

# Meet The Composer Commissioning Music/USA Program

## 2010 Projects

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### ARTISTS

(\* Denotes lead commissioning organization in a consortium)

**Amy Denio • Composer**  
**Dan Froot • Playwright**  
**Dan Hurlin • Puppetry**

*Commissioning Organizations:* \*501 (see three) ARTS, Los Angeles, CA; Highways Performance Space, Santa Monica, CA; Helena Presents/Myrna Loy Center for the Performing and Media Arts, Helena, MT  
*World Premiere:* January 2012

*Who's Hungry-Santa Monica* is a program of three 20-min toy theater plays with live music, based on the lives of homeless and hungry residents of Santa Monica, CA. Toy theater is miniaturized puppetry on tabletop stages. Froot will transcribe his interviews with three community narrators which will be adapted into theatrical form with Hurlin designing the sets and puppet figures and Denio composing a prelude, a score for each play, and interludes to tie everything together. The work will be for small ensemble and musicians will be choreographed into the action and may interact with the puppets.

For more on Amy Denio, visit: [www.amydenio.com/index.html](http://www.amydenio.com/index.html)

For more on Dan Froot, visit: [www.danfroot.com](http://www.danfroot.com)

For more on Dan Hurlin, visit: <http://mappinternational.org/artists/view/8>

**Mark Grey • Composer**  
**Niloufar Talebi • Librettist**  
**Catherine Owens • Visual/Video Artist**

*Commissioning Organizations:* \*Carnegie Hall, New York, NY; Cal Performances, Berkeley, CA  
*World Premiere:* March 2011

*Atash Sorushān (Fire Angels)* will be a 25 minute work for soprano, flute, clarinet, piano, percussion (one player), violin, viola, cello, and prerecorded playback. *Atash Sorushān (Fire Angels)* is a love story between Mana and Ahsha. Mana is the Oceanic and Persian term for the divine life force that embodies everything, and Ahsha is an Avestan and Zoroastrian term for truth/existence. Ahsha, whose realm is cleansing fire, sets out on the mythological bird Phoenix, to confront and overcome what Ahsha perceives to be the source of darkness.

For more on Mark Grey, visit: [www.markgreymusic.com/](http://www.markgreymusic.com/)

For more on Niloufar Talebi, visit: [www.niloufartalebi.com](http://www.niloufartalebi.com)

**Fang Man • Composer**  
**Kasumi • Video Art**

*Commissioning Organization:* **Dolce Suono Chamber Music Concert Series**, Philadelphia, PA  
*World Premiere:* October 2011

Provisionally entitled *Earth* – this 20-minute work will be for bass-baritone voice and ensemble of flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, and percussion (Pierrot Ensemble). It will incorporate live electronic sound by Fang Man and video art by Kasumi. The live video will aim to enhance dramatic scope of the work, creating innovative connections between the sonic and aural colors and textures. This work will be the second collaboration for Fang Man and Kasumi and will use the same text of Gustav Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* ("The Song of the Earth") by Li Bai (701–762 C.E.), a Tang Dynasty poet who is one of the most important and influential writers of Chinese verse. Fang Man plans to set the same texts in the original Chinese.

For more on Fang Man, visit: [www.fangmanmusic.com](http://www.fangmanmusic.com)  
For more on Kasumi, visit: [www.kasumifilms.com](http://www.kasumifilms.com)

**Phil Kline • Composer**  
**Jim Jarmusch • Writer/Director**

*Commissioning Organizations:* \***Duke University/Duke Performances**, Durham, NC; **Krannert Center**, Urbana, IL; **Hopkins Center, Dartmouth College**, Hanover, NH; **Flynn Center**, Burlington, VT  
*World Premiere:* Fall 2013

*Tesla* will be an opera of Nikola Tesla, a man of incredible gifts about whom we understand little, and his years in lower Manhattan. The main character of this piece is his spirit, his desire to invent and make a better world. His fate is tragic, but the spirit is heroic. Like Baroque opera, mixing men and gods, the natural and supernatural, the aim of the production is an essential and symbolic, rather than literal, truth, rooted in the suggestive power of image and sound. Vivid hallucinations trump dull facts. The reality is that of dreams, memories or myths. The musical ensemble will be for string quartet, four electric guitars, keyboard and a small children's chorus. Staging is reductive and symbolic, with creative use of light and shadow, selective use of video.

For more on Phil Kline, visit: [www.philkline.com](http://www.philkline.com)  
For more on Jim Jarmusch, visit: [www.jim-jarmusch.net](http://www.jim-jarmusch.net)

**Elizabeth Brown • Composer**  
**Lothar Osterburg • Video Artist**

*Commissioning Organization:* **Electronic Music Foundation**, New York, NY  
*World Premiere:* October 2011

Elizabeth Brown and Lothar Osterburg will create a 45-minute multimedia chamber opera for theremin, electronic sound and video. Inspired by the joy of browsing, *A Bookmobile for Dreamers* will celebrate the imagination as inspired by the printed word. Osterburg's video projection will create a prop-free stage set that easily moves from the tangible to the

imaginary, and composer and thereminist Brown will interact with the virtual world of the video projection. To portray in sound the intangible quality of becoming lost in a book, Brown will first transform field recordings of everyday sounds to create an electronic soundscape evocative of the papery hush of libraries. Singing over this, the theremin will represent the imagination in all its unpredictability – its leaps and associations and meanderings. She will use the theremin's spatial playing technique to virtually turn pages and trace lines of text. Osterburg's video will feature a dreamlike model world in which a bookmobile makes its rounds, bringing an odd collection of books to the viewers' attention. The video will enter a series of both handmade and existing books to reveal surprises and delights. Using real time video, stop motion animation and some special effects, the books will be "read" by the video narrative. Osterburg will use his skills as sculptor, photographer, printmaker and filmmaker to create this imaginary world, interpreting quotes and getting visually sidetracked by the texts.

For more on Elizabeth Brown, visit: [www.ElizabethBrownComposer.com](http://www.ElizabethBrownComposer.com)  
For more on Lothar Osterburg, visit: [www.LotharOsterburgPhotogravure.com](http://www.LotharOsterburgPhotogravure.com)

**Robert Mazurek • Composer**  
**Marianne Kim • Choreography & Video**

*Commissioning Organizations:* \*Festival of New Trumpet Music, New York, NY; Ars Nova Workshop, Philadelphia, PA  
*World Premiere:* Spring 2012

Composer/cornetist, Robert Mazurek, and video artist/choreographer Marianne Kim seek to collaborate on *The Spaces In Between*, a multi-media project resulting in a 60 min. "video score" for projection, and corresponding musical and choreographed compositions and performances. Inspiration for this project comes from Mazurek's prior work developing multi-media compositions for solo performances at the Rothko Chapel, in Houston, TX and at the Abbaye Royale de Fontevrau, France.

For more on Robert Mazurek, visit: [www.robmazurek.com](http://www.robmazurek.com)  
For more on Marianne Kim, visit: [www.mariannekim.com](http://www.mariannekim.com)

**Yosvany Terry • Composer**  
**Carl Hancock Rux • Poet/Writer**  
**Edouard Duval-Carrie • Visual Artist**  
**Jocelyn Clarke • Dramaturge**

*Commissioning Organization:* Harlem Stage, New York, NY  
*World Premiere:* March 2011

*Makandal* will be a 90 minute opera for a small string ensemble with percussion and vocals. Carl Hancock Rux and Yosvany Terry Cabrera will develop *Makandal*, an opera based on Rux's observance of the book "The Kingdom of This World" by Cuban novelist Alejo Carpentier. The book takes readers from the Haitian revolt in which Makandal was so instrumental, to the rise and fall of King Henri Christophe who, despite being black, reinstated the unjust systems of the French colonizers. In dealing with questions of freedom, oppression,

and the dissonance that results from belonging to multiple cultures, Rux and Terry's *Makandal* promises to create a significant point of connection with the many cultural groups and communities that surround us. Drawing on his classical training, Terry's score will be drawn from musical elements of multiple cultures, traditional and contemporary. Terry will create a score for flexible instrumentation to increase the works' ability to travel and be set on ensembles of varying sizes.

For more on Yosvany Terry, visit: [www.yosvanyterry.com](http://www.yosvanyterry.com)

For more on Carl Hancock Rux, visit: [www.carlhancockrux.com](http://www.carlhancockrux.com)

For more on Edouard Duval-Carrie, visit: [www.edouard-duval-carrie.com](http://www.edouard-duval-carrie.com)

For more on Jocelyn Clarke, visit: [www.jocelynclark.com](http://www.jocelynclark.com)

<p><b>Juraj Kojs • Composer</b> <b>Alexey Taran • Dance</b></p>
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*Commissioning Organization:* **Harold Golen Gallery**, Miami, FL

*World Premiere:* December 2011

*Touch Me Hear* is a collaborative project between the composer, performer and sound designer Juraj Kojs and dancer and choreographer Alexey Taran. It is a fifty minute avant-garde multimedia composition, which focuses on exploring the interconnection between touch and sound. Two percussionists, a cellist, a flutist and two dancers (besides A. Taran) further augment the soundscape and choreography of *Touch Me Hear*. Real-time processed and projected video additionally enriches the multimedia character of the work. The composition is structured into the seven scenes, each inducing a particular atmosphere and exploring ways how sound can be experienced not only with ears, but also with eyes and touch.

For more on Juraj Kojs, visit: [www.kojs.net](http://www.kojs.net)

For more on Alexey Taran, visit: [www.bistoury.blogspot.com](http://www.bistoury.blogspot.com)

<p><b>Robert Mirabal • Composer</b> <b>Eiko Otake • Dance</b> <b>Koma Otake • Dance</b></p>
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*Commissioning Organization:* **Inta, Inc.**, New York, NY

*World Premiere:* March 2011

Native-American (Taos Pueblo) composer Robert Mirabal will create the score for an as yet untitled new work by Japanese-born dancer-choreographers Eiko & Koma. Mirabal will compose for his flute but the score will be designed so it can be adopted to the Japanese shakuhachi flute. Performances on tour will involve Mirabal himself or expert shakuhachi player Ralph Samuelson performing live or else by a recorded track. At the discretion of the collaborators, the flute might be supplemented by a drum or other percussion instrument. Although the music is to be performed live, the musician will not be framed in any of the usual fashions—in a pool of light or hidden (just as visibly) in a makeshift “pit.” The music will seem to emanate from the visual environment itself and/or from a body that changes location. In this way, the music will be a pivotal component of the way the work inhabits the space.

For more on Robert Mirabal, visit: [www.mirabal.com](http://www.mirabal.com)

For more on Eiko & Koma Otake, visit: [www.eikoandkoma.org](http://www.eikoandkoma.org)

**Wayne Horvitz • Composer**  
**Robin Holcomb • Text/Songwriting**

*Commissioning Organizations:* \***Jack Straw Productions**, Seattle, WA; **Western Washington University**,  
Bellingham, WA  
*World Premiere:* February 2012

*Smokestack Arias* will be a song cycle for soprano, piano and pre-recorded electronic score created by composer Wayne Horvitz in collaboration with songwriter/librettist Robin Holcomb. The work takes its name from the nickname for the city of Everett, Washington at the start of the last century, and examines the labor uprising and resultant deaths of six individuals in an incident known as The Everett Massacre. The complete song cycle will be performed by soprano soloist Maria Mannisto and pianist Cristina Valdes – both featured performers in Horvitz and Holcomb’s 2008 chamber opera *The Heart-song of Charging Elk*. Individual songs will express the points of view of a variety of female characters: mothers, daughters, wives and comrades of the slain protesters. The electronic score, as interludes, will evoke the voices of the departed. Wayne Horvitz will compose the score for piano and soprano. Text will be written by Robin Holcomb. The electronic score will be created by Mr. Horvitz and will use original material in addition to manipulations of historical and environmental recordings. Both Ms. Holcomb and Ms. Mannisto will contribute vocally to the electronic component of the composition. The narrative seeks to evoke the personal toll and emotional impact of this historic tragedy, rather than to express an overtly political or didactic viewpoint.

For more on Wayne Horvitz, visit: [www.waynehorvitz.net](http://www.waynehorvitz.net)  
For more on Robin Holcomb, visit: [www.robinholcomb.com](http://www.robinholcomb.com)

**Diedre Murry • Composer**  
**Cornelius Eady • Poet**

*Commissioning Organization:* **Music-Theatre Group**, New York, NY  
*World Premiere:* TBD

*Patient Zero* will be a 45-50 minute work for chamber ensemble of violin, cello, contrabass, clarinet, trumpet, piano, and percussion by composer Diedre Murray with original text by Cornelius Eady and guest appearances by actual ministers who will, in essence, become spoken word soloist inside of the piece. *Patient Zero*, a hospitalized schizophrenic, floridly rants and raves about his delusions at a psyche evaluation to a panel of doctors in a mental hospital. Through a series of visitations and events doctors, ministers and imaginary friends of Zero try to discern if these are just the ravings of a madman or something else. Finally the panel agrees that he is indeed mad but not before the piece explores the warnings and the meaning of prophecy in *The Book of Revelations*. All design elements will be fashioned to allow the work to be adapted for touring to a variety of venues.

For more on Diedre Murry, visit: [www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diedre\\_Murray](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diedre_Murray)  
For more on Cornelius Eady, visit: [www.corneliuseady.com](http://www.corneliuseady.com)

**Corey Dargel • Composer**  
**Andrew Sean Greer • Writer**

*Commissioning Organization: Newspeak, New York, NY*  
*World Premiere: October 2012*

*The Three Christs* will be a 90 min opera very loosely based on the book of the same name by Milton Rokeach who, while at Ypsilanti State Hospital discovered three patients whom suffered from the same psychotic delusion: that he was Jesus Christ. The opera will portray three different, unorthodox versions of Christ, challenging the received wisdom about who he was, and exploring the 'blind prophet' phenomenon. The piece will be scored for two vocalists with large ensemble and explore the concept of "fundamental beliefs." *Three Christs* will combine the eloquence and grandiosity of the operatic form with the immediacy of punk rock music and the intimacy of cabaret.

For more on Corey Dargel, visit: <http://coreydargel.com>  
For more on Andrew Sean Greer, visit: <http://andrewgreer.com>

**Frank London • Composer**  
**Judith Sloan • Writer**

*Commissioning Organization: Queens Symphony Orchestra, Glendale, NY*  
*World Premiere: October 2011*

Frank London will create a new, approximately 45 minute work, with text by Judith Sloan, in three movements for orchestra, singers, actors and dancers that will tell the story of the various immigrant populations that have settled in Queens over the years. Ms. Sloan will research the text by interviewing people of all generations who landed in Queens, making connections between "old and new". The stories of transformation and migration will include people, music, dance, ideas and instruments. Mr. London will draw on his wealth of knowledge of various ethnic instruments, forms and styles to compose the music. He will use these instruments in addition to the conventional symphony orchestra instrumentation. Embedded in the piece will be the journey and development of instruments and musical language from locations outside the Western world to the Western world. As non-Western instruments are ancient in their origins the piece will show the connections between them and modern Western instruments.

For more on Frank London, visit: [www.franklondon.com](http://www.franklondon.com)  
For more on Judith Sloan, visit: [www.earsay.org](http://www.earsay.org)

**Victor Adan • Composer**  
**Douglas Repetto • Artist/Engineer**

*Commissioning Organization: Talea Ensemble, Bronx, NY*  
*World Premiere: October 2011*

The proposed project, *Tractus*, is an audio visual concert / installation involving the live performance of newly invented instruments and two large paintbots (mural painting robots), designed by Douglas Repetto, that do live painting in response to the music performed by the ensemble, composed by Victor Adan, thus creating a lasting physical representation of the ephemeral sonic experience. *Tractus* is written for four performers playing a combination of

traditional instruments (piano, violin, viola, and percussion) alongside the newly invented ones. The instruments are simple yet versatile, providing a wide variety of colors and nuances; as mechanical devices, they will naturally inherit the rich acoustic properties of the physical world. The idea of the visual element of the piece is that of the trace, the physical representation of the aural experience, hence the title of the piece. The paintbots respond to the music, converting the sounds into drawings. The paintbots do not just record the sounds like a phonograph, but rather interpret and encode the sounds as a variety of gestural shapes, much like humans interpret and encode music in the form of symbolic notation.

For more on Victor Adan, visit: [www.victoradan.net](http://www.victoradan.net)  
For more on Douglas Repetto, visit: <http://music.columbia.edu/~douglas>

**Hahn Rowe • Composer**  
**John Jasperse • Choreography**

*Commissioning Organizations:* **Thin Man Dance**, New York, NY; **Brooklyn Academy of Music**, New York, NY  
*World Premiere:* September 2011

The new work will be an evening length project for 6 dancers with choreography by Jasperse and a commissioned score by composer Hahn Rowe for cello, violin and percussion. The work will explore how we might manifest the intangible, by imparting a shimmering quality to the otherwise mundane. This transformation is central to aesthetic and (dare we suggest) religious experience. We want to explore how, through performance, we might generate a "fog" of wonder. The music will be crucial in that it will interact with the dance to create an engaging, captivating (but sometimes disorienting) experience for the audience. We will build immersive musical and kinesthetic sections, employing extremes in fullness of dynamic and timbre within the music (and in the texture and structure of the dance) while alternating these textures with adjacent spaces of silence and stillness, creating an almost architectural relationship to temporal and physical space. Instead of traditional staging where the musicians perform in a fixed location, we will vary the spatial orientation of the musicians along with the other performers, integrating them into the theatrical space. Additionally, electronics will be used to manipulate the location of the music in the audio field. This interactive approach will also extend into the scoring. Flexible cells of musical material (as opposed to fixed notation) will instigate or react to actions performed by the dancers, morphing from clouds of immersive sound material into sections of well defined, concrete notation.

For more on Hahn Rowe, visit: [www.myspace.com/hahnrowe](http://www.myspace.com/hahnrowe)  
For more on John Jasperse, visit: [www.johnjasperse.org](http://www.johnjasperse.org)

**Christopher Jonas • Composer/Video**  
**TILT SIXtet • Music**  
**Acushla Bastible • Stage Director**

*Commissioning Organization:* **TILT Brass**, New York, NY  
*World Premiere:* May 2011

*GARDEN, Chapter Two "Invisible Cities"* is part of a series of music-driven intermedia performance/installations developed over 3 years that use linear-immersive media (live music, installation, transparent screens and projected video) to explore expressive, atmospheric,

metaphoric, psychological and cross-cultural realms of place, dwelling, urban identity and the human environment. Inspired by author Italo Calvino's "Invisible Cities", the second chapter of GARDEN is an exploration of identity within the human ecosystems of US cities at night. This chapter will be created via collaborative workshop sessions with Brooklyn based brass sextet TILT SIXtet in NYC, and with the Littlelobe creative team in Santa Fe working on the project's projected video, a set of transparent screens (enveloping the performers), costumes, spoken text, movement and music. The resultant installation and linked 50 minute intermedia composition takes place in front of an audience within the multiple layers of video screens, mixing live music with projected video of imaginary and surreal cityscapes, abstract landscapes and human figures.

For more on Christopher Jonas, visit: [www.chrisjonas.com](http://www.chrisjonas.com)

For more on TILT SIXtet, visit: [www.tiltbrass.org](http://www.tiltbrass.org)

For more on Acushla Bastible, visit: [www.littlelobe.org/about\\_bastible.html](http://www.littlelobe.org/about_bastible.html)

<p><b>Jonathan Bepler • Composer</b> <b>Wally Cardona • Dance</b> <b>Jennifer Lacey • Dance</b></p>
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*Commissioning Organizations:* \*WCV, Inc., New York, NY; The Kitchen, New York, NY; Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC), New York, NY; CNDC Angers, Angers, France; Experimental Media & Performing Arts Center, Troy, NY

*World Premiere:* May 2011

*TOOL IS LOOT* (working title): a new work of approx. 60-70 min., made in collaboration by the composer Jonathan Bepler and two established choreographers, Wally Cardona and Jennifer Lacey. While the process of the work is a work unto itself - involving finite experiences throughout - it is also a game leading to other games of meaning, intent and form and a crucial part of *TOOL IS LOOT*. Bepler, Cardona and Lacey's work together will be an acquaintance of the survey of styles and interpretation methods with which they have come in contact. The musical score will be an equal part of this encounter, also functioning as a clarifier, or re-interpreter, of the dance. Bepler will work with the performers to find a sound palette that they can control, and deliver live, in conjunction with himself. The basis for all recorded and manipulated material will be the dramaturgical sessions. Primary instrumentation will be voice and a string quartet, as well as a reduced palette of acoustic string instruments and an accumulated library of max patches developed especially to elucidate the "dramaturgical" element of the score.

For more on Jonathan Bepler, visit: <http://jonathanbepler.com/>

For more on Wally Cardona, visit: [www.wcvismorphing.org](http://www.wcvismorphing.org)

<p><b>Bill Frisell • Composer</b> <b>Bill Morrison • Filmmaking</b></p>
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*Commissioning Organization:* Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH

*World Premiere:* September 2011

*The Great Flood* will be a 75 min suite of music with accompanying film based on the catastrophic Mississippi River Flood of 1927 and the ensuing transformation of American

society that was reflected in the world of music. The work will include American roots movement for guitar, bass, drums, and cornet. Musically, the “Great Migration” fueled the evolution of acoustic blues (including artists who witnessed the flood such as Charley Patton “High Water Everywhere” and Memphis Minnie “When the Levee Breaks”) to electric blues bands that thrived in cities like Memphis, Detroit and Chicago becoming the wellspring for R&B and rock as well as developing jazz styles. Bill Morrison’s work on *The Great Flood* will be based on actual footage of the 1927 flood, including source material from the Fox Movietone Archive and the Pathé collection. Frisell will draw upon his wide musical palette informed by elements of American roots music, but, refracted through his uniquely evocative approach that highlights essential qualities of his thematic focus.

For more on Bill Frisell, visit: [www.billfrisell.com](http://www.billfrisell.com)

For more on Bill Morrison, visit: [www.myspace.com/hypnoticpictures](http://www.myspace.com/hypnoticpictures)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>David Bithell • Composer</b> <b>Ali Momeni • Video/Interdisciplinary</b></p>
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*Commissioning Organization: Yarn/Wire, Ridgewood, NY*  
*World Premiere: March 2011*

*the difference engine* will be a 30 minute long performance for two pianists and two percussionists that incorporates a highly sophisticated yet playful array of interactive audio, video, and robotic technologies in an immersive theatrical/musical experience. The proposed title makes reference both to the early mechanical computer of the same name (designed by Charles Babbage in the late 1840's) as well as to the work’s investigation of the ability of multiple cameras to show successive iterations of an event - thereby revealing "difference". The composition exploits the artistic possibilities of newly-affordable wireless video, audio, and sensor technologies. On stage, a network of wireless cameras will be set in motion like miniature aerial trams along an elaborate terrain of suspended wire track that is constantly assembled and reconfigured by the live performers. This unique mobile visual perspective allows the gaze of the camera to become a semiautonomous actor in the overall performance. Performer(s) will interact and intersect with the passing surveillance cameras - catching fleeting moments of musical action and a variety of invented sound-generating robotic instruments "mid-air" and "midaction" – the resulting sounds and images projected through a multi-projector, multi-channel audio system. The performers will adopt roles that alternate between “actors” and “observers”. As “actors” they will perform traditional musical actions observed in minute detail by the mobile cameras. As “observers”, the performers take an active role in assembling and reconfiguring the physical space - guiding the robotic cameras to capture (like a Rube Goldberg inspired camera crew) the actions of the other musicians or those of the autonomous robotic instruments.

For more on David Bithell, visit: [www.davidbithell.com](http://www.davidbithell.com)

For more on Ali Momeni, visit: [www.alimomeni.net](http://www.alimomeni.net)

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