



american composers orchestra

news release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 2, 2016

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American Composers Orchestra Announces 2016 Jazz Composers Orchestra Institute (JCOI) Readings

**16 Jazz Composers Selected for Readings, Workshops, and
Performances of New Works by Three Orchestras in 2016**

Naples Philharmonic

**Wednesday, May 25, 2016 at 2pm (working rehearsal) & Thursday, May 26 at 7pm (run-through)
Artis-Naples Hayes Hall, 5833 Pelican Bay Boulevard, Naples, FL
Admission: Free and open to the public**

American Composers Orchestra

**Wednesday, June 15, 2016 & Thursday, June 16 at 7:30 pm (run-through)
Columbia University's Miller Theatre, 2960 Broadway, NYC
Admission: Evening run-through is free and open to the public, reservations suggested**

Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra

**Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2016 & Wednesday, Sept. 21 at 7pm (run-through)
Kleinhans Music Hall, 3 Symphony Circle, Buffalo, NY
Admission: Evening run-through is free and open to the public**

**Read the *Wall Street Journal* feature: <http://on.wsj.com/12iNufw>
"the potential to shift the course of concert music" – *NPR***

New York, NY – **American Composers Orchestra (ACO)** in cooperation with **EarShot**, the National Orchestra Composition Discovery Network, will present the third **Jazz Composers Orchestra Institute (JCOI) Readings** in 2016. Three orchestras – the **Naples Philharmonic (May 25 & 26)**, **American Composers Orchestra (June 15 & 16)**, and the **Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (September 20 & 21)** – will workshop, rehearse, and give public readings of new works for symphony orchestra written by sixteen jazz composers.

ACO's JCOI is a new development in the jazz field, led by ACO in partnership with the **UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music** in Los Angeles and the **Center for Jazz Studies at Columbia University** in New York. While many jazz composers seek to write for the symphony orchestra, opportunities for hands-on experience are few. JCOI aims to provide new resources for both jazz and classical music, promoting the emergence of composers trained in both jazz and new orchestral techniques. ACO's first JCOI during the 2010-2011 season was the subject of two features on National Public Radio, which reported that what the composers discovered while at the Institute has "the potential to shift the course of concert music." With the class of 2016, nearly 100 jazz composers have benefited from the program, and so far 27 new jazz

works for orchestra have been created and workshopped. *Listen online at:*
www.npr.org/2010/12/19/132146455/teaching-the-symphony-to-swing

The 2016 JCOI Readings are the culmination of a process that began in August 2015, when 36 jazz composers of all ages were selected from a national pool of applicants to attend the weeklong Jazz Composers Orchestra Institute Intensive, a series of workshops and seminars devoted to orchestral composition held at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music in Los Angeles. After completing the Intensive, sixteen composers were given the opportunity to put what they learned into practice by composing a new symphonic work for the JCOI Readings in 2016. The composers, working in jazz, improvised, and creative music, were chosen based on their excellent musicianship, originality, and potential for future growth in orchestral composition. Each of the three orchestras will workshop and perform between four and seven composers' new works.

The JCOI Readings by the **Naples Philharmonic** will take place at Artis-Naples Hayes Hall, with mentor composers **Vincent Mendoza** (composer/arranger), **James Newton** (JCOI Director; University of California, Los Angeles), and **Derek Bermel** (Artistic Director, ACO), conducted by Naples Philharmonic Assistant Conductor **Yaniv Segal**. The participating composers are **Robin Holcomb** (b. 1954), a Seattle-based composer and singer/songwriter recording for Nonesuch, Songlines, and Tzadik, whose music draws on both her childhood in Georgia and her stints working among avant-garde musicians in New York and California; **Sonia Jacobsen** (b. 1967), a much-awarded composer, jazz saxophonist, and founding director of the New York Symphonic Jazz Orchestra who grew up splitting her time between Australia and Denmark and is now based in Chapin, South Carolina; **Yvette Jackson** (b. 1973), a composer, sound designer and installation artist focused on radio opera and narrative soundscape composition from La Solla, California who holds degrees from Columbia University and the Colburn School for the Performing Arts; and Brooklyn-based performer and composer **Nathan Smith** (b. 1983), who leads the Nathan Parker Smith Large Ensemble which performs throughout New York City. The Readings will include an open, working rehearsal on Wednesday, May 25 at 2pm, and a run-through of the composers' pieces on Thursday, May 26 at 7pm. Both events are free and open to the public.

The JCOI Readings by **American Composers Orchestra** will take place at Columbia University's Miller Theatre, with mentor composers **Derek Bermel**, **Anthony Davis** (University of California, San Diego), **Gabriela Lena Frank** (composer in residence, Houston Symphony), and **James Newton**, conducted by ACO Music Director **George Manahan**. The participating composers are New York-based **Jonathan Finlayson** (b. 1982), a disciple of the saxophonist/composer Steve Coleman who has performed alongside notables including Mary Halvorson, Henry Threadgill, Von Freeman, Jason Moran, Dafnis Prieto and Vijay Iyer; Boston-based **Brian Friedland** (b. 1982), whose music is rooted in jazz piano traditions but also shows his love of genres ranging from Balkan Folk to classical minimalism; New York-based saxophonist and composer **Ethan Helm** (b. 1990) who co-leads the jazz quintet Cowboys & Frenchmen and whose latest quartet album, *The Spoon*, was released last summer; Israeli-born, New York-based jazz pianist and composer **Guy Mintus** (b. 1991) who focuses on music as a gateway to cross-cultural understanding and has collaborated with master musicians from Turkey, Greece, Iran, Morocco, Azerbaijan, Cuba, India and Mali; **Ben Morris** (b. 1993) who graduated from the University of Miami, who is currently pursuing his masters' at Rice University and has won the ASCAP Morton Gould Award, two Klezmer Company Orchestra

Composers' Prizes, and three Festival Miami Composers' Awards; **John La Barbera** (b. 1945) who is a renowned composer/arranger working in the jazz world for over four decades whose music has been performed by Buddy Rich, Woody Herman, Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie, Mel Tormé, Chaka Khan, Harry James, Bill Watrous, Phil Woods, and many more; and **Dawn Norfleet** (b. 1965) a jazz flutist, vocalist, and composer residing in Los Angeles who is on the faculty at the Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County and the Colburn School of Performing Arts. The Readings will include a private, working rehearsal on Wednesday, June 15, and a run-through of the composers' pieces on Thursday, June 16 at 7:30pm, which is free and open to the public (reservations suggested at www.americancomposers.org).

The JCOI Readings by the **Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra** will take place at Kleinhans Music Hall, with mentor composers **Derek Bermel**, **Anthony Cheung** (composer, University of Chicago), and **Nicole Mitchell** (composer/flutist), conducted by **Stefan Sanders**, associate conductor of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. The participating composers are **Amina Figarova** (b. 1965), an Azerbaijan-born, New York-based pianist and composer who studied classical piano performance at the Baku Conservatory as well as jazz performance at the Rotterdam Conservatory, Netherlands, and attended the Thelonious Monk Institute's summer jazz colony in Aspen; **Gene Knific** (b. 1992) a pianist, composer, and arranger based in Kalamazoo, Michigan who has performed all over the world including at The St. Petersburg Conservatory, Copenhagen Opera House, Montmartre Jazzhus, Amelia Island Jazz Festival, Mozambique International Festival of Music, and more and has won seven *Down Beat* Music Awards for his performances and compositions; Los Angeles-based saxophonist and composer **Hitomi Oba** (b. 1984) who holds an MA from UCLA in Music Composition and whose second jazz album, *Negai*, released on the Japanese label M&I received a prestigious *Swing Journal* 42nd Annual Jazz Disc Award; **Anthony Tidd** (b. 1972) who was born in London but is based in Philadelphia, and has performed with Steve Coleman, The Roots, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Wayne Krantz, Meshell Ndegeocello, Common, Jill Scott, and many more and has produced albums by such well-known artists such as The Roots, Macy Grey, Zap Mama, The Black Eyed Peas, and more; and Buenos Aires-born, Brooklyn-based **Emilio Solla** (b. 1962) who has recorded more than 40 albums performing with Paquito D'Rivera, Arturo O'Farrill, Cristina Pato, Billy Hart, Ryan Keberle and many more, and whose latest album, *Second Half* (2014), was nominated for a 2015 Grammy Award for Best Latin Jazz Album. The Readings will include a private, working rehearsal on Tuesday, September 20, and a run-through of the composers' pieces on Wednesday, September 21 at 7pm, which is free and open to the public.

Each composer will receive coaching from mentor composers and a professional music engraver as they write their new musical works. Once completed, each piece will be workshopped, rehearsed and performed by these host orchestras, through EarShot, the national orchestral composition discovery network. Composers will receive feedback from orchestra principal musicians, conductors, librarians, and mentor composers, throughout the Readings.

About American Composers Orchestra

Founded in 1977, **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. www.americancomposers.org

About the Naples Philharmonic

The **Naples Philharmonic** was founded in 1982 and in its first season performed four concerts as a chamber orchestra. Since then, the ensemble has grown in scope, size and artistic impact and now performs over 140 orchestral and chamber concerts, as well as opera and ballet, education, community and special event concerts between September through June each year. In 2014-15, the orchestra welcomed internationally renowned conductor Andrey Boreyko to his first season as the Music Director. In 2015-16, the Naples Philharmonic features a host of internationally recognized guest artists, including pianists Emanuel Ax and André Watts, the Miró String Quartet and saxophonist Branford Marsalis, among others. www.artisnaples.org/naples-philharmonic

About the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra

As Buffalo's cultural ambassador, the Grammy Award-winning **Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra** under the leadership of music director JoAnn Falletta presents more than 100 concerts each year. Since 1940, the orchestra's home has been Kleinhans Music Hall, a National Historic Landmark with a reputation as one of the finest concert halls in the United States. During the tenure of JoAnn Falletta, the BPO has rekindled its history of radio broadcasts and recordings, including the release of 36 new recordings on the Naxos and Beau Fleuve labels. www.bpo.org

About EarShot

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 their new music programs. EarShot is coordinated 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

About the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music

With its three outstanding departments of Ethnomusicology, Music and Musicology, **The UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music** aspires to educate the whole student through productive collaborations between performance and scholarship, a cross-cultural, global understanding of the art of music, and preparatory training for a broad range of careers in music after graduation. Public concerts, lectures, symposia, master classes, and musical theater and opera productions, are a hallmark of The UCLA Herb Alpert School of

Music. Each department hosts a calendar of events open to the entire community, enriching the lives of both those on stage and those in the audience, and contributing to the quality of life in the city and beyond. The UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music was formed in 2007, with the support of a \$30 million endowment from the Herb Alpert Foundation, made possible through the generosity of the renowned performer, producer and philanthropist Herb Alpert and his wife Lani Hall Alpert.

www.schoolofmusic.ucla.edu

About the Center for Jazz Studies at Columbia University

The **Center for Jazz Studies at Columbia University** sees jazz as a music without borders and ultimately without limits, a model for the integration of forward-thinking models of scholarly inquiry with innovative teaching and community dialogue. Its direction, which emphasizes the themes of internationalization, technology, and community, is realized by promoting research by innovative scholars in the arts, humanities, and sciences; encouraging excellence in the teaching of music and culture; and presenting public events that complement and extend the Center's research and teaching. The Center for Jazz Studies views the interdisciplinary expansion of the intellectual conversation surrounding jazz, and especially its lifeblood practice, improvisation, as tracing a path toward the development of new knowledge that illuminates the human condition. www.jazz.columbia.edu

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The Jazz Composers Orchestra Institute is made possible by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Herb Alpert Foundation, with additional funding provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Fromm Music Foundation and with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts. EarShot is made possible with the support of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music and with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional funding provided by the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation.



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

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