



NEWS RELEASE

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NEW YORK YOUTH SYMPHONY ANNOUNCES 2016/2017 FIRST MUSIC COMMISSIONS

Through its **First Music** program, the **New York Youth Symphony (NYYS)** has selected seven of America's emerging orchestra, chamber music, and jazz composers under age 30 to write commissions for the **NYYS' 54th Season**. The works will be premiered by **NYYS** student musicians on their performances at Carnegie Hall and Jazz at Lincoln Center. Called "invaluable" by *The New York Times*, **First Music** has been widely acknowledged as one of the leading forces in the United States for bringing the work of gifted young composers to the public's attention for the past 33 years.

The **First Music** commissions for the 2016/2017 Season:

ORCHESTRA

Viet Cuong: Sunday, November 20, 2016, 2 PM at Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage, Carnegie Hall
Ethan Braun: Sunday, March 5, 2017, 2 PM at Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage, Carnegie Hall
Daniel Silliman: Sunday, May 28, 2017, 2 PM at Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage, Carnegie Hall
Orchestra/Chamber honorable mentions: **Natalie Dietterich, Scott Lee, and Nicholas DiBerardino.**

CHAMBER MUSIC

Charles Peck: Tuesday, May 2, 2017, 7:30 PM - Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall

JAZZ

Michael Thomas: Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2016, 7:30/9:30 PM - Dizzy's Club *Coca-Cola* at Jazz at Lincoln Center
Andy Clausen: Monday, March 13, 2017, 7:30/9:30 PM - Dizzy's Club *Coca-Cola* at Jazz at Lincoln Center
Remy Le Boeuf: Sunday, May 7, 2017, 7:30 PM - The Appel Room at Jazz at Lincoln Center
Jazz honorable mentions: **Gene Knific and Benjamin Morris.**

This year's Chamber Music/Orchestra Jury was chaired by Pulitzer Prize winner Julia Wolfe, and included Donnacha Dennehy, Joshua Gersen, Angélica Negrón, and Robert Honstein. The Jazz Jury was chaired by Rufus Reid, a leading string bass player with over 250 recordings in his discography, and included Michael Rodriguez, Miho Hazama, and Luis Bonilla.

First Music Applications are accepted annually between September and December. Past **First Music** composers have gone on to receive a total of 12 Rome Prizes, 16 Guggenheim Fellowships, the Grawemeyer Award, and 4 Pulitzer Prizes. Additional information about **First Music** can be found at <http://www.nyys.org/programs/first-music>

The remaining **First Music** commissions to be premiered in the 2015/2016 Season include:

Sonata da Camera by **Michael Schachter**

Wednesday, May 4, 2016, 7:30 PM at Weill Hall, Carnegie Hall

For tickets and info, please visit: <http://www.carnegiehall.org>

Native Tongue by **Chris Zuar**

Monday, May 16, 2016, 7:30 PM at the Appel Room, Jazz at Lincoln Center

For tickets and info, please visit: <http://www.jazz.org>

Collective by **Brendan Faegre**

Sunday, May 29, 2016, 2 PM at Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall

For tickets and info, please visit: <http://www.carnegiehall.org>

First Music is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and New York State Council on the Arts.

Composer Biographies:

Viet Cuong's works have been performed on six continents by musicians and ensembles, including Sō Percussion, PRISM Saxophone Quartet, JACK Quartet, American Modern Ensemble, Gallicantus, Music From Copland House, Winston-Salem Symphony, Mimi Stillman, Anthony McGill, Lisa Moore, and over 70 college and conservatory wind ensembles. **Mr. Cuong's** music has been featured in diverse venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Aspen Music Festival, International Double Reed Society Conference, Boston GuitarFest, US Navy Band International Saxophone Symposium, and American Public Radio's *Performance Today*. Awards include the ASCAP Morton Gould Award, Suzanne and Lee Ettelson Award, Theodore Presser Foundation Music Award, Cortona Prize, and Walter Beeler Memorial Prize, as well as honorable mentions in the Harvey Gaul Memorial Competition and two ASCAP/CBDNA Frederick Fennell Prizes. **Mr. Cuong** has received artist residencies from Copland House, Yaddo, Ucross, and the Atlantic Center for the Arts, and was a scholarship student at the Aspen, Bowdoin, and Lake Champlain music festivals. Raised in Marietta, GA, **Cuong** received degrees from the Peabody Conservatory and is currently a Naumburg and Roger Sessions PhD Candidate at Princeton University.

For more info on **Viet Cuong** please visit: <http://vietcuongmusic.com>

Ethan Braun hails from Los Angeles, California. Taken with Jazz, his music demonstrates a classical architecture with a raw, improvisatory energy. **Mr. Braun** has written for ensembles as varied as detuned electric guitar quartet, big band, percussion quartet, and solo viola. Current/recent projects include a work for orchestra, voice, and sinewaves for the Shanghai Symphony, collaboration with Sam Gendel (of INGA) for the Albany Symphony, and a work for improvising ensemble for the Brendan Faegre Edge Ensemble (The Hague, NL). He has worked with electronic musician Wyatt Penn Keusch on several records, and released EPs of electroacoustic music with Khalija Records (Los Angeles). Following private studies in composition, jazz, and classical piano, **Mr. Braun** received his B.A. in Composition at UCLA in 2011. He also completed an M.M. with Oscar Bettison at the Peabody Conservatory, and with Peter Adriaansz and Cornelis de Bondt at the Royal Conservatorium of The Hague. **Mr. Braun** is now pursuing a doctorate in composition at Yale University where he studies with Chris Theofanidis.

For more info on **Ethan Braun**, please visit: <http://www.ethanbraun.com>

Daniel Silliman's work has been recognized with various awards and honors, including the 2015 William Schuman Prize from the BMI Foundation, an ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award (winner 2015, finalist 2012), with additional support from Copland House, the Gamper Festival of Contemporary Music, American Festival for the Arts, Texas Music Teachers Association, and Access Contemporary Music. Born in upstate New York, **Mr. Silliman** grew up in Texas and is a graduate of the USC Thornton School of Music. He is currently a doctoral fellow in music at Princeton.

For more info on **Daniel Silliman**, please visit <http://www.danielsilliman.com>.

Charles Peck's work has been called "daring" (Philadelphia Inquirer), "vivid" (UArts Edge magazine), and "spell-binding" (Rappahannock News). He approaches composition as a way of capturing the energy and contrasts of visual imagery in a sonic medium. Recently, **Mr. Peck's** music was selected in Ensemble Mise-En's Call for Scores, the Locrian Chamber Player's Call for Scores, and he was named the winner of Symphony in C's Young Composers' Competition, Castleton Festival's Young Composer's Forum, OFMC Collegiate Composition Competition, and the University of Cincinnati's Composition Competition. Mr. Peck has also been awarded grants from the McKnight Foundation, American Composers Forum, and Cornell Council for the Arts. His music has been featured at festivals including the New Music Gathering, highSCORE Festival, Castleton Festival, and, as of this coming summer, the Aspen Music Festival. Additionally, his bassoon duet, titled *Alluvion*, is included on Ablaze Record's new music compilation album, Millennial Masters Vol. III. **Mr. Peck's** new work for Euphonium and Brass Band, titled *Aggregate*, is featured on Joel Collier's debut album *Shadowed*. Mr. Peck is currently a doctoral student at Cornell University.

For more info on **Charles Peck**, please visit: <http://charlespeckmusic.com>

Award-winning saxophonist, composer, and arranger **Michael Thomas** has been an active member of the New York City jazz community since arriving in 2011. Holding degrees from the University of Miami, New England Conservatory, and The Juilliard School, **Mr. Thomas** has performed throughout the United States and abroad, including tours in Central and South America, Australia, Europe, and Russia. His sideman work has included performances with Nicholas Payton, Miguel Zenón, and Jason Palmer. Mr. Thomas's talents can be heard on over 20 recordings, including his solo debut, *The Long Way* (2011). As a composer and arranger, **Mr. Thomas** has been commissioned by school and professional ensembles throughout the United States, and he current co-leads and writes for the Terraza 7 Big Band based in Queens, NY, in addition to his own quintet and trio.

For more info on **Michael Thomas**, please visit: <http://michaelthomasjazz.com>

Andy Clausen is a New York-based composer, trombonist, bandleader, and graduate of The Juilliard School. Hailing from Seattle, he relocated to NYC in 2010 where he enjoys a diverse schedule collaborating with filmmakers, folk and blues artists, classical composers, as well as New York's jazz elite. **Mr. Clausen** will begin his new role as director of the New York Youth Symphony Jazz at the start of the 2016/17 season. He has performed with Wynton Marsalis, Ron Carter, Benny Golson, Frank Wess, Gerald Wilson, Kurt Elling, The After Midnight Orchestra, Joe Lovano, Bill Frisell, Jason Moran, Dave Douglas, Wayne Horvitz, Andrew D'angelo, John Zorn, The American Brass Quintet, Feist, and My Brightest Diamond. The *New York Times* has described his work as "sleek, dynamic large-group jazz, a whirl of dark-hued harmony and billowing rhythm...The intelligent sheen of Mr. Clausen's writing was as striking as the composure of his peers...It was impressive, and not just by the yardstick of their age." **Mr. Clausen** is a founding member of The Westerlies, a new music brass quartet whose 2014 debut *Wish the Children Would Come on Home: The Music of Wayne Horvitz* was met with critical acclaim from NPR Fresh Air, Jazz Times, and was named the NPR Jazz "Best Debut of 2014." Mr. Clausen's awards include the Gerald Wilson Prize for Composition from the Monterey Jazz Festival, Emerging Artist of The Year, and Alternative Jazz Group of the Year Awards from the Earshot Jazz Festival, and the Lotos Foundation Prize. In addition, **Mr. Clausen** has been commissioned by the *New York Times*, Dell, Bloomberg and Blue Chalk Media to compose music for film and television.

For more info on **Andy Clausen** please visit: <http://www.andyclausen.com>

Remy Le Boeuf has been described by *The New York Times* as a "musically precocious" saxophonist and composer who embodies "the gleaming cosmopolitanism of our present era." Mr. Le Boeuf has received many of today's most prestigious honors and awards for composition and performance. While envisioning his approach to composition and improvisation as never veering far from the roots of language, **Mr. Le Boeuf** often employs literary elements to fuel his compositions. His recent chamber music projects include *A Dream: The Musical Imagination of Franz Kafka* commissioned by Chamber Music America's New Jazz Works for a composition based on Franz Kafka's short story, *A Dream*. Additionally, **Mr. Le Boeuf** has received commissions and awards from SFJAZZ, the American Composers Forum, Jerome Foundation, National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts, ASCAP Foundation,

Independent Music Awards, Edward and Sally Van Lier Fund within the New York Community Trust, North American Saxophone Alliance, Sax Idol, and the International Songwriting Competition. Mr. Le Boeuf performs regularly with his band Le Boeuf Brothers and has also toured as part of the Grammy Award-winning Bob Mintzer Big Band, as well as with Dayna Stephens' band, Linda Oh, JACK Quartet, the Alan Ferber Expanded Ensemble, and indie-pop sensation Wildcat! Wildcat!

For more info on **Remy Le Boeuf**, please visit: <http://remyleboeuf.com>

About the NYYS:

The **New York Youth Symphony** is internationally recognized for its award-winning and innovative educational programs for talented young musicians. Founded in 1963 as an orchestra to showcase the metropolitan area's most gifted musicians, ages 12-22, its programs have since grown to include Chamber Music groups, Jazz, Composition, Apprentice Conducting, and the First Music and First Art commissioning programs.

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