

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND LETTERS ANNOUNCES 2012 MUSIC AWARD WINNERS

Eighteen Composers Receive Awards Totaling \$190,000

New York, February 29, 2012—The American Academy of Arts and Letters announced today the eighteen recipients of this year's awards in music, which total \$190,000. The winners were selected by a committee of Academy members: Ezra Laderman (chairman), David Del Tredici, John Harbison, Fred Lerdahl, Tania Leon, Bernard Rands, Gunther Schuller, and Steven Stucky. The awards will be presented at the Academy's annual Ceremonial in May. Candidates for music awards are nominated by the 250 members of the Academy.

ARTS AND LETTERS AWARDS IN MUSIC

Four composers will each receive a \$7500 Arts and Letters Award in Music, which honors outstanding artistic achievement and acknowledges the composer who has arrived at his or her own voice. Each will receive an additional \$7500 toward the recording of one work. The winners are Paul Moravec, Frank Ticheli, Dan Welcher, and John Zorn.

WALTER HINRICHSSEN AWARD

Reena Esmail will receive the Walter Hinrichsen Award for the publication of a work by a gifted composer. This award was established by the C. F. Peters Corporation, music publishers, in 1984.

ANDREW IMBRIE AWARD

Louis Karchin will receive the \$10,000 Andrew Imbrie Award in Music. This award, being inaugurated this year, is given to a composer of demonstrated artistic merit, and is made possible through a gift from Andrew and Barbara Imbrie.

WLADIMIR AND RHODA LAKOND AWARD

The Wladimir and Rhoda Lakond award of \$10,000 is given to a promising mid-career composer. This year the award will go to Christopher Theofanidis.

GODDARD LIEBERSON FELLOWSHIPS

Two Goddard Lieberson fellowships of \$15,000, endowed in 1978 by the CBS Foundation, are given to mid-career composers of exceptional gifts. This year they will go to Edmund Campion and Huck Hodge.

CHARLES IVES FELLOWSHIPS

Harmony Ives, the widow of Charles Ives, bequeathed to the Academy the royalties of Charles Ives' music, which has enabled the Academy to give the Ives awards in composition since 1970. Two Charles Ives Fellowships, of \$15,000 each, will be awarded to Haralabos Stafylakis and Xi Wang.

CHARLES IVES SCHOLARSHIPS

Niccolo Athens, Sean Friar, David Hertzberg, Takuma Itoh, Wang Jie, and Chris Rogerson will receive Charles Ives Scholarships of \$7500, given to composition students of great promise.

MARC BLITZSTEIN MEMORIAL AWARD FOR MUSICAL THEATER

Friends of the late Academician Marc Blitzstein set up an award, now \$5,000, in his memory to be given from time to time to a composer, lyricist, or librettist to encourage the creation of works of merit for musical theater and opera. Chosen by a specially selected committee, the composer John Kander will be awarded this prize.

THE ACADEMY

The American Academy of Arts and Letters was founded in 1898 to "foster, assist, and sustain an interest in literature, music, and the fine arts." Each year, the Academy honors over 50 composers, artists, architects, and writers with cash awards ranging from \$5000 to \$100,000. Other activities of the Academy are exhibitions of art, architecture, and manuscripts; purchases of art for donations to museums; publications on the Academy's history and events; readings and performances of new musicals. The Academy is located in three landmark buildings designed by McKim, Mead & White, Cass Gilbert, and Charles Pratt Huntington, on Audubon Terrace at 155 Street and Broadway.

Biographies of 2012 Award Winners in Music

Niccolo Athens (b. 1988) grew up in San Antonio, Texas. In 2010, he received his Bachelor of Music in composition from The Juilliard School, and he is currently enrolled in the DMA program at Cornell University. He is the recipient of two BMI Student Composer Awards, the emerging composer prize of the American Art Song Competition for Composers, and first prize in the Longfellow Chorus Competition. In 2009, he participated in the Staunton Music Festival. Ensembles which have performed his work include the Juilliard Orchestra, the New Juilliard Ensemble, The Momenta Quartet, the Olmos Ensemble, and the San Antonio Symphony.

Edmund Campion is Professor of Music Composition at UC Berkeley and Co-Director at the Center for New Music and Audio. Born in Dallas, Texas, in 1957, he studied composition at the University of Texas, Columbia University, and in France studying with composer Gérard Grisey. He worked at IRCAM where he composed *Losing Touch*, a mainstay in the repertoire for percussion and electronics. He has been commissioned by IRCAM, Radio France, the French Ministry of Culture, Soci t  Generale, the Koussevitzky Foundation, and the Santa Rosa Symphony. Campion will be Composer-in-Residence with the Santa Rosa Symphony for the 2012-13 season.

Indian-American composer **Reena Esmail** received her training at The Juilliard School (BM '05) and Yale School of Music (MM '11), and has studied with teachers including Susan Botti, Aaron Jay Kernis and Chris Theofanidis. She is currently on a yearlong Fulbright grant to India to study Hindustani classical music with Gaurav Mazumdar in Delhi. Esmail was awarded an "INK" Innovation and Knowledge Fellowship this past December, and has been invited to speak about her work at events in Jaipur, Chennai, Delhi, and on national radio and television in India. She will be returning to the US to start her doctoral degree at Yale in the fall of 2012.

Sean Friar was born in Los Angeles in 1985. He thrives on composing for ensembles both within and outside the realm of traditional concert music, and his recent commissions run the gamut from a large-scale work for the Berlin Philharmonic Scharoun Ensemble to a junk car percussion concerto for the American Composers Orchestra. The youngest winner of the Rome Prize in over 25 years, Friar's honors include the Aaron Copland Award, four ASCAP Young Composer Awards, a Lee Ettelson Award, and a First Music Award. He graduated from UCLA in 2007 and is a Ph.D. candidate at Princeton University.

David Hertzberg is currently in his fourth year of the accelerated BM/MM program at The Juilliard School, where he studies with Samuel Adler, and from where he will graduate with distinction. His works have been performed by soprano Jennifer Zetlan and the Juilliard Orchestra in Alice Tully Hall, by pianist James Goldsworthy on the Unique Voices concert series in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and by members of the Argento Ensemble at the Austrian Cultural Forum in New York. Among his recent distinctions are the 2011 William Schuman Prize from BMI and the 2011 Arthur Friedman Prize from The Juilliard School.

Huck Hodge writes music that explores the embodied poetics of organized sound, perceptual illusion and the threshold between design and intuition. He has won the Rome Prize, the Gaudeamus Prize and the Aaron Copland Fellowship from the Bogliasco Foundation, among many other awards and commissions. Praised by the *New York Times* for his "harmonically fresh work...full of both sparkle and thunder," his collaborators include members of Ensemble Modern, the Berlin Philharmonic and the ASKO Ensemble. Hodge studied composition at Columbia

University and the Musikhochschule Stuttgart. He is currently Assistant Professor in Composition at the University of Washington.

Takuma Itoh was born in Japan and raised in Northern California. Currently a DMA candidate at Cornell University, he earned a MM from the University of Michigan and a BM from Rice University. His compositions have been performed by the Albany Symphony, the New York Youth Symphony, Symphony in C, the Shanghai Quartet, the St. Lawrence Quartet, the Momenta Quartet, Argento Ensemble, the H2 saxophone quartet, and by the violinist Joseph Lin. He is the recipient of four ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards and has attended the Aspen Music Festival and the Pacific Music Festival.

Shanghai-born **Wang Jie** has emerged as one of the most distinctive musical voices among young American composers. Composition protégée of Nils Vigeland at Manhattan School of Music and Richard Danielpour at Curtis Institute of Music, her work has had performances by the American Composers Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, New York City Opera, Continuum, among others. She has received honors from ASCAP, BMI, and Opera America. Critics from the NY Times, Classicsource.com and Minnesota's Pioneer Press refer to her work as "fascinating," "self-assured," and sometimes "far more fun than one is supposed to have at a concert of 'serious' music".

John Kander has received Tony Awards for *Cabaret*, *Woman Of The year*, *Kiss Of The Spiderwoman*, a Laurence Olivier Award for the London production of *Chicago*, Emmy Awards for *Liza With A Z* and *Liza Minnelli Live! From Radio City Music Hall*, and Grammy Awards for *Cabaret*, Original Cast Album, and for *Chicago*, Musical Show Album. Together with Fred Ebb, the team also received numerous nominations, which include five more Tony Awards, two Academy Awards, and four Golden Globe Awards. In 1998, he and Ebb received the Kennedy Center Honors award for Lifetime Achievement.

Louis Karchin has had over sixty works performed worldwide. A Naxos CD release of his opera, *Romulus*, garnered accolades in England, Germany, and the U.S., with Opera News proclaiming it "unfailingly fresh...it announces its originality right out of the gate and sustains it through to the very end of its seventy-two-minute running time." A Guggenheim fellow for 2011-12, Karchin has been commissioned by the Koussevitzky, Fromm, and Barlow foundations, and received prizes from the AAAL (Goddard Lieberson and Walter Hinrichsen Awards) and the National Endowment for the Arts. His music publishers are C. F. Peters Corporation and the American Composers Alliance. He is Professor of Music at New York University.

Paul Moravec, recipient of the 2004 Pulitzer Prize for Music, has composed over one hundred works for the orchestral, chamber, choral, lyric, film, and operatic genres. Recent premieres include *The Letter* at Santa Fe Opera, *The Blizzard Voices* at Opera Omaha, and *Brandenburg Gate* with Orpheus Chamber Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. His catalog of recordings includes four albums for Naxos American Classics: *Tempest Fantasy*, *The Time Gallery*, *Cool Fire*, and *Useful Knowledge*. He is University Professor at Adelphi, recently served as Artist-in-Residence with the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, and was elected to the American Philosophical Society in 2010. His website is www.paulmoravec.com, and his publisher is Subito Music.

Chris Rogerson's music has been praised for its "virtuosic exuberance" and "haunting beauty" (*New York Times*). Ensembles such as the New World Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, Grand Rapids Symphony, and the New York Youth Symphony have performed his work at venues including Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and the Library of Congress. He has won awards and fellowships from ASCAP, the MacDowell Colony, the Aspen Music Festival, and the Presser Foundation. Rogerson is Composer-in-Residence with Young Concert Artists and attended the Curtis Institute of Music and Yale University, where he studied with Jennifer Higdon, Aaron Jay Kernis, and Martin Bresnick.

Montréal-born composer **Haralabos Stafylakis** completed his bachelor's degree in music composition at McGill University in 2010, having studied with Chris Paul Harman, Jean Lesage, and John Rea. He is currently working

toward his Ph.D. in music at the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center, studying with David Del Tredici and Jason Eckardt. His awards include two SOCAN Foundation Awards for Young Composers, a Canada Council for the Arts “Grant for Professional Musicians”, finalist at the Alea III Composition Competition, and first prize in the Guitare Montréal composition competition. He is published by Les Productions d’OZ.

Frank Ticheli is in his 21st year as Professor of Composition at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music. From 1991 to 1998, Ticheli was Composer-in-Residence of the Pacific Symphony. Ticheli's orchestral works have been performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Dallas Symphony, American Composers Orchestra, and many other orchestras throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. Recent compositions include *Songs of Love and Life* for soprano and 18 players, and Clarinet Concerto, composed for soloist Håkan Rosengren. He is currently composing *The Shore*, a choral symphony for the Pacific Chorale and Pacific Symphony, to be premiered and recorded by them on a Delos label CD. Other recordings of his music are being released this year on the Reference, Klavier, and Naxos labels.

Christopher Theofanidis is on the faculty of Yale University and has taught at the Peabody Conservatory and The Juilliard School. He writes for a variety of musical genres, from orchestral and chamber music to opera and ballet. His work, *Rainbow Body*, has been programmed by over 120 orchestras internationally. Mr. Theofanidis' works have been performed by the New York Philharmonic, the London Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and he has a long-standing relationship with the Atlanta Symphony. Mr. Theofanidis has written widely for the stage, from a work for the American Ballet Theatre, to multiple dramatic pieces, including *The Refuge* for the Houston Grand Opera and *Heart of a Soldier* for the San Francisco Opera. His large-scale piece, *The Here and Now*, was nominated for a Grammy award in 2007.

Xi Wang's orchestral music has been performed by the Minnesota Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony, American Composers Orchestra, Shanghai Philharmonic, Spokane Symphony, among others. She has received awards from Meet the Composer, National Endowment for the Arts, American Music Center, and ASCAP. Her fellowships include the MacDowell Colony, Composers Conference and Chamber Music Center, Pacific Music Festival, Aspen Music Festival, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Music 04, Oregon Bach Music Festival, the Chamber Music Conference and Composers' Forum of the East, and the Hinrichsen Foundation. Xi Wang received her B.M. from Shanghai Conservatory, M.M. from University of Missouri-Kansas City, and D.M.A from Cornell University. She is Assistant Professor in Music at the Southern Methodist University.

Critic Royal S. Brown, writing in *High Fidelity* magazine, called **Dan Welcher** “one of the most promising American composers I have heard.” With over one hundred works to his credit, more than half of which are published and recorded, Welcher has written in virtually every medium, including opera, oratorio, concerto, symphony, wind ensemble, vocal literature, piano solos, and various kinds of chamber music. His orchestral music has been performed by more than fifty orchestras, including the BBC Symphony, Chicago Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, and Dallas Symphony. He is a Guggenheim fellow, has received awards from numerous agencies, and commissions from some of the world's leading ensembles and artists. Welcher holds the Lee Hage Jamail Regents Professorship in Fine Arts at the Butler School of Music (University of Texas at Austin), where he directs the New Music Ensemble.

Drawing upon his experience in classical, jazz, rock, hardcore punk, klezmer, film, cartoon, popular, world and improvised music, **John Zorn** has created an influential body of work that defies academic categories. Born and raised in New York City, he is a central figure in the Downtown Scene, incorporating a wide variety of creative musicians into various compositional formats. His work is diverse and remarkably eclectic and draws inspiration from art, literature, film, theatre, philosophy, alchemy and mysticism, as well as music. He founded the Tzadik label in 1995, runs the East Village performance space The Stone, and has edited/published five volumes of musician's writings under the title ARCANA. Honors include the Cultural Achievement Award from the National Foundation for Jewish Culture and the William Schuman Prize for composition from Columbia University. He was

inducted into the Long Island Hall of Fame by Lou Reed in 2010 and is a MacArthur Fellow. In 2012 he was given the honorary doctorate Magister Artium Gaundensis by the University of Ghent, Belgium.

http://www.artsandletters.org/press_releases/2012music.php

For further information, please contact Ardith Holmgrain, aholmgrain@artsandletters.org