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## American Composers Forum and the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble Announce Three Composers Selected for ACF CONNECT

ST. PAUL, MN – Three composers have been selected as participants for the first annual ACF CONNECT program offered by the American Composers Forum (ACF) in partnership with the highly acclaimed Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble (PNME). Long recognized for its world-class performances and commitment to new work beyond the premiere, PNME is a perfect match for the ACF CONNECT program. Selected participants will have an opportunity to work with the ensemble over 18 months, culminating in a highly produced performance in July 2018. “It is an honor to launch our new ACF CONNECT program with these exceptional composers,” says John Nuechterlein, President and CEO of ACF. “They each bring a distinctive voice to the fabric of American music, and their interaction with each other and PNME will be an extraordinary opportunity for them to grow as artists, build new networks and engage new audiences.”

The three selected composers, whose musical voices represent the diverse landscape of music being created today, were chosen out of 370 applicants from across the country. The cohort of ACF CONNECT composers includes David Biedenbender (East Lansing, MI), Rufus Reid (Teaneck, NJ), and Jung Yoon Wie (Ann Arbor, MI). Each of the selected composers will receive a \$7,500 commission to write a piece for PNME that will be workshopped and performed by the ensemble in July 2018. They will meet with industry leaders, new music professionals, and network with other composers and performers to create even more opportunities.

Kevin Noe, PNME Artistic Director, stated “The Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble has had a wonderful time collaborating with the esteemed American Composers Forum on this unique and substantive project. As a result, we have listened to and learned about hundreds of composers, many of whom were new to us. While the three fabulous composers chosen – David Biedenbender, Jung Yoon Wie, and Rufus Reid will all write new works intended to premiere next season – we also plan to reach out and build relationships with many other composers that we discovered through this process as well.

The three new works commissioned as a result of this collaboration with the ACF will clearly put PNME across the three-hundred commission threshold. Over our long history we have commissioned a wide range of composers from all over the world, and we could not be more pleased with the talents of the three chosen for this program. We are looking forward to getting to know them, to supporting and promoting them, and to having a chance to introduce them to the unique work that the Lime Green Dream Team does in Pittsburgh at our Theatre of Music.

For all the composers out there - thank you for taking the risks that you do, and for the countless hours you spend imagining how the little black dots you jot down might come together to make our world a little richer. We at the PNME and audiences all over the world... are forever grateful. Love live composers, new work, and the act of creation!"

### About the winners

**David Biedenbender** (East Lansing, MI) [www.davidbiedenbender.com](http://www.davidbiedenbender.com)

Composer David Biedenbender's music has been described as "simply beautiful" [twincities.com] and is noted for its "rhythmic intensity" [NewMusicBox] and "stirring harmonies" [Boston Classical Review]. "Modern, venturesome, and inexorable...The excitement, intensity, and freshness that characterizes Biedenbender's music hung in the [air] long after the last note was played" [Examiner.com]. David has written music for the concert stage as well as for dance and multimedia collaborations, and his work is often influenced by his diverse musical experiences in rock and jazz bands as an electric bassist, in wind, jazz, and New Orleans-style brass bands as a euphonium, bass trombone, and tuba player, and by his study of Indian Carnatic Music. His present creative interests include working with everyone from classically trained musicians to improvisers, acoustic chamber music to large ensembles, and interactive electronic interfaces to live brain data. He has had the privilege of collaborating with and being commissioned by many talented performers and ensembles, including Alarm Will Sound, PRISM Saxophone Quartet, Albany (NY) Symphony Orchestra, Stenhammar String Quartet, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, U.S. Navy Band, Philharmonie Baden-Baden (Germany), VocalEssence, and Eastman Wind Ensemble, among many others.



He is currently Assistant Professor of Composition in the College of Music at Michigan State University. He holds degrees in composition from the University of Michigan and Central Michigan University, and has also studied at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study, the Aspen Music Festival, and in Mysore, India where he studied carnatic music.

**Rufus Reid** (Teaneck, NJ) <http://rufusreid.com/>

Rufus Reid is a seasoned 50-year career veteran who has made over 400 recordings with some of the jazz world's greatest performers. He is professor emeritus and director of jazz studies and performance at William Paterson University, where he has taught for over 20 years. His book and DVD, *The Evolving Bassist*, continues to be the industry standard bass method. His receipt of the 2006 Raymond Sackler Commission resulted in his five-movement suite for large jazz ensemble, *Quiet Pride-The Elizabeth Catlett Project*. In November 2015, his album *Quiet Pride*, received two Grammy nominations, for Best Large Jazz Ensemble and Best Instrumental Composition.



Rufus is a 2008 Guggenheim Fellow in the field of composition, which resulted in the three-movement symphonic work, *Mass Transit*. In April 2016 he was named Harvard University's Jazz Master in Residence, participating in public conversations and performing in concert with his original compositions. In April 2017, *Lake Tyrrell In Innisfree*, Rufus' third symphonic

work was debuted in Raleigh, NC by the Raleigh Civic Symphony, Peter Askim, Conductor. In November 2017, Newvelle Records, an all vinyl recording company, will release the Rufus Reid Trio featuring the SIRIUS QUARTET.

Born on February 10, 1944 in Atlanta, GA, Rufus Reid was raised in Sacramento, CA, where he played the trumpet through junior high and high school. Upon graduation from Sacramento High School, he entered the United States Air Force as a trumpet player. During that period, he began to be seriously interested in the bass. After fulfilling his duties in the military, Rufus had decided he wanted to pursue a career as a professional bassist. He moved to Seattle, Washington, where he began serious study with James Harnett of the Seattle Symphony. He continued his education at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, where he studied with Warren Benfield and principal bassist, Joseph Guastefeste, both of the Chicago Symphony. He graduated in 1971 with a Bachelor of Music Degree as a Performance Major on the Double Bass.

Rufus Reid truly continues to be THE EVOLVING BASSIST.

**Jung Yoon Wie** (Ann Arbor, MI) <https://www.jungyoonwie.com/>

Born in Seoul, South Korea, Jung Yoon Wie's works have been performed by leading ensembles in notable venues. In 2016, her orchestral work, *Water Prism*, was premiered by the New Jersey Symphony, one of the four works selected for the Edward T. Cone Composition Institute. Her chamber work, *Whimsical Sketches*, for two clarinets, two percussion, and piano, received the Second Prize at the 2016 Robert Avalon International Competition and was premiered at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. In 2015, her work for string ensemble and percussion, *Telephone*, was premiered by Avanti! String Ensemble and Magnus Lindberg in Helsinki, Finland.



An avid performer, Wie enjoys concertizing as a pianist. In 2014, she premiered her piano concerto, *Jindo Arirang Concerto*, as an invited soloist with the Wooster Symphony Orchestra. This work would later win the First Prize at the 2014 Ohio Federation of Music Clubs Collegiate Composers Competition and a finalist in the 2014 ASCAP Foundation Morton Gould Young Composer Awards. In 2016, Wie performed the concerto again with the Wooster Symphony for the 100-year celebration of the orchestra at Symphony Space, New York City.

This summer, she will be participating as a fellow at June in Buffalo, where her new work, *Draw the Sound*, for bassoon and piano will be performed. Wie is pursuing the Doctor of Musical Arts at the University of Michigan under the guidance of Bright Sheng.

**Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble** <http://www.pnme.org/>

In their 42nd year, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble (PNME) strives to present compelling and memorable performances of contemporary music by giving world-class performances, by commissioning and premiering new works by living artists, by disseminating and promoting new works beyond their premieres through recording and touring, and by constantly reexamining and exploring the way in which new music is presented, and by playing a leading role in helping expand a progressive arts community.

The Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble was founded by Pittsburgh composer, David Stock, in 1976, and since then has commissioned and premiered almost 300 works by composers including John Cage, Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, Michael Daugherty, David Lang, Derek Bermel, Pierre Jalbert, Kieren MacMillan, and Kevin Puts.

Current Artistic Director Kevin Noe assumed that post in 2000 and implemented a new artistic vision incorporating the drama, lighting, sound, and stage design of theatre into PNME's performances. PNME's Pittsburgh audience has grown by more than 600% since that time, and the wildly successful experiment is now a fully realized performance style dubbed the "Theatre of Music."

Today's PNME is a fixed ensemble of flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, percussion, soprano, bass-baritone, actor, lighting designer, and sound designer. These artists, chosen from around the world through a rigorous audition process, come together for an intense summer festival season in July at the City Theatre on Pittsburgh's vibrant South Side.

Their beloved Founder, David Stock, stayed heavily involved in the company, and even wrote and conducted a new piece of his own for PNME's 40th anniversary, just a few months before his passing in 2015. Their lime green light shines brightly for him, and they will never forget all he has done for the musical fabric of Pittsburgh, for PNME as a company throughout their more than four decades in existence.

Currently, PNME produces an average of 10 concerts during July in Pittsburgh featuring existing contemporary works and new commissions. It regularly does residencies at various universities, including most recently the University of Texas at Austin and Susquehanna University. It is developing a brand new educational program for young artists that will provide the kind of professional opportunity for both individuals and existing groups that will increase their knowledge, artistic craft, entrepreneurial skills and professional exposure, and it is beginning a vigorous production cycle of recordings of contemporary music and touring both nationally and abroad.

Now embarking on its newest artistic vision, currently called the *All Around Us* project, PNME initiated a long-term project to incorporate immersive binaural technology into their performance design and into their commissioning process. Through these new breakthroughs, they believe they will be able to provide a level of intensity, intimacy, and personal connection with audiences that will be both unique and a game changer for the world of new music and composition.

### **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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