



AMERICAN
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FORUM

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2018 McKnight Composer Fellows and McKnight Visiting Composers Announced

ST. PAUL, MN – The American Composers Forum (ACF) today announced the recipients of this year's McKnight Fellowships for Composers, funded by the McKnight Foundation. These awards, which include \$25,000 in unrestricted funds for each recipient, acknowledge excellence in the field of music composition. The four fellows were chosen from a pool of 50 applicants. In another McKnight funded program, two artists from outside Minnesota have been selected as the McKnight Visiting Composers. Each receives \$10,000 to spend a minimum of 40 days in Minnesota pursuing a self-designed residency project. This year's panelists were composer/performers Marcos Balter (New York, NY), Amy Knoles (Castaic, CA), and Osnat Netzer (Cambridge, MA).

The 2018 McKnight Composer Fellows are:

Joshua Clausen (Minneapolis, MN)
Scott L. Miller (Otsego, MN)
JC Sanford (Northfield, MN)
Tiffany M. Skidmore (Falcon Heights, MN)

The 2018 McKnight Visiting Composers are:

Anthony R. Green (Providence, RI)
Volker Goetze (Staten Island, NY)

About the McKnight Composer Fellows

Joshua Clausen (Minneapolis, MN) <http://joshuaclausen.com/>

Joshua Clausen's music inhabits stylistic interstices, blending elements of concert music, new music technologies and varied popular forms. Described by Public Radio International as "powerful" and "poignant," Clausen's works frequently fuse strong rhythmic textures, intense harmony and intricate patterning with narratives and imagery from history, mass culture and current events.

Performances of Clausen's works include the 2018 Tribeca New Music Festival, a 2019 showcase of Clausen's choral works in Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, Ensemble Mise-En, ShoutHouse, Verdant Vibes in Providence RI, ARENA DANCES at St. Paul's Fitzgerald theater, the 2018 American Choral Directors Association Conference in



Oklahoma City, and the American Composers Forum showcase. Clausen's music has been featured on PRI's *The World* with Marco Werman and Classical Minnesota Public Radio.

Clausen's music has been recognized by a McKnight Composer Fellowship and a Jerome Foundation Composer/Sound Artist Fellowship, as well as awards from the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, the American Composers Forum, and the Minnesota State Arts Board. Clausen holds

degrees from the University of Minnesota and Concordia College in Moorhead, where his instructors have included Douglas Geers, Judith Lang Zaimont, Alex Lubet, Daniel Breedon, Liviu Marinescu and Steven Makela. He is a member of the Spitting Image Collective, a Twin-Cities group dedicated to composer-curated programming, and mentors young composers during the American Composers Forums' annual *NextNotes* initiative.

Scott L. Miller (Otsego, MN) <http://www.scottlmiller.net/>

Scott L. Miller is a composer of electroacoustic, orchestral, chamber, choral and multimedia works described as 'high adventure avant garde music of the best sort' (Classical-Modern Music Review). His recent work experiments with virtual reality applications in live concerts and his latest album, *Raba*, features two decades of audio visual collaborations and is available on New Focus Recordings.

Known for his interactive electroacoustic chamber music and ecosystemic performance pieces, Miller's work has been recognized by numerous international arts organizations. Recordings are available on New Focus Recordings, Panoramic, Innova, Eroica, CRS, rarescale and SEAMUS, and his music is published by ACA (American Composers Alliance), Tetractys, and Jeanné. Miller is a Professor of Music at St. Cloud State University, Minnesota, where he teaches composition, electroacoustic music and theory. He is Past-President of the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the U.S. (SEAMUS) and presently Director of SEAMUS Records. He holds degrees from The University of Minnesota, The University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill and the State University of New York at Oneonta, and has studied composition at the Czech-American Summer Music Institute and the Centre de Creation Musicale Iannis Xenakis.



JC Sanford (Northfield, MN) <http://www.jcsanford.com/>

JC Sanford is a musician of rare breadth, deeply rooted in the traditions of Jazz and Classical music, yet constantly pushing at their boundaries. A protégé of the legendary composer/trombonist Bob Brookmeyer, his compositions and arrangements have been performed by diverse artists such as Dave Liebman, John Abercrombie, Lew Soloff, Ingrid Jensen, the Swedish Wind Ensemble, British singer-songwriter Joy Askew, Japanese koto player Yumi Kurosawa, and Grammy-nominated pianist Andrew Russo. His 2014 JC Sanford Orchestra

album *Views from the Inside* won international acclaim and was awarded the prestigious Aaron Copland Fund Recording grant. He has been recognized as a "Rising Star" trombonist (2015, 2017), arranger (2017), and big band (2015, 2016, 2017) in DownBeat Magazine's Critic's Poll. A sought-after conductor of new large ensemble music in NYC, he conducts the twice-Grammy-nominated John Hollenbeck Large Ensemble, the Frank Carlberg Large Ensemble, Alan Ferber Nonet with Strings, and the Alice Coltrane Orchestra featuring Ravi Coltrane and Jack DeJohnette. As a trombonist, Sanford has performed alongside the likes of Danilo Pérez, Matt Wilson, Bill Stewart, and Donny McCaslin.



Since returning to Minnesota in 2016, he has co-founded the Twin Cities Jazz Composers' Workshop, an organization that fosters creative composition for the jazz orchestra, and has joined forces with his wife, composer Asuka Kakitani, to form the 17-piece Inatnas Orchestra. He regularly performs in Minnesota and NYC with his quartet and trio, along with stalwarts of the Twin Cities jazz scene such as Chris and JT Bates, Davu Seru, and Brandon Wozniak.

Tiffany M. Skidmore (Falcon Heights, MN) <http://www.tiffanyskidmore.com/>

Tiffany M. Skidmore holds degrees in Music Composition and Vocal Performance from Gonzaga



University, Eastern Washington University, and the University of Minnesota. She has studied with acclaimed Scottish composer James Dillon, Chaya Czernowin, Jonathan Middleton, and J. Kevin Waters. Her work has been featured in master classes with Brian Ferneyhough, Julio Estrada, and Michael Pisaro. She was a featured composer in the Hildegard von Bingen Festival of Women in the Arts and the Rimon Artist Salon, and her work has been performed throughout Europe and the United States by Duo Gelland, the California State University Stanislaus Concert Chorale, Opus7 Vocal Ensemble, The Gregorian Singers, the Kiev

Philharmonic, Peter Wright (principal clarinetist for the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra), the Hark Quartet, Ensemble Dal Niente, Fonema Consort, and the Strains New Music Ensemble, among many others. She has received commissions and awards from organizations including the Jerome Fund for New Music, the University of Minnesota, Rimon: the Minnesota Jewish Arts Council, the Schubert Club, and the Zeitgeist New Music Ensemble. She was selected for participation in the Centrum Composition Program, the Nautilus Composer-Librettist Studio, the John Duffy Institute for New Opera, the 2016 Internationale Ferienkurse for Neue Musik Flute Composition Workshop (with Rebecca Saunders and Eva Furer), and the Zeitgeist Composer Workshop. She is a member of the American Composers Forum and president of the Minneapolis composer collective, 113.

About the McKnight Visiting Composers

Volker Goetze (Staten Island, NY) <https://www.volkergoetze.com/>

Volker Goetze's work transcends traditional norms. His research doesn't start with recordings or books but begins by actually traveling and spending time in places of interest and seeking out the local master musicians. He believes in learning by doing and establishing personal connections.



His time in West Africa inspired him to direct a feature documentary about the oral history of West Africa. He also composed a live performance documentary recounting the creation of the African harp featuring his duo partner and kora-virtuoso Ablaye Cissoko. The duo has performed sold out concerts at the most prestigious concert halls in Europe and festivals in North America.

He founded his own big band in 2007 and recorded "NY 10027." His quintet album featuring Richie Barshay and Oran Etkin was released last year including two European release tours and a concert at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.

Recently Volker Goetze composed a 360 video and spatial audiovisual composition about New York City's mass grave on Hart Island titled "Unique Places of Death NYC," which will premiere at LaMaMA in April 2019. Last year, he completed a photography and music project called "Secret Island" about Staten Island telling the untold stories and historic events of the borough going back to the Prehistoric Ice Age. Currently he is interviewing the homeless of NYC to compose a mobile Virtual Reality pop-up installation. In 2017, Volker was awarded a highly competitive grant by Design Trust and Staten Island Arts to implement his vision of NYC's sound sculpture walk called "Sonic Gates, which will open on July 14th 2018. The project is partly funded by the NEA, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and NYC Small Business Service NYC.

For the McKnight Visiting Composer Residency Volker Goetze will create *UNHERALDED*, an interdisciplinary ambisonic 360 video and music performance giving the homeless a voice. Volker Goetze will investigate the stories of homeless individuals in Minneapolis. Eye opening vignettes of interviews will elevate their struggle and, as a result, audiences will see them in a new light, all with the goal to promote change. New original music inspired by each personal story will be composed. A 360 performance video with 3D audio will be edited and prepared for a performance version and a shorter online version. The 360 video 3D audio will create a real-world experience of the places the homeless live in. By bringing the problem into view, the project will support the work of local organizations who are fighting to address this issue. Volker Goetze will meet with key community organizers to help him understand local aspects and challenges. The music will be rehearsed and recorded in a performance space. A final performance will take place in collaboration with the community organizations. Utilizing art to create social change is Volker Goetze's passion and the residency provides a wonderful opportunity to accomplish this goal.

Anthony R. Green (Providence, RI) <https://www.anthonrygreen.com/>

The creative output of Anthony R. Green (composer, performer, social justice) includes musical and visual creations, interpretations of original works or works in the repertoire, collaborations, educational outreach, and more. Behind all of his artistic endeavors are the ideals of equality



and freedom, which manifest themselves in diverse ways in a composition, a performance, a collaboration, or social justice work. As a composer, his works have been presented in over 20 countries by Gabriela Díaz (violin), Wendy Richman (viola), Ashleigh Gordon (viola), Amanda DeBoer Bartlett (soprano), ALEA III (conducted by Gunther Schuller), The Playground Ensemble, Transient Canvas, Ossia New Music Ensemble, Access Contemporary Music, Ensemble 212, and Alarm Will Sound, to name a few. He has received commissions from Community Music Works, Make Music Boston, Celebrity Series Boston, Access Contemporary Music, and various soloists and ensembles. He has been a resident artist at the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts (Nebraska), Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Escape to Create (Florida), Visby International Centre for Composers

(Sweden), Space/Time (Scotland), atelier:performance (Germany), and the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts (Nebraska). As a performer, he has appeared at venues across the US, Cyprus, France, the Netherlands, the UK, Israel, Germany, and South Korea, working with numerous student and emerging composers, as well as established composers such as Renee' C. Baker, Steve Reich, and George Crumb. Green's most important social justice work has been with *Castle of our Skins*, a concert and education series organization dedicated to celebrating Black artistry through music. (Photo by Colin Conces)

The representation of Black composers in concert halls and performing venues around the world is strikingly low, and all too often specifically contextual. For various reasons, most of which are deep-seated and institutional, the default image of a composer has led to a vicious cycle of Black musicians and creatives being turned off by the idea of becoming a "Classical" composer, thus further reaffirming the default image of a composer. In an effort to spark an interest in Classical music and composition amongst young (age 8 to 17) students of color, I propose a residency that has two primary elements: education and creativity. The main purpose of this residency is two-fold: 1) to introduce the lives and music of Black composers to students in mostly minority, low-performing schools, and 2) to collaboratively create a new piece of music that they can perform together, regardless of previous musical experience. This residency comprises 6 weeks of bi-weekly visit. Each week will contain one educational and one creative session, culminating in interviews with the students about what they have learned, and a performance and recording (audio and video) of their collaboratively composed pieces. This program will occur at 3 schools – an elementary, middle, and high school, and each school will receive 12 hour-long sessions centered on Black composers and "classical" music composition. The final aspect of this residency includes a piano recital at a community center, ideally a Black church. The recital will feature music by Chevalier de Saint-Georges, Samuel Coleridge Taylor, Scott Joplin, Margaret Bonds, myself, and others. Before each piece will be a short introduction about the composer and the work to be performed, thus adding an educational component to the event. With this residency, I hope to inspire a new generation of musicians and composers of color.

About the McKnight Artist Fellowships Program

Founded on the belief that Minnesota thrives when its artists thrive, The McKnight Foundation's arts program is one of the oldest and largest of its kind in the country. Support for individual working Minnesota artists has been a cornerstone of the program since it began in 1981. The McKnight Artist Fellowships Program provides annual, unrestricted cash awards to outstanding mid-career Minnesota artists in 10 different creative disciplines. Program partner organizations administer the fellowships and structure them to respond to the unique challenges of different disciplines. Currently the foundation contributes about \$1.7 million per year to its statewide fellowships. For more information, visit mcknight.org/artistfellowships.

About the McKnight Foundation

The McKnight Foundation, a Minnesota-based family foundation, seeks to improve the quality of life for present and future generations. Program interests include regional economic and community development, Minnesota's arts and artists, education equity, youth engagement, Midwest climate and energy, Mississippi River water quality, neuroscience research, international crop research, and rural livelihoods. Founded in 1953 and independently endowed by William and Maude McKnight, the Foundation has assets of approximately \$2.4 billion and grants about \$90 million a year.

About the American Composers Forum

The American Composers Forum is committed to supporting composers and developing new markets for their music. Through granting, commissioning, and performance programs, ACF provides composers at all stages of their careers with valuable resources for professional and artistic development. By linking communities with composers and performers, ACF fosters a demand for new music, enriches communities, and helps develop the next generation of composers, musicians, and music patrons.

Founded in 1973 as the Minnesota Composers Forum, the organization has grown from an innovative regional initiative into one of the nation's premier composer service organizations. ACF programming reaches composers and communities in all 50 states and helps composers engage communities with music as a source of inspiration, self-reflection, and delight. This engagement takes the form of groundbreaking composer residencies, designed to engage communities in the creative process and broaden the contexts in which new music is written, performed, and heard. It means innovative approaches to teaching music while nurturing the next generation of composers, performers, and audiences. ACF supports composers' artistic and professional growth through a rich variety of programs and services, including commissions, performances, readings, and fellowships. 2,000 members include composers and performers, presenters and organizations that share ACF's goals, and individuals and institutions with an interest in supporting new music. Members come from both urban and rural areas; they work in virtually every musical genre, including orchestral and chamber music, world music, opera and music theater, jazz and improvisational music, electronic and electro-acoustic music, and sound art.

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