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**Composers Chen-Hui Jen, Wang Jie, and Hannah Lash
to Receive Commissions in Third Year of
League of American Orchestras' and EarShot's
Women Composers Readings and Commissions Program**

- **Program Expanded This Year to Three Commissions**
- **Program Renewed for 2017**
- **Columbus Symphony and Berkeley Symphony Selected to Perform Premieres by 2015 Commission Recipients Andreia Pinto-Correia and Xi Wang**

New York, NY (December 14, 2016) – Three composers -- Chen-Hui Jen, Wang Jie, and Hannah Lash -- will each receive orchestral commissions of \$15,000 as part of the League of American Orchestras' 2016 **Women Composers Readings and Commissions program**, which is administered by the American Composers Orchestra and EarShot and supported by the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation. Partner orchestras to premiere the works will be announced at a later date.

This latest round marks an expansion: for the first time since the program was launched in 2014, three commissions will be awarded, rather than two. Additionally, the program has been renewed for 2017 and will continue in its current expanded form, with three additional composers being awarded commissions next year. All women who have participated in EarShot Readings this year as well as in the past are considered for these commissions.

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The League also announced that the Columbus Symphony and Berkeley Symphony have been selected to premiere new works in a future season by 2015 commission recipients Andreia Pinto-Correia and Xi Wang.

Jesse Rosen, the League's President and CEO, said, "In just three years, this program's impact has been deeply felt by women composers, orchestras that program their works, and the general public, who have fantastic opportunities to discover these talented artists and their music as a result. We are grateful to the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation for helping us raise the profile of women composers in the United States."

"In the three years of the initiative the Toulmin Foundation's support of women composers has already made a substantial impact on the field. By leveraging the EarShot network, we are providing needed exposure and development opportunities to some incredibly talented and deserving composers, and with this year's round, we will see a total of seven commissions, and premieres with multiple orchestras around the country" said Michael Geller, President of American Composers Orchestra.

The Women Composers Readings and Commissions program is embedded in EarShot, an initiative of American Composers Orchestra in collaboration with American Composers Forum, League of American Orchestras, and New Music USA, which is the nation's first ongoing, systematic program for identifying emerging orchestral composers. ACO's artistic and administrative staff works with participating orchestras, assisting with planning, identifying composers through its extensive nationwide calls, as well as program design and execution. EarShot offers participants career development in the form of mentorships, counsel, and industry exposure with orchestras. Each year, orchestras host readings across the country; this year's readings took place with Columbus Symphony (October 27-29, 2015), Naples Philharmonic (Jazz Composers Orchestra Readings, May 25-27, 2016), EOS Repertoire Orchestra in Beijing (May 28-31, 2016), and American Composers Orchestra (Underwood New Music Readings, June 13-15, 2016 and Jazz Composers Orchestra Institute Readings, June 14-17, 2016).

The program featured career development workshops as well as mentoring opportunities with, among others, composers Derek Bermel (American Composers Orchestra Artistic Director), Robert Beaser, Margaret Brouwer, John Corigliano, Anthony Davis, Gabriela Lena Frank, Stephen Hartke, Sarah Kirkland Snider, and Chen Yi, as well as composer/arranger Vincent Mendoza.

Over the first three years, the results have been impressive. Through the Women Composers Readings and Commissions program, twenty women composers benefitted from career development via the EarShot Readings and four composers have now received commissions, with two (premieres by Julia Adolphe and Melody Eötvös) completed. 2014 commission recipient Julia Adolphe's *Unearth, Release* (Concerto for Viola and Orchestra) received its New York

premiere November 17-19, 2016 by the New York Philharmonic, conductor Jaap van Zweden, and Principal Viola Cynthia Phelps as soloist. Melody Eötvös's *Red Dirt | Silver Rain* was premiered at Carnegie Hall in 2015 by American Composers Orchestra as part of the orchestra's SONiC: Sounds of a New Century, a festival devoted to new music written in the 21st century by composers age 40 and under.

The recipients of the 2015 Women Composers Readings and Commissions were composers Andreia Pinto-Correia and Xi Wang, who were both awarded \$15,000 and an orchestral commission. Andreia Pinto-Correia is working on her commission to be premiered by the Columbus Symphony Orchestra and Xi Wang is working on a piece for the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra; both works will premiere in a future season.

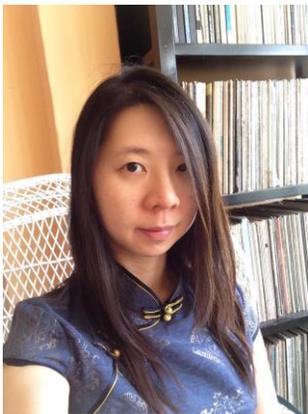


Photo: Chen-Hui Jen

Chen-Hui Jen is a composer whose music presents an imaginative, spiritual, and poetic space with subtlety and sophistication. She earned a Ph.D. degree in Composition at the University of California, San Diego, where her mentor was Chinariy Ung.

Born in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, Chen-Hui Jen received her M.F.A. in composition at the Graduate School of Music at the Taipei National University of the Arts and B.F.A. in composition at the Music Department of the National Sun Yet-San University, under the instruction of Prof. Hwang-Long Pan and Dr. Tzyy-Sheng Lee. She began studying piano at age four, under the instruction of professors including Aleck Karis and Ming-Fen Hsu.

Chen-Hui Jen writes music for music for orchestra, chamber, and solo, for both Western and Chinese instruments, also vocal and choral works, as well as works with computer and electronics. Chen-Hui Jen's works have been performed at multiple new music festivals and concerts, including the ISCM World Music Days, SEAMUS, Acanthes Music Festival, ACL Music Festival, EarShot San Diego Workshop, New Music Miami Season, Taipei International New Music Festival, WOCMA T, and Contemporary Sizhu Music Festival. Chen-Hui Jen's works have won numerous prizes in the Taiwan Literature and Fine Arts Composition Competition for chamber, choral, and solo works, the Formosa Composition Competition for violin concerto, the International Tsang-Houei Hsu Music Composition Competition for Chinese chamber music, the International Taiwan Music Center Composition Competition, and the National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra Composition Competition. She has also received multiple commissions from the Palimpsest Ensemble, Accordant Commons, The Living Earth Show, Ensemble ISCM-Taiwan, Taipei Chamber Singers, Little Giant Chinese Chamber Orchestra,

Ching-Yun Chorus, Kaohsiung Chamber Choir, and Muller Choir, as well as multiple grants from the Taipei Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Taiwan National and Arts Foundation.

Since 2010, Dr. Jen has performed piano in a duo with her husband, composer/computer musician Jacob David Sudol. Together they've played many distinguished venues such as the Taipei National Recital Hall, Taiwan National Chiao Tung University the Spectrum in New York City, Center for New Music in San Francisco, ISCM New Music Miami Festival, Root Signal Festival, Miami Bakehouse Art Complex, University of California at San Diego, Mills College, California Institute of Arts, Chapman University, and Florida International University. She is currently also a pianist in the NODUS Ensemble and the White Ibis Ensemble.



Photo: Wang Jie

Wang Jie

Part cartoon character, part virtuoso, musical whiz kid Wang Jie has been nudging serious music and its concert audiences into spectacular frontiers over the past few seasons. Her *From New York, With Love* transformed a classic percussionist into a dervish-like rock star. Her chamber opera *Flown* dramatized the end of a rocky love affair by having the two pianists attack each other and their shared instrument. Despite having the worst title in the history of music, Oboe Concerto *For The Genuine Heart Of Sadness*

channeled the power of Liang Wang, the principle oboist of the New York Philharmonic, and the League of Composers Orchestra into an orgiastic whirlwind. An unexpected collaboration with comedy writer Paul Simms inspired a song cycle titled *Lord? Please Don't Let Me Die in a Funny Way*, coaxing belly laughs from an otherwise sedate Opera America audience. Not one to let herself off the hook at her Carnegie Hall debut with the American Composers Orchestra, she shape-shifted into a monkey god swiveling on stage between three keyboards during a performance of her concert opera *From The Other Sky*.

One day she spins a few notes into large symphonic forms, the next she calls Zodiac animals to the opera stage. It is no accident that Ms. Wang's stylistic versatility is a rare trait in today's composers. There is a mile-long dossier on Jie's outside-the-box incidents. It begins with a thrilling escape from a Chinese-military-run kindergarten at the age of four. Behind a touch of glorious madness to Jie's music, the skill, theatricality and method that once facilitated her youthful escape are now the engines for her appetite to "Engage • Explore • Play". Jie credits her mentors at the Curtis Institute of Music, the Manhattan School of Music and NYU's PhD program for all the music mischief she didn't think was possible.

Most recently, her Symphony No. 2, commissioned and premiered by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Leonard Slatkin was streamed live to a worldwide audience. Upcoming, Symphonic Overture '*America, The Beautiful*' will be premiered by the Colorado Springs Philharmonic; Chamber opera *Rated R For Rat* will receive a premiere production by Festival Opera, and her Symphony No.2 is on the bill at the Buffalo Philharmonic. Wang Jie is currently creating *Phoenix Fallen*, a prison opera. Supported by the McKnight Foundation, Jie will spend a year as a resident composer at the Shakopee Correctional Facility in Minnesota, where she will conduct field work and opera workshops in collaboration with the Lake Superior Chamber Orchestra and the Shakopee prison choir. For a complete list of Jie's mischief, please visit: www.wanjiemusic.com



Photo: Bob Handelman

Hannah Lash

Hailed by the New York Times as "striking and resourceful...handsomely brooding," Hannah Lash's music has been commissioned by The Fromm Foundation, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Alabama Symphony Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, the Library of Congress, Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, Columbia University's Miller Theatre, The Naumburg Foundation, and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, as well as the Colorado and Aspen Music Festivals, among many others.

Lash has received numerous honors and prizes, including the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award, a Charles Ives Scholarship (2011) and Fellowship (2016) from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Fromm Foundation Commission, the Naumburg Prize in Composition, the Barnard Rogers Prize in Composition, and the Bernard and Rose Sernoffsky Prize in Composition, among others.

In addition to performances of her music in the USA, Lash's music is well known internationally. In April of 2008, her string quartet *Four Still* was performed in Kyev in the Ukraine's largest international new music festival, "Musical Premieres of the Season," curated by Carson Cooman. In 2016, her chamber orchestra work *This Ease* was selected as "audience favorite" in performances by the Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Mainz, conducted by Hermann Baumer.

Recent premieres include *Three Shades Without Angles*, for flute, viola and harp, by the Boston Symphony Chamber Players, Two Movements for violin and piano, commissioned by the Library of Congress for Ensemble Intercontemporain, a new chamber opera, *Beowulf*, for Guerilla Opera, and new orchestral works for the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, the Alabama Symphony Orchestra, and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, as well as two concerti for harp

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premiered by the American Composers Orchestra and the Colorado Music Festival, both with Lash as soloist. In 2016, Lash was honored with a Composer Portraits Concert at Columbia University's Miller Theatre. In the 2016-2017 season, Lash receives the premiere of her Requiem with the Yale Choral Artists as well as the debut of *The Voynich Symphony*, a major large-scale orchestral work, with the New Haven Symphony.

Lash obtained her Ph.D in Composition from Harvard University in 2010. She has held teaching positions at Harvard University (Teaching Fellow), at Alfred University (Guest Professor of Composition), and currently serves on the composition faculty at Yale University School of Music.

Now in its 40^h 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 350 world premieres and newly commissioned works. ASCAP has awarded its annual prize for adventurous programming to ACO 37 times, singling out ACO as "the orchestra that has done the most for American music in the United States." ACO recordings are available on ARGO, CRI, ECM, Point, Phoenix USA, MusicMasters, Nonesuch, Tzadik, and New World Records. In the last three years, ACO's digital albums include *Playing It UNSafe* (March 2011), *Emerging Composers Series: Vol. 1* (February 2012), *Orchestra Underground: X10D* (June 2012), *Orchestra Underground: Tech & Techno* (July 2014), and *SONiC Double Live* (July 2016), a collection of premiere performances from its groundbreaking SONiC: Sounds of a New Century festival. ACO has also released *Orchestra Underground: A-V*, a groundbreaking album of multimedia works available for free streaming at www.vimeo.com/channels/orchestraunderground. www.americancomposers.org

EarShot, the National Orchestral Composition Discovery Network, initiates partnerships with orchestras around the country; provides consulting, production, and administrative support for orchestras to undertake readings, residencies, performances, and composer-development programs; identifies promising orchestral composers, increasing awareness and access to their music; supports orchestras' commitment to today's composers and enhances national visibility for

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their new music programs. EarShot is administered by American Composers Orchestra in collaboration with American Composers Forum, the League of American Orchestras, and New Music USA (formerly the American Music Center and Meet The Composer). It brings together the artistic, administrative, marketing, and production resources and experience of the nation's leading organizations devoted to the support of new American orchestral music. www.earshotnetwork.org

The **League of American Orchestras** leads, supports, and champions America's orchestras and the vitality of the music they perform. Its diverse membership of more than 2,000 organizations and individuals across North America runs the gamut from world-renowned symphonies to community groups, from summer festivals to student and youth ensembles, from conservatories to libraries, from businesses serving orchestras to individuals who love symphonic music. The only national organization dedicated solely to the orchestral experience, the League is a nexus of knowledge and innovation, advocacy, and leadership advancement. Its conferences and events, award-winning Symphony magazine, website, and other publications inform people around the world about orchestral activity and developments. Founded in 1942 and chartered by Congress in 1962, the League links a national network of thousands of instrumentalists, conductors, managers and administrators, board members, volunteers, and business partners. Visit americanorchestras.org.

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