



# In the key of now<sup>TM</sup>

2013

*Annual Report*



# Our Vision

Make **composers**, and  
the **music** they create,  
a **vibrant** and integral  
part of our culture.

The American Composers Forum enriches lives by nurturing the creative spirit of composers and communities. We provide new opportunities for composers and their music to flourish, and engage communities in the creation, performance and enjoyment of new music.

2013



AMERICAN  
COMPOSERS  
FORUM



Left: *Cherry Spoon Collective*, a group of improvising musician/composers, energized audiences and performed original pieces inspired by a variety of experiences, melding jazz, poetry, rock and classical music. Photo: Jim Nihart.

Right: A student rehearses his trumpet solo from the latest piece in the *BandQuest*® series - *Nonantum Bulgar* by klezmer revivalist Hankus Netsky. "It was a great experience. ...to see how he composed, what his process was, and how he showed it to our group of amateur musicians was quite fascinating." -- Adlai, Grade 8



Dear Friends,

*In February 2013 I attended SPHINXCON, a convening sponsored by the Sphinx Organization in Detroit to discuss ideas about diversity in the performing arts. It was a significant event that drew every major service organization in the country. More than 30 leaders talked about how they defined diversity and what they were doing – or at least trying to do – to be more inclusive. The subject is not new to our field, but the size and scope of SPHINXCON represented renewed energy to engage the broadest possible spectrum of the performing arts.*

*I came away from the two-day event with much to think about, and the board of ACF devoted a lot of time to the topic in its May meeting. The word diversity is a broad term that can be defined in many different ways. How diverse are the boards of our performing arts organizations? Or the executive directors – or the staff that work for them? Why does a majority of arts funding in this country go to the top 50 arts institutions? As the white population moves toward a minority position, are we satisfied that so many performing organizations continue to be predominantly white? How do we support artists who do not live in the large urban centers?*

**My colleague Ann Meier Baker at Chorus America said they are working to be **more intentionally inclusive instead of unintentionally exclusive**.** It's a phrase that made great sense to me, and I've been living with it now for many months as I think about the new music field. We have spent lots of ink and chatter (for decades) on the subject of under-representation of female composers. Stylistic diversity also continues to dominate our conversations about craft, quality and artistic integrity. What we do not discuss enough is cultural diversity. People of color are still a very small group within our circles, and I worry that we are not doing enough to encourage more people of color to feel welcome.

These questions have no easy answers, but if ACF is to be a leader in the field, and an advocate for the living composer, we must keep these questions on the table at all times. Over the last two years, ACF has increased our efforts to encourage grant applicants from a broad pool of artists. We are connecting to artists by announcing opportunities to culturally-specific arts organizations and through social media. These efforts have shown positive results and we will continue to work at ways to be more intentionally inclusive in all of our programs. I invite your thoughts and perspectives on how we can do that effectively.

As always, thank you for your support and commitment to the work of living composers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Nuechterlein".

John Nuechterlein  
President and CEO

### Fostering Artistic Development for Composers

- Awarded more than \$411,600 in grants to a diverse group of composers and performers of new music.
- In partnership with McNally Smith College of Music and Minnesota Public Radio, produced *GAME ON! An Insider's Guide to Video Game Scoring*, that drew 80 composers from across the United States and Canada to Saint Paul, MN, for a full slate of workshops and a concert featuring transcriptions of video game scores written by keynote speakers: Jason Graves and Lennie Moore.
- Completed the third year of awarding *Live Music for Dance Minnesota* grants to composers, choreographers and Minnesota-based professional dance companies.
- Collaborated with VocalEssence (MN) on *Essentially Choral*, a unique opportunity for composers to work with a professional chorus to refine their works for voices. Six composers heard their pieces rehearsed by the 32-voice VocalEssence Ensemble Singers and attended mentoring sessions with the ensemble's Artistic Director Philip Brunelle and composer/conductor Francisco Núñez.



In partnership with McNally Smith College of Music and Minnesota Public Radio, ACF introduced composers to the exciting world of video game scoring with *GAME ON! An Insider's Guide to Video Game Scoring*. Sessions were led by award-winning video game composers Lennie Moore and Jason Graves (pictured), and coordinated by film and video game composer Sean McMahon. Photo: Jim Nihart.



*Hear My Voice*, commissioned by ACF's *ChoralQuest*® program, premiered by the Children's Choir from the School for Creative and Performing Arts in Cincinnati. This new work for middle-level voices was written by Pulitzer Prize-winner Jennifer Higdon, one of the most performed living American composers.

### Membership

- Total membership remained strong at 1,700+ composers, performers and educators in all 50 states and 17 countries.
- In partnership with Zeitgeist, offered 8 performance salons, serving 33 composers and 46 performers.
- Partnered with the Twin Cities chapter of Opera on Tap for a special night of "homegrown opera," including works for voices written by local composers.



Participants in Opera on Tap end the evening with a tradition: a sing-along of Verdi's "Libiamo ne' lieti calici (The Drinking Song)" from *La traviata*.

### innova Recordings

- Released 31 titles (total catalog holds 457) featuring artists and composers from wildly diverse backgrounds and experiences. From a Met Opera star's take on American songbook classics, to a re-imagining of an Irish folk tune, to Satie played on a traditional Vietnamese instrument, *innova* continues to challenge, reinvent, and influence.
- Licensed music to myriad sources, including high visibility outlets such as HBO's "Vice" series, Fox's "So You Think You Can Dance" and an Ivy League institution's lecture series.
- Increased earned revenue for artists by 5% and continued to pay out 100% of sales to artists.
- Received reviews in the LA Times, NPR, PRI's The World, Songlines, Downbeat, Gramophone, New York Times, Huffington Post, and San Francisco Examiner, to name a few.
- Supported artist tours and shows, and continued to foster community connections by arranging gatherings, appearing at conventions, and presenting at conferences.
- Diversified distribution by capturing micro-revenue streams from various online content providers.
- Began online video roundtable discussions with industry professionals and artists.



Laurie Anderson was featured during *Composer Conversations*, a series featuring some of today's most original, prominent and prestigious voices in composition. Photo: Jim Nihart.

### Chapter Activity

- ACF-Philadelphia awarded 22 grants to 24 composers totaling \$85,000 through its *Subito* and *Community Partners* programs. It also hosted three composer events and two professional development workshops.
- ACF-Philadelphia organized a meet and greet with Dance/USA Philadelphia to encourage collaboration between composers, choreographers and dancers.
- As part of *New Spaces New Formats*, ACF-Philadelphia presented an *Impromptu Jazz Composition Showcase* at Christ Church Neighborhood House.
- Expanded listeners of *New Music Philadelphia* through presence on Live365 and iTunes radio.
- ACF-LA formed a partnership with Marshall Academy in Pasadena to develop and implement *Making Music*, a program that trains students in the art, science and philosophy of creating music of all and any genre.



The Burning Bridge band led by Jason Kao Hwang (center back) about to play music from their critically acclaimed *innova* album that Downbeat magazine called "multifaceted and wholly absorbing..." and NPR's Fresh Air praised as having a "natural flow."

### Strengthening Community and Audience Engagement

- Began *Faith Partners* residencies in Morris, MN and Menomonie, WI and continued residencies in Sartell, MN and Fargo, ND/Moorhead, MN.
- Reached a weekly cumulative audience of one million listeners with *Composers Datebook* on 165 public radio stations nationwide. Of the 51 new shows this year, three featured pieces from the *ChoralQuest®* series.
- Co-hosted the inaugural season of the *Composer Conversation Series* in partnership with The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Minnesota Public Radio. The series featured composers Maria Schneider and Laurie Anderson, with time devoted for audience Q&A and informal receptions.
- Nurtured and collaborated with the *Cherry Spoon Collective* – a new, multi-generational, multi-instrumental group of musician/composers – to support the efforts of artists and also to engage the community with outside-the-performance-hall music experiences.



Musicians from the Philadelphia Orchestra perform at an ACF-Philadelphia speed composing event. Photo: Steven Krull.

### Essentially Choral

Rich Campbell (New York, NY)  
Ian A. Cook (Northfield, MN)  
Brian Coughlin (New York, NY)  
Caroline Mallonée (Buffalo, NY)  
Andrew McKenna Lee (Brooklyn, NY)  
Michael Schachter (Ann Arbor, MI)

### Faith Partners

Linda Kachelmeier (Saint Paul, MN)  
Jake Runestad (Minneapolis, MN)

### Jazz Noir Radio Program

George Maurer (Minneapolis, MN)

### Jerome Fund for New Music (JFund)

Chris Cresswell (Brooklyn, NY)  
Chris Danforth (Minneapolis, MN)  
Alex Freeman (Northfield, MN)  
Masatora Goya (Rego Park, NY)  
David Hertzberg (New York, NY)  
Asako Hirabayashi (Falcon Heights, MN)  
Jeremy Howard Beck (New York, NY)  
Heath Mathews (Farmington, MN)  
Eric Nathan (New York, NY)  
Danielle Schwob (New York, NY)

### Live Music for Dance Minnesota

Lisa Conlin (Minneapolis, MN)  
Mike Hallenbeck (Minneapolis, MN)  
Ryan Homsey (New York, NY)  
Julie Johnson (Minneapolis, MN)  
Katha Dance Theatre (Crystal, MN)  
Minnesota Ballet (Duluth, MN)  
Alanna Morris (Saint Paul, MN)  
Tamara Ober (Minneapolis, MN)  
Rosy Simas Danse (Minneapolis, MN)  
Threads Dance Project (Golden Valley, MN)  
Brian Van Tassel (Saint Paul, MN)  
Vanessa Voskuil (Minneapolis, MN)  
Jesse Whitney (Minneapolis, MN)  
Nioka Workman (New York, NY)  
Zorongo Flamenco Dance Theatre (Minneapolis, MN)

### Magnificat Project

Zachary Wadsworth (Calgary, AB)

### McKnight Composer Fellowships

Randall Bauer (Saint Paul, MN)  
Scott Miller (Maple Grove, MN)  
Joshua Musikantow (Saint Paul, MN)  
David Evan Thomas (Minneapolis, MN)

### McKnight Visiting Composer Residencies

Chris Coyle (Philadelphia, PA)  
Jin Hi Kim (Bridgeport, CT)

### Minnesota Emerging Composer Awards (MECA)

JT Bates (Minneapolis, MN)  
Lucas Melchior (Saint Paul, MN)  
Orkestar Bez Ime (Minneapolis, MN)

### Minnesota Varsity

Austin Kraft (Savage, MN)  
Grant Luhmann (Lino Lakes, MN)

### Welcome Christmas

David Biedenbender (Ann Arbor, MI)  
Sheena Phillips (Trenton, NJ)



Photo: Nikolai Fox

**“All in all, my experiences with ACF have shaped my professional career in a significant way and I am incredibly thankful for it. I am grateful for the support from the McKnight Foundation and I hope that my residency reflected the kind of work that they envisioned when they made funding available. I enjoyed my time in Minnesota immensely and I will use this experience to drive my writing, teaching and performing to new territories.”**

*Chris Coyle (McKnight Visiting Composer, pictured above)*

**>1,350,000**  
people experienced the work of ACF

**>\$411,600**  
granted to composers and performers

**7,745**  
people attended classes and workshops

**1,740**  
members in 50 states and 17 countries

**290**  
individual donors

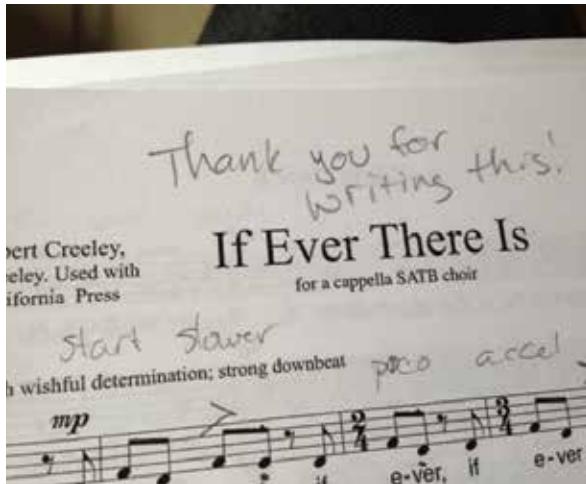
### ACF social media buzz

**2,864** Facebook likes, up **22%**  
**8,302** Twitter followers, up **49%**  
**110** YouTube subscribers, up **31%**

**51**  
new Composers Datebook shows produced

**34**  
new works commissioned

**31**  
titles added to the innova catalog



Left: Score written by *Essentially Choral* composer participant, Robert Creeley.

Right: Each year, the *McKnight Visiting Composer Program* underwrites a Minnesota residency of at least eight weeks for two out-of-state composers. While in residence, the visiting artist collaborates on a project with a Minnesota community of their choosing. *Visiting Composer*, Charles Peck, explores sound and science with students at Crossroads Elementary School in Saint Paul, MN.



“full of intrigue and difficult to label.” — *Daniel Coombs, Audiophile Audition*

Nick Brooke  
*Border Towns*

Mary Ellen Childs  
*Wreck*

Bill Ryan's Billband  
*Towards Daybreak*

Jeri-Mae G. Astolfi  
*Here (and There)*

Andrew McPherson  
*Secrets of Antikythera*

David T. Little  
*Soldier Songs*

Justin DeHart  
*Strange Paths*

Justin Rubin  
*A Waltz Through the Vapor*

Minneapolis Guitar Quartet  
*Thrum*

The Crossing  
*I Want to Live*

Andrew Rindfleisch  
*In The Zone*

Michael Hersch  
*The Sudden Pianist*

Robert Carl  
*Shake the Tree*

Dorothy Hindman  
*Tapping the Furnace*

Misfit Toys  
*Does Anybody Really Know What Time it is?*

Chris Campbell & Grant Cutler  
*Schooldays Over*

Jeremy Beck  
*String Quartets*

Jerome Kitzke  
*The Character of American Sunlight*

GVSU  
*Music for 18 Musicians (redux)*

Van-Anh Vanessa Vo  
*Three Mountain Pass*

Matthew Burtner  
*NOISE plays BURTNER*

Stephanie Blythe  
*As Long As There Are Songs*

The Crossing  
*Christmas Daybreak*

Juan Blanco  
*Nuestro Tiempo/Our Time*

Neil Rolnick  
*Gardening at Gropius House*

Larry Axelrod  
*Brandenburg Variations*

Viv Corringham  
*Walking*

Peter Kerlin Octet  
*Salamander*

Xenia Pestova  
*Shadow Piano*

Ayman Fanous & Jason Kao Hwang  
*Zilzal*

The Living Earth Show  
*High Art*



THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION



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#### \$100,000+

Bush Foundation  
McKnight Foundation  
William Penn Foundation

#### \$50,000 - \$99,999

Jerome Foundation  
Minnesota State Arts Board

#### \$25,000 - \$49,999

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National Endowment for the Arts  
New Music USA, with funds from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

#### \$10,000 - \$24,999

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#### \$5,000 - \$9,999

MAHADH Fund of HRK Foundation  
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#### \$1,000 - \$4,999

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Margaret Rivers Fund  
Wells Fargo Foundation Minnesota

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Ameriprise Foundation  
Ecolab Political Action Committee  
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### Gifts from Individuals

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**"I am continually energized by the strong staff and board commitment to ACF's mission to support the development of new music."**

*Nancy Huart, ACF board member and contributor*



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American Composers Forum  
Statement of Financial Activity for the year ending June 30, 2013

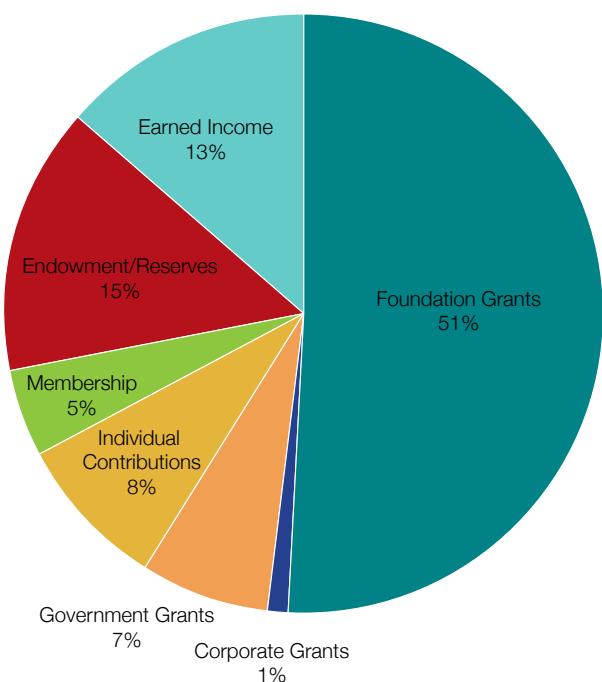
**Revenue**

Foundation Grants	\$830,906
Government Grants	116,847
Individual Contributions	133,307
Corporate Grants	17,689
Membership	75,640
Endowment/Reserves	237,671
Earned Income	220,010
<b>Total Operations Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,632,070</b>

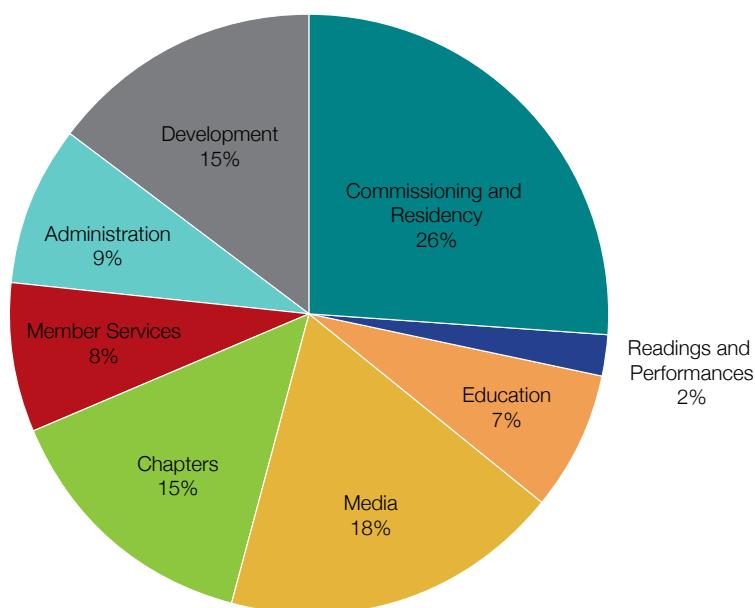
**Expense**

Commissioning and Residency	\$429,586
Readings and Performances	32,984
Education	121,821
Media	300,007
Chapters	236,894
Member Services	127,530
Administration	143,444
Development	236,249
<b>Total Operations Expense</b>	<b>\$1,628,515</b>

**Revenue**



**Expense**



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**“ACF is a wonderful organization that does great work in bringing composers, performers and audiences together. It should be called “American Composer’s Friend!”**

*Benjamin Broening (Composer, pictured above)*

**arts** learning Xchange  
 strengthening arts participation  
 in the twin cities

This publication has been produced in part by a grant from Arts Learning Xchange, a program funded by The Wallace Foundation and managed by Arts Midwest in collaboration with Minnesota Community Foundation.