



american composers orchestra

news release

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## **American Composers Orchestra & Beijing Modern Music Festival China-U.S. Composers Project Launches with Beijing EarShot Composers Competition**



**Eos Repertoire Orchestra  
Yong Yan Hu, conductor**

**May 31 – June 3, 2016  
Beijing Concert Hall | Beijing, China**

**American Composers Orchestra:  
[www.americancomposers.org](http://www.americancomposers.org)**

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

New York, NY – From **May 31-June 3, 2016**, **American Composers Orchestra (ACO)** and the **Beijing Modern Music Festival** will host the first **EarShot China – U.S. Composers Project Emerging Composers Competition**, part of the China – U.S. Composers Project, a new initiative announced in June 2015. 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 the most important international exploration of the work of contemporary composers to date.

The EarShot China – U.S. Composers Project Emerging Composers Competition, the first international EarShot program to date, is open to composers who are Chinese citizens residing anywhere in the world, and composers of Chinese-American descent who are U.S. citizens or non-citizens lawfully and permanently residing or studying full-time in the United States. Up to six composers will be selected for four days of intensive readings, rehearsals and workshop sessions from May 31-June 3, 2016, and a free public performance of the selected works by the **Eos Repertoire Orchestra**, under the direction of **Yong Han Hu**, on Thursday, June 2 at Beijing Concert Hall. Feedback will be provided by Yong Yan Hu and principal musicians from the orchestra, as well as a distinguished panel of mentor-composers including 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) will also be present as honorary mentors.

One composer will be selected for the Competition Grand Prize, an honor that includes the 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. The selected composer will be invited to New York as part of a delegation of composers participating in the festival.

The Emerging Composers Competition is 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.

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.

Unlike most other musical exchange programs developed between China and the U.S., this project focuses on music created (rather than just performed) by Chinese and American artists. By focusing on living composers, the project makes much deeper connections between the people of our two countries. Contemporary composers capture the culture, concerns, histories, and aspirations of their people, their countries, and their time. When artists and audiences are drawn together because of a common love of music, and the music they perform and hear is created by contemporary composers, the level of exchange and understanding is much deeper.

Despite the incredible power and talent represented in Chinese and American composers, it is a fact that composers from our two countries are not widely known beyond our borders. The China-U.S. Composers Project will bring the best and brightest composers greater recognition not only in China and the U.S. but around the world.

## **About ACO**

Now in its 38<sup>th</sup> 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 700 American composers, including nearly 300 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](http://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](http://InstantEncore.com), [Amazon.com](http://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](http://www.vimeo.com/channels/orchestraunderground). More information about American Composers Orchestra is available online at [www.americancomposers.org](http://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](http://www.americancomposers.org/press)

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### **american composers orchestra**

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