identifies today's brightest emerging composers, champions prominent established composers as well as those lesser-known, and increases regional, national, and international awareness of the infinite variety of American orchestral music, reflecting geographic, stylistic, and temporal diversity. ACO also serves as an incubator of ideas, research, and talent, as a catalyst for growth and change among orchestras, and as an advocate for American composers and their music.

To date, ACO has performed music by more than 800 American composers, including nearly 350 world premieres and newly commissioned works. Among the orchestra's innovative programs have been SONiC: Sounds of a New Century, a nine-day citywide festival in New York of music by more than 100 composers age 40 and under; *Sonidos de las Américas*, six annual festivals devoted to Latin American composers and their music; *Coming to America*, a program immersing audiences in the ongoing evolution of American music through the

work of immigrant composers; Orchestra Tech, a long-term initiative to integrate new digital technologies in the symphony orchestra; Improvise!, a festival devoted to the exploration of improvisation and the orchestra; coLABoratory: Playing It UNsafe, a new laboratory for the research and development of experimental new works for orchestra; and Orchestra Underground, ACO's entrepreneurial cutting-edge orchestral ensemble that embraces new technology, eclectic instruments, influences, and spatial orientation of the orchestra, new experiments in the concert format, and multimedia and multi-disciplinary collaborations.

Composer development has been at the core of ACO's mission since it's founding. In addition to its annual Underwood New Music Readings and Commission, ACO also provides a range of additional educational and professional development activities, including composer residencies and fellowships. In 2008, ACO launched EarShot, a multi-institutional network that assists orchestras around the country in mounting new music readings. Recent and upcoming Earshot programs have included the Detroit, Berkeley, La Jolla, Nashville, Memphis, Colorado, San Diego Symphonies, the New York Philharmonic, New York Youth Symphony, and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. For more information visit www.EarShotnetwork.org. The Jazz Composers Orchestra Institute, launched in 2010 and continuing in 2015, supports jazz artists who desire to write for the symphony.

Among the honors ACO has received are special awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and from BMI recognizing the orchestra's outstanding contribution to American music. ASCAP has awarded its annual prize for adventurous programming to ACO 36 times, singling out ACO as "the orchestra that has done the most for American music in the United States." ACO received the inaugural MetLife Award for Excellence in Community Engagement, and a proclamation from the New York City Council. ACO recordings are available on ARGO, CRI, ECM, Point, Phoenix USA, MusicMasters, Nonesuch, Tzadik, New World Records, InstantEncore.com, Amazon.com and iTunes. ACO's digital albums include *Playing It UNsafe* (March 2011), *Emerging Composers Series: Vol. 1* (February 2012), *Orchestra Underground: X10D* (June 2012), and *Orchestra Underground: Tech & Techno* (July 2014). ACO has also released *Orchestra Underground: A-V*, a groundbreaking album of multimedia works available for free streaming at www.vimeo.com/channels/orchestraunderground. More information about American Composers Orchestra is available online at www.americancomposers.org.

About EarShot

EarShot is a nationwide network of new music readings and composer-development programs administered by the American Composers Orchestra (ACO) with partner organizations the American Composers Forum, League of American Orchestras, and New Music USA. As the nation's first ongoing, systematic program for identifying emerging orchestral composers, EarShot provides professional-level working experience with orchestras from every region of the United States and now nationally, and increases awareness of these composers and access to their music throughout the industry.

In addition to the Eos Repertoire Orchestra, EarShot partnerships have included the New York Philharmonic, Berkeley Symphony, Columbus Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Colorado Symphony Orchestra, Memphis Symphony Orchestra, Nashville Symphony Orchestra, Pioneer Valley Symphony (MA), New York Youth Symphony, and the San Diego Symphony. To date, over fifty composers have been selected for New Music Readings with orchestras.

About the Beijing Modern Music Festival

The Beijing Modern Music Festival (BMMF) is regarded as the most influential modern musical event in China, and one of the most important modern music festivals in the world. BMMF is committed to disseminating modern music, promoting an international artistic and cultural communication as well as building a platform for young musicians. The Festival has organized over 400 concerts, nearly 100 lectures and master classes, and published a large number of academic books, scores, audio and video discs. Initiated by artistic director Mr. Xiaogang Ye, BMMF reinforces the bonds between art and society through music while retain its academic originality. Beijing Modern Music Festival is supported and sponsored by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Culture of the China.

About the Eos Repertoire Orchestra

China's Orchestra Academy at the Central Conservatory of Music, EOS Repertoire Orchestra was established in 2006. Its members have primarily been instructors and graduate students from the Orchestra Academy, musicians from professional orchestras in China and overseas and selected graduate students from the Orchestral Instruments Department of the Central Conservatory of Music. The EOS Repertoire Orchestra has performed ten seasons at the Beijing Concert Hall and four-six annual weekend concerts at Beijing's National Centre of the Performing Arts. EOS has performed more than 70 works, including all the Mahler symphonies, film soundtracks, Peking Opera excerpts, rock music, multimedia concerts, and many compositions by contemporary composers.

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This press release is available online at: www.americancomposers.org/press

Support for the China-U.S. Composers Project is provided by the Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China, Beijing Performance & Art Group, Chinese Literature Foundation, Beijing BPA Music & Culture Co, Ltd. and Shanghai Supreme Co., Ltd. Special support for the China-U.S. Composers Project comes from the Estate of James S. Marcus. Special thanks to Ms. Shirley Young.

Support for American Composers Orchestra is provided by The Herb Alpert Foundation, The Amphion Foundation, Inc., ASCAP Foundation, The Sidley Austin Foundation, Mary Duke Biddle Foundation, BMI & the BMI Foundation, The Cheswaty Foundation, The Edward T. Cone Foundation, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, The Charles E. Culpeper Fund, The Joe and Hellen Darion Foundation, Deutsche Bank, Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, Fromm Music Foundation, Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, The Howard Gilman Foundation, Francis Goelet Charitable Lead Trusts, Guggenheim Partners, Jephson Educational Trust, Jerome Foundation, The J.M. Kaplan Fund, Ralph Lauren Foundation, League of American Orchestras, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Metropolitan Valuation Services, New Music USA, The Netherland-American Foundation, The New York Community Trust Edward and Sally Van Lier Fund, Seyfarth Shaw LLP, Emma A. Sheafer Charitable Trust, Women's Philharmonic Advocacy, and World Wide Land Transfer, Inc. ACO programs are also made possible with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

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