



## new release information

January 2017



**TITLE:** SECRET ALCHEMY: Chamber Works by Pierre Jalbert  
**ARTISTS:** MUSIC FROM COPLAND HOUSE  
Linda Chesis (flute), Derek Bermel (clarinet), Curtis Macomber, Harumi Rhodes, and Karina Canellakis (violin), Danielle Farina (viola), Wilhelmina Smith, Alexis Pia Gerlach, Nicholas Canellakis, and Alice Yoo (cello), Michael Boriskin (piano)  
**PRICE:** \$14.00  
**RELEASE DATE:** January 24, 2017  
**CATALOG #:** CHB-CD-102  
**BAR CODE:** 888295511797

### ABOUT THE RELEASE:

**Summary:** Capping an exhilarating, 15-year association, this release features four stunning works by Pierre Jalbert, "an acknowledged chamber-music master" (*The New Yorker*) – three in their World Premiere recordings, including a Copland House commission – in performances by the internationally-acclaimed Music from Copland House ensemble.

The medieval alchemist, stealthily converting one element into another, finds his modern counterpart in Pierre Jalbert, who revels in the transformation of musical ideas. Jalbert's music – urgent, mysterious, and instrumentally brilliant – veers between propulsive and reflective, secular and sacred, with a spiky, syncopated rhythmic drive animated by Prokofiev, Stravinsky, and Copland, and the ethereal, suspended calm of Gregorian chant.

The CD's title composition, his piano quartet *Secret Alchemy* (2012), alludes to the mystery of creation and the euphoria of discovery. His intense, eventful *String Trio* (2008) slowly emerges, evolves, explodes, and ultimately circles back to its origins, all within a tightly-written, one-movement arch scarcely longer than 10 minutes. *Crossings*, a Copland House commission, traces Jalbert's own French-Canadian ancestry, and is driven by a different kind of transformation – the migration of people voyaging into new places. The *Piano Trio No. 1*, ferocious and serene, was wildly hailed at its New York Premiere by Music from Copland House, and has become one of the composer's most often performed works.

Jalbert's close association with Copland House began in 1999, and included two Residency Awards, the Copland House/Borromeo Quartet Award, and the Copland House-Hoff Barthelson Music School Commission. Music from Copland House's New York Premiere in 2001 of his *Piano Trio No. 1* was the first of many performances the ensemble has given of that and other Jalbert works, including the World Premiere in 2011 of *Crossings*, which it commissioned.

This recording features the Founding, Principal, and Guest Artists of Music from Copland House, and was produced for the COPLAND HOUSE BLEND label by multi-Grammy Award-winner Judith Sherman. *Secret Alchemy* was supported by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Friends of Copland House. The CD will be available at Copland House's website ([www.coplandhouse.org](http://www.coplandhouse.org)), select retail stores, and most online outlets, including iTunes, Spotify, Amazon, and others.

## **CRITICAL ACCLAIM:**

"*Crossings* is strong, vibrant and effective ... we were hearing a masterpiece."

Portland [Maine] Press Herald

"The *Piano Trio No. 1* is a new masterwork."

American Record Guide

## **ABOUT THE ARTISTS:**

**PIERRE JALBERT** is highly acclaimed for his richly colored, superbly crafted scores and intense, expressive musical language. Born and raised in New England, he began piano lessons when he was five. Growing up, he heard French and English folk songs and Catholic liturgical music, gaining a deep respect for music that communicates powerfully and simply. He was also influenced by Copland's music, playing some of his works in youth orchestras. Jalbert's music has been performed by the London, Budapest, Boston, Houston, and Seattle Symphonies; the Borromeo, Emerson, Chiara, Enso, Jasper, Escher, and Ying Quartets; St. Paul Chamber Orchestra; Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble; cellist David Finckel; violinist Midori; and countless others. He won the BBC Masterprize, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Stoeger Award, two Copland House Residency Awards, Rome Prize, and an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and served as Composer-in-Residence of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and California Symphony. He is Professor of Composition and Theory at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music.

**MUSIC FROM COPLAND HOUSE** (MCH) is the internationally-acclaimed touring resident ensemble at Aaron Copland's National Historic Landmark home near New York City, an award-winning creative center for American music. Hailed by *The New York Times* for "all the richness of its offerings" and "illuminating essential truths about the music," MCH is the only wide-ranging American repertory ensemble journeying across 150 years of the U.S. musical landscape. It has been engaged by Carnegie Hall, the Library of Congress, Miller Theatre, Merkin Hall, Monday Evening Concerts in Los Angeles, the Caramoor, Cape Cod, Bard, and Ecstatic Music Festivals, Smithsonian Institution's Freer Gallery of Art, and many other leading North American concert presenters, and has collaborated with the European Broadcasting Union and National Public Radio on a special concert production showcasing American composers and aired in over 20 countries. MCH records for the Arabesque, Koch International, and COPLAND HOUSE BLEND labels, and is regularly featured on Copland House's popular main-stage concert series at the historic Merestead estate in Mount Kisco, NY. MCH concerts and recordings feature the ensemble's much-admired Founding Artists – clarinetist-composer Derek Bermel, pianist Michael Boriskin, flutist Paul Lustig Dunkel, violinist Nicholas Kitchen, and cellist Wilhelmina Smith – along with an array of stellar Principal and Guest Artists.

**COPLAND HOUSE BLEND** champions past and present American music. Its best-selling inaugural release, *Wake Up Singin'*, features baritone James Martin in 125 years of Afro-American art songs, hymns, and spirituals. Forthcoming are a CD of chamber works by Copland House Resident Robert X. Rodriguez, and re-releases of widely-praised MCH discs of music by Sebastian Currier and John Musto.

## **CREDITS:**

**Producer and Engineer:** Judith Sherman

**Engineer and Assistant Editor:** Jeanne Velonis

**Recording dates:** *Secret Alchemy* – 2/4/15; *String Trio* – 4/1/14; *Piano Trio No. 1* – 8/25/14;

The Recital Hall of the Performing Arts Center, Purchase College, State University of New York, Purchase, NY. *Crossings* – 10/4/13; American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, NY.

**Piano:** Steinway & Sons

**Piano Technician:** Russell Gordon

Pierre Jalbert's music is published by Schott Helicon Music Corporation (BMI).

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