



american composers orchestra

news release

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American Composers Orchestra in Underground 'Conversations'

Friday, January 29, 2010 at 7:30pm
Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall
57th St. & 7th Avenue, NYC

Tickets: \$38 & \$48 at www.carnegiehall.org, 212-247-7800, or the Carnegie Hall Box Office

Saturday, January 30, 2010 at 7:30 pm
Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts
3680 Walnut Street, Philadelphia

Tickets: \$25 at www.pennpresents.org, 215-898-3900, or the Penn Presents Box Office

"The American Composers Orchestra has brought to the city a repertory of music of our time which leaves all the major American orchestras far behind." – *The New York Times*

For audio samples, videos, and more information: www.americancomposers.org

For high resolution photos: www.christinajensenpr.com (in ACO's gallery)

New York, NY – **Orchestra Underground: Conversations** is the title of **American Composers Orchestra's** concerts Friday, January 29, 2010 at 7:30pm at Zankel Hall, presented by Carnegie Hall, and repeating Saturday, January 30 at 7:30pm at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts in Philadelphia. The concert features two world premieres by **Sebastian Currier** and **Roger Zare**, and a local premiere by composer/clarinetist/saxophonist **Paquito D'Rivera**. **Anne Manson** conducts.

Conversations with Cachao by Latin jazz innovator **Paquito D'Rivera** forms the program's centerpiece: a tribute to **Israel "Cachao" López**, the Havana bass player who made Cuban Mambo a worldwide phenomenon. The piece features D'Rivera's clarinet and alto sax in dialogue with the double bass, played by soloist **Robert Black**, recalling the style and personality of the man who served as friend and mentor to D'Rivera and many Cuban musicians.

Conversations, Dialogues and dualities become the context for musical explorations in very distinct and diverse ways in the program's two featured world premieres:

Next Atlantis is a multimedia collaboration between composer **Sebastian Currier** and video-artist **Pawel Wojtasik**. The piece is a meditation on an imagined future when New Orleans is but a collective memory, having been fully submerged by the rising sea. Juxtaposing water imagery and scenes of New

Orleans with a string orchestra, enhanced with four-channel sampled and electronically altered sounds of water, the music becomes, “a dialogue between the strings and the liquid sounds.”

Roger Zare, a young composer beginning to win awards and attract professional attention, offers *Time Lapse*, a piece commissioned by ACO as part of its Underwood Composers Readings for Emerging Composers. The work offers a different take on the relationship between the visual and the sonic, exploring alteration and manipulation of the sense of time. In the piece, Zare integrates techniques of time-lapse photography, in which the motion of slowly moving objects is sped up and large periods of time are reduced to seconds; and high-speed photography, in which the motion of a high-speed object is slowed down to become perceptible to our senses.

Founded in 1977, American Composers Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world dedicated exclusively to the creation, performance, preservation, and promulgation of music by American composers. To date, ACO has performed music by more than 600 American composers, including 200 world premieres and newly commissioned works.

Orchestra Underground is ACO’s subversive and entrepreneurial exploration of the orchestra as an elastic ensemble that can respond to composers’ unhindered creativity in experimental and innovative ways. The ensemble has embraced new technology, eclectic instruments and influences, spatial orientation, new experiments in concert format, and multimedia and multi-disciplinary collaborations. Since the opening of Zankel Hall, Carnegie Hall’s subterranean state-of-the-art auditorium, Orchestra Underground has played to sold-out audiences, with 50 world premieres and newly commissioned works.

Paquito D’Rivera: *Conversations with Cachao*

(New York City Premiere; Philadelphia Premiere)

For more information and audio: www.paquitodrivera.com

Paquito D’Rivera is one of today’s giants of Latin jazz, celebrated for his soaring improvisations and technical mastery on clarinet and saxophone, as well as his vibrant energy-infused compositions that pulsate with the spirit of his native Havana, Cuba. His recordings include more than 30 solo albums and nine GRAMMY awards, and his highly acclaimed ensembles—the Chamber Jazz Ensemble, the Paquito D’Rivera Big Band, and the Paquito D’Rivera Quintet—have performed worldwide. At the age of 17 in Havana, D’Rivera became a member of the Cuban National Symphony and went on to found the Orquesta Cubana de Musica Moderna and the influential ensemble Irakere. As a composer, D’Rivera is the recipient of a Guggenheim fellowship, and has been commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra, the Rotterdam Philharmonic, the Library of Congress, Turtle Island String Quartet, and Caramoor Festival.

Built on elements of Cuban traditional music, *Conversations with Cachao* is homage to D’Rivera’s longtime friend and mentor, the bassist and founding father of Cuban mambo, Israel “Cachao” López. The piece reflects Cachao’s extraordinary sense of humor, as well as the eclectic career of the bassist, who played everything from symphonies, operas, and ballets, to silent movies, Jazz, the circus, dance parties and nightclubs, and who helped spread Cuban music worldwide. The piece is a three-movement double concerto for the contrabass and clarinet/alto sax soloists. The piece is filled with references to traditional Cuban music, and includes a bass “lick” (G-C-Bb-C) that was Cachao’s signature, as well as improvised cadenzas. **Robert Black** will be the bass soloist in “conversation” with Mr. D’Rivera.

Robert Black, double bass

Robert Black's performance spectrum is as wide as Cachao's, ranging from traditional orchestral and chamber music to solo recitals, collaborations with actors, music with computers, movement-based improvisations with dancers, and live action-painting performances with artists. He has commissioned, collaborated, or performed with musicians from John Cage to D.J. Spooky, Elliott Carter to Meredith Monk, Cecil Taylor to Paquito D'Rivera, as well as many young emerging composers. His recital activities frequently take him to five continents, and he has appeared at major festivals, on radio and television broadcasts, and as an artist-in-residence. Currently, he performs with the Bang on a Can All Stars, among others.

Roger Zare: *Time Lapse* (World Premiere, ACO/Underwood Commission)

For more information and audio: <http://rogerzare.com>

In 2008, **Roger Zare** was one six young composers selected for ACO's Underwood New Music Readings. His work *Green Flash* garnered that year's Underwood Commission prize, with composer-mentor Christopher Rouse saying, "Roger Zare writes for orchestra like a real natural. It's a medium that seems to be in his blood." Zare's newly-commissioned work, *Time Lapse*, reunites the composer with conductor Anne Manson, who conducted the 2008 Underwood Readings. Manson calls Zare "an exciting and sophisticated young composer and a wonderful orchestrator."

Time Lapse is an essay for orchestra focusing on coloristic possibilities and dramatic gestures when the techniques of time-lapse (the speeding up of slowly moving objects) and stop-action (the slowing down of extremely high-speed motion) photography are applied to musical motives. Exploring these two modes of temporal perception, concise motivic ideas are developed into sweeping gestures through expansion and contraction, giving the listener a sense of timeless expanse.

Roger Zare received a BMI Student Composer Award in 2007 and 2009, and the ASCAP Rudolf Nissim Prize in 2009. Originally from Sarasota, FL, Zare started composing at age fourteen. His music has been performed by the Minnesota Orchestra, the Sarasota Orchestra, ensembles at the Sarasota Music Festival, the Santa Monica Symphony Wind Quintet, and the USC Thornton Symphony and Wind Ensemble. He holds a B.M. in composition from the University of Southern California and an M.M. in composition at the Peabody Conservatory, where he studied with Christopher Theofanidis. Currently, he is a doctoral candidate at the University of Michigan.

Sebastian Currier: *Next Atlantis* for string orchestra, electronics & video (World Premiere, ACO Commission)

For more information and audio: www.sebastiancurrier.com

Sebastian Currier's music has been performed at major venues worldwide. His last outing with ACO was *Microsymph*, commissioned by ACO and premiered at Carnegie Hall in 1997. Since then he has gone on to win the 2007 Grawemeyer Award; he has also won the Berlin Prize, Rome Prize, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, and an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Next Atlantis is inspired by New Orleans after hurricane Katrina -- a new Atlantis, not of the mythic past, but one of the too possible future. Originally conceived as a work for string quartet, the piece has been expanded into a multimedia collaboration for strings, four-channel sound and video, with video-artist

Pawel Wojtasik. *Next Atlantis* weaves together sounds of water and elegiac strains, with murmurings of Dixieland. Currier says, "I've always loved the sound of water and have had in mind for some time to write a piece that weaved water sounds into a musical fabric. And here the sound of water is especially poignant, because for New Orleans water is both the life-blood of the city and its potential destroyer."

Pawel Wojtasik, videographer

Born in Lodz, Poland, educated at Yale, and now living in Brooklyn, **Pawel Wojtasik** creates documentary-style video that explores society's obsessions with rapid consumption, industrial overproduction, and its environmental impact. His videos are meant to take us behind the scenes of our "throw away" society, providing visceral experiences that can be both beautiful and horrific. *Firehole* (2005) was set in an automobile junkyard, while *Dark Sun Squeeze* (2003-04) was shot at a sewage treatment plant. Wojtasik has had exhibitions and screenings at Smack Mellon, MASS MoCA, Anthology Film Archives, the New York Armory Show, Art Basel/Miami, PS1 among many others. He is represented by Martos Gallery in New York and Jail Gallery in Los Angeles.

Anne Manson, conductor

Anne Manson previously conducted ACO during the 2008 Underwood New Music Readings and makes her Orchestra Underground debut on this concert. She is music director of the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, with whom she has led two hugely successful tours, one with world famous soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian that comprised appearances in San Francisco, Orange County, Vancouver, Toronto, Boston and Carnegie Hall. In September she conducted the orchestra in a Canadian tour with percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie. She was the first woman to conduct at the Salzburg Festival, where she led the Vienna Philharmonic and a cast that included Samuel Ramey and Philip Langridge in a production of *Boris Godunov*, which met with great critical acclaim. Ms. Manson is one of only three women to have been appointed music director of a leading American symphony orchestra, having served in that role with the Kansas City Symphony from 1999 to 2003. She launched her career in 1988 as music director of the London-based Mecklenburgh Opera, where over a span of eight years she programmed operas ranging from Mozart to 20th-century rarities, while commissioning world premieres from a host of contemporary composers. A reputation for excellence in the central German repertory, combined with a passionate advocacy of music of the present, has led to invitations to leading orchestras worldwide: she has conducted Paris' Ensemble Intercontemporain, the London Philharmonic, the Royal National Scottish Orchestra, the BBC Scottish Orchestra, the Swedish Chamber Orchestra, the Leipzig Radio Orchestra, and the Residentie Orchestra of The Hague. In America her engagements include the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Houston Symphony, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

Tickets & Info

Tickets for the January 29 performance in Zankel Hall are \$38 and \$48 and can be purchased via CarnegieCharge at 212-247-7800, www.carnegiehall.org, or at the Carnegie Hall Box Office.

Tickets for the January 30 performance at the Annenberg Center for the Performing arts are \$25 and can be purchased via telephone at 215-898-3900, www.pennpresents.org, or at the Annenberg Center Box Office.

About ACO

Now in its 33rd year, American Composers Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world dedicated to the creation, performance, preservation, and promulgation of music by American composers. ACO makes the creation of new opportunities for American composers and new American orchestral music its central purpose. Through its concerts at Carnegie Hall and other venues, recordings, radio broadcasts, educational programs, New Music Readings, and commissions, 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 600 American composers, including 200 world premieres and newly commissioned works. Among the orchestra's innovative programs have been *Sonidos de las Américas*, six annual festivals devoted to Latin American composers and their music; *Coming to America*, a program immersing audiences in the ongoing evolution of American music through the work of immigrant composers; *Orchestra Tech*, a festival and long-term initiative to integrate new digital technologies in the symphony orchestra; *Improvise!*, a festival devoted to the exploration of improvisation and the orchestra; *Playing it UNSafe*, a new laboratory for the research and development of experimental new works for orchestra; and, of course, *Orchestra Underground*, ACO's entrepreneurial cutting-edge orchestral ensemble that embraces new technology, eclectic instruments, influences, and spatial orientation of the orchestra, new experiments in the concert format, and multimedia and multi-disciplinary collaborations.

Among the honors ACO has received are special awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and from BMI recognizing the orchestra's outstanding contribution to American music. ASCAP has awarded its annual prize for adventurous programming to ACO 31 times, singling out ACO as "the orchestra that has done the most for new American music in the United States," and most recently awarding ACO the 2008 ASCAP Morton Gould Award for Innovative Programming. ACO received the inaugural METLife Award for Excellence in Audience Engagement, and a proclamation from the New York City Council. ACO recordings are available on ARGO, CRI, ECM, Point, Phoenix USA, MusicMasters, Nonesuch, Tzadik, New World Records, and InstantEncore.com. More information about American Composers Orchestra is available online at www.americancomposers.org.

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ACO programs are also made possible with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts and New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and by New York City Council Member Gale A. Brewer.

ACO's residency at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is made possible with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Roger Zare's commission was made possible by Paul Underwood.

American Composers Orchestra: Upcoming Events

Friday, January 29, 2010, at 7:30pm. Presented by Carnegie Hall, Zankel Hall

Saturday, January 30, 2010, at 7:30pm Annenberg Center, Philadelphia

Orchestra Underground: Conversations

Anne Manson, conductor

Paquito D'Rivera, clarinet and saxophone

Robert Black, double bass

ROGER ZARE: *Time Lapse* (World Premiere, ACO/Underwood Commission)

SEBASTIAN CURRIER: *Next Atlantis* for string orchestra, electronics, and video (World Premiere, ACO Commission)

PAQUITO D'RIVERA: *Conversations with Cachao* (New York City/Philadelphia Premiere)

Monday, February 22, 2010, at 6:30pm. Queens Public Library, Flushing Branch. FREE ADMISSION.

Donal Fox: Composers OutFront!

DONAL FOX, composer/pianist in a solo evening of "Transformations, Variations, Improvisations" on music by Chopin, Ellington, Bach, Gershwin, Monk, Schumann, Scarlatti, and Fox

Sunday, March 21, 2010 at 4:00pm, Dweck Center, Brooklyn Public Library for Performing Arts. FREE ADMISSION.

Missy Mazzoli: Composers OutFront!

Original music by MISSY MAZZOLI and her ensemble, VICTOIRE

Friday, April 9, 2010 at 7:30pm. Presented by Carnegie Hall, Zankel Hall

Orchestra Underground: Louis & the Young Americans

Jeffrey Milarsky, Conductor

John Korsrud, trumpet

LOUIS ANDRIESEN: *Symphony for Open Strings* (New York City Premiere)

MISSY MAZZOLI: *These Worlds in Us* (World Premiere, new orchestration)

MICHAEL FIDAY: *HST: In Memoriam Hunter S. Thompson* (World Premiere, ACO Commission)

JOHN KORSRUD: *New Work* (World Premiere, ACO Commission)

May 21 & 22, 2010, Miller Theatre, Columbia University, New York

May 21 – 10:00am / May 22 – 8:00pm. FREE ADMISSION.

Underwood New Music Readings

ACO's annual roundup of the country's brightest young and emerging composers selected through a national search

This press release is available online at: www.americancomposers.org/press.

For press tickets and inquiries, please contact Christina Jensen PR at 646-536-7864 or christina@christinajensenpr.com.

american composers orchestra

Robert Beaser, *Artistic Director* / Dennis Russell Davies, *Conductor Laureate*

Steven Sloane, *Principal Guest Conductor* / Derek Bermel, *Creative Advisor*

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