



news release

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PRESS CONTACT: Cindi Hubbard
212-977-8495 x256; EarShot@americancomposers.org



Photo by Angela Brimberry

EarShot and Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra Present Four Emerging Composers in New Music Readings

Saturday & Sunday, April 17–18, 2010
2:00–4:30 p.m.
Rhodes Arts Center
Northfield Mount Hermon, Mount Hermon, MA 01354
FREE and Open to the Public

www.EarShotNetwork.org

On Saturday and Sunday, April 17–18, 2010, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., **EarShot**, the National Orchestral Composition Discovery Network, and **Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra (PVS)** will present the **Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra New Music Readings**. Four composers, selected from a national call for scores, will hear their works read and will receive feedback from PVS music director **Paul Phillips**, mentor composers **Lewis Spratlan** and **Derek Bermel**, and PVS musicians. The four composers, selected by Mr. Phillips, Mr. Spratlan, and Mr. Bermel, are **Ching Mei Lin**, **Wah-Hei Ng**, **Katarina Kramarchuk**, and **Ethan Wickman**. The Readings are free and open to the public.

One of the oldest community orchestras in the United States, Pioneer Valley Symphony (PVS) was founded to “serve the Pioneer Valley through music in three ways: by performing symphonic and

choral music; by providing members of the community the opportunity to participate in making music; and through musical education, particularly by introducing young children to live orchestral music." Under the dynamic leadership of Music Director Paul Phillips, the PVS provides professional musical direction to approximately 80 instrumentalists and 60 chorus members. The PVS is strongly committed to playing new music and has performed works by living composers every season for the past sixteen years. In recent years, the PVS has been featured twice in *Symphony Magazine*, recorded for Arizona University Recordings, won an ASCAP Award, and been selected to represent Massachusetts in the latest Ford Made in America Project. William Bolcom, Robert Ward, George Walker, Gwyneth Walker and Peter Boyer are several of the composers who have been hosted by the orchestra in conjunction with performances of their works. In celebration of its 70th anniversary season in 2008-09, the PVS performed new works by Paul Phillips, David Amram, and William Perry.

Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra's New Music Readings are a part of EarShot, the nationwide network of new music readings and related composer-development programs. The goals of the program are to create the nation's first ongoing systematic program for identifying emerging orchestral composers, to provide professional-level working experience with orchestras from every region of the country, and to increase awareness of these composers and access to their music throughout the industry. EarShot is a partnership among American Composers Orchestra, American Composers Forum, American Music Center, the League of American Orchestras, and Meet The Composer. Through EarShot, 28 composers so far have been selected for programs with the New York Youth Symphony, the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, and the Nashville Symphony.

Ching Mei Lin: *Reflections of the Seasons*

Ching-Mei Lin (b. 1980) is originally from Taiwan. Upon graduating from the National Taiwan Normal University, Ms. Lin was awarded a government sponsorship for overseas study. She holds a master of music degree in composition from the Eastman School of Music, and recently completed a doctor of musical arts degree at the University of Michigan. She has studied composition with Evan Chambers, Bright Sheng, William Bolcom, David Liptak, Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon, and Gordon Chin. Lin is also an active pianist, improviser, and collaborator.

Reflections of the Seasons was inspired by pastoral scenes commonly depicted in Chinese poetry of the Tang Dynasty (618-907 C.E.). The work evokes the technique of the Tang poets using sounds to describe images associated with each season. Lin's experience of a more pronounced change in seasons in Michigan than in Taiwan made her increasingly aware of the cycles of nature as a metaphor for the human condition, and she depicts these cycles in the work.

Wah-Hei Ng: *Beyond the Life II*

Wah-Hei Ng (b. 1982) obtained his bachelor of arts and master of music degrees from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, studying composition with Wing-wah Chan and Victor Chan. He is currently pursuing a doctoral degree at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), where he has

taught non-Western music and composition to undergraduates. His composition teachers at UMKC include Chen Yi, Zhou Long, and James Mobberley.

Beyond the Life II is a response to two recurring themes in the novels of Japanese writer Haruki Murakami, those of sorrow and beauty associated with death. The music is intended as a mystical reflection on the experience of reading Murakami's novels. The title means the death of a beloved one has become part of another's life; death and life are not opposite directions; indeed, the death of a beloved one would somehow determine how the people around live their lives.

Katerina Kramarchuk: *Shadows*

Katerina Kramarchuk was born in Kishinev, Moldova, in 1988 to a family of musicians. She studied at the music lyceum "Ciprian Porumbescu" in Kishinev (1994–2002). In 2002 her family moved to Portland, OR, where she became interested in jazz and began composing seriously. Currently a senior at Manhattan School of Music, Katerina is studying with Richard Danielpour and is a recipient of the Helen Airopff Dowling Scholarship. She has been accepted into the Curtis Institute of Music, where she will continue her studies in the 2010-11 academic year.

Kramarchuk says of *Shadows*, "This piece is inspired by the book of Isaiah, chapter 59, which describes the 'gap' between people and God. It has a restless energy, and, as I envisioned it, suggests an image of someone fighting to find a moment of peace amongst the turmoil that overwhelms his life. Just as he gets a glimpse of light, the struggles take over and the hero finds himself (or herself) in a climax of emotions and of possible hope. 'We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows' (Isaiah 59:9)."

Ethan Wickman: *Les Jeunes et les Immortels*

Ethan Wickman (b. 1973) holds a DMA in composition from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, with additional degrees from Boston University (MM) and Brigham Young University (BM). Formerly Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at Indiana University-South Bend, he is assistant professor of music at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

Wickman got the idea for the piece while on vacation in France during the summer of 2009. He visited two cemeteries—the American Cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer, known as Omaha Beach, and the German Military Cemetery, also in Normandy. In spite of the contrasting sculptures and stonework in both—be it the muscle-bound and Promethean "Spirit of American Youth" in the one, or the grief-stricken mother and father flanking the large Saxon cross in the other—the ambience in each was poignant and profound. As I wandered among the stone crosses, I marveled acre after acre at the lives laid to rest there—predominantly young lives snuffed out at ages that surreally echo the ages of my students at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. *Les Jeunes et les Imortels* ("The Young and the Immortal") is written for the Eau Claire Chamber Orchestra in the memory of the youth swallowed up in the vastly contrasting circumstances of time and place—youth who rode, and continue to ride, the opposing, clashing waves amidst epic ideological confrontations."

Paul Phillips, conductor

Paul Phillips, an award-winning conductor, composer and author, has served as music director and conductor of the Pioneer Valley Symphony and Chorus since 1994 and as director of orchestras and chamber music at Brown University since 1989. Previously he held conducting positions with the Frankfurt Opera, Stadttheater Lüneburg, Greensboro Symphony, Savannah Symphony, Maryland Symphony and Rhode Island Philharmonic. As a guest conductor, he has led performances with the San Francisco Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, Boston Academy of Music, Commonwealth Opera, and Netherlands Radio Chamber Orchestra, and recorded music of Leifur Thorarinson and Jorun Vidar with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra.

Acclaimed as a conductor “who was *born* to stand on a podium,” Phillips’ honors include 1st Prize in the NOS International Conductors Course in Holland, 1st Prize in the Wiener Meisterkurse Conductors Course in Vienna, selection for the Exxon/Arts Endowment Conductors Program, and nine ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music. He has led the Pioneer Valley Symphony and Chorus to new artistic heights, leading memorable performances of the *Saint John Passion*, Beethoven Ninth, Mahler Second, Verdi Requiem, *La Traviata*, *The Rite of Spring*, *The Planets*, *Carmina Burana* and *Ellis Island: The Dream of America*. Under his leadership, the Brown University Orchestra has toured China, given concerts in Avery Fisher Hall and Carnegie Hall, and performed with Itzhak Perlman, Joseph Kalichstein, Christopher O’Riley, Dave Brubeck and Carol Wincenc. Joseph Schwantner, Steven Stucky and Steve Reich are among the many composers-in-residence at Brown whose music Phillips has performed with the BUO, which won its seventh ASCAP Award in 2009.

After attending the Eastman School of Music, Phillips graduated *cum laude* in music from Columbia University, later earning graduate degrees in composition and conducting from Columbia and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, respectively. He pursued additional studies at the Salzburg “Mozarteum,” Académie internationale d’été in Nice, Eastman, Music Academy of the West, Aspen, and Tanglewood. His conducting teachers include Kurt Masur, Gunther Schuller, and Leonard Bernstein.

Admission & Info

The Readings are free and open to the public and will be held in the Rhodes Art Center on the Northfield Mt. Hermon campus, Mr. Hermon, MA. Tickets are not required.

About EarShot

EarShot is the newly formed National Orchestral Composition Discovery Network that initiates partnerships with orchestras around the country; provides consulting, production, and administrative support for orchestras to undertake readings, residencies, performances, and composer-development programs; identifies promising orchestral composers, increasing awareness and access to their music; supports orchestras’ commitment to today’s composers and enhances national visibility for their new music programs.

EarShot is coordinated by **American Composers Orchestra** in collaboration with **American Composers Forum**, **American Music Center**, the **League of American Orchestras**, and **Meet The Composer**. It brings together the artistic, administrative, marketing, and production resources and experience of the nation's leading organizations devoted to the support of new American orchestral music.

American Composers Orchestra

American Composers Orchestra (ACO) is the only orchestra in the world dedicated to the creation, performance, preservation, and promulgation of music by American composers. ACO identifies today's brightest emerging composers, champions prominent established composers as well as those lesser known, and increases regional, national and international awareness of the infinite variety of American orchestral music, reflecting geographic, stylistic, and temporal diversity. ACO also serves as an incubator of ideas, research, and talent, as a catalyst for growth and change among orchestras, and as an advocate for American composers and their music. To date, ACO has performed music by more than 500 American composers, including 150 world premieres and newly commissioned works. In pursuit of its singular mission, ACO maintains an unparalleled range of activities, including an annual concert series at Carnegie Hall, commissions, recordings, radio broadcasts, educational programs, new music reading sessions, composer residencies and fellowships, as well as special projects designed to advance the field. More information is available at www.americancomposers.org.

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, the Forum provides composers at all stages of their careers with valuable resources for professional and artistic development. By linking communities with composers and performers, the Forum fosters a demand for new music, enriches communities, and helps develop the next generation of composers, musicians, and music patrons. For more information, go to www.composersforum.org.

American Music Center

The American Music Center (AMC) is dedicated to building a national community of artists, organizations and audiences creating, performing and enjoying new American music. Since its founding in 1939 by composers Marion Bauer, Aaron Copland, Howard Hanson, Harrison Kerr, Otto Luening, and Quincy Porter, AMC has been a leader in providing field-wide advocacy, support, and connection. AMC advocates for the community through NewMusicBox, its award-winning web magazine, and Counterstream Radio, a 24-hour online station broadcasting music by a broad range of U.S. composers. For more information, go to www.amc.net.

League of American Orchestras

Founded in 1942, and chartered by Congress in 1962, the League of American Orchestras leads, encourages, and supports America's orchestras while communicating to the public the value and importance of orchestras and the music they perform. The League's vision is to be a transformative

and unifying force for the orchestra field—a catalyst for understanding and innovation, a place for conversations that matter, and a champion for orchestras. More information can be found at www.americanorchestras.org.

Meet The Composer

Meet The Composer (MTC) is a national organization founded in 1974 that has revolutionized the environment for composers in this country. Its mission is to increase opportunities for composers of every style of music by fostering the creation, performance, dissemination, and appreciation of their work. In so doing, Meet The Composer has radically expanded the repertoire of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, creating a legacy for the music of our time—over 1,400 new works have been added since MTC's first commissioning program was launched in 1988. For more information, go to www.meetthecomposer.org.

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EarShot

c/o American Composers Orchestra
240 West 35 Street, Suite 405
New York, NY 10001
212-977-8495
fax: 212-977-8995
www.EarShotNetwork.org