



NEWS

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COPLAND HOUSE NAMES *CULTIVATE* FELLOWS FOR 2021

6 Composers from 5 States Selected for 10th Round of Coveted Emerging Composers’ Institute

Cortlandt Manor, NY – Copland House has announced the six Fellows chosen to participate in CULTIVATE 2021, the 10th year of its acclaimed, annual emerging composers institute. The selected composers are (*clockwise from upper left in photos*) [Juhi Bansal](#), 36 (Altadena, CA); [Nick Bentz](#), 26 (Los Angeles, CA); [Bobby Ge](#), 24 (Baltimore, MD); [Yaz Lancaster](#), 24 (Newport News, VA); [Paul Novak](#), 22 (Chicago, IL); and [Daniel Reza Sabzghabaei](#) (دانیال رضا سبزقباہی), 28 (Denton, TX). They were chosen from a formidable pool of 150 applicants in 32 states, the District of Columbia, and four countries. This year’s eminent jury was comprised of former Copland House Residents and CULTIVATE Fellows **Derek Bermel** (CULTIVATE Director), **Matthew Browne**, **Carlos Carrillo**, **Tonia Ko**, **Paula Matthusen**, and **Igor Santos**. Commenting on the selection process, Matthusen said, “it was a life-affirming experience to listen to all of the submitted works. They were extraordinary, and I am greatly enthusiastic about the music being created now, and look forward to a future in which we get to hear it, hopefully together.”

An all-scholarship, weeklong, intensive creative workshop and mentoring program, CULTIVATE will take place this year between June 6 and 14 at Aaron Copland’s National Historic Landmark home in northern Westchester County, NY, and other nearby locations. “During the week,” Bermel explained, “we cultivate ‘Three Es’: the EXPERIENCE of sculpting a composition in real time, while working closely with the Music from Copland House performers; an EXPERIMENTAL focus on deepening the imprint of one’s own creative voice; and access to the EXPERTISE of mentors and industry leaders.”

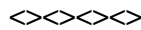
Launched in 2012, CULTIVATE quickly became an important destination for highly-gifted composers on the threshold of their professional careers. “As we launch this 10th round of CULTIVATE,” explained Copland House’s Artistic and Executive Director **Michael Boriskin**, “we take great pride in noting how so many of our 53 past Fellows have established brilliant careers, marked by significant artistic accomplishments.” 2019 Sheila and Richard J. Schwartz

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Honorary Fellow **Nina Shekhar** recalled CULTIVATE as “one of my favorite musical experiences. I felt inspired and motivated throughout. Having such a safe and nurturing environment in which the Composer Fellows could share feedback with each other made CULTIVATE so special.”

For CULTIVATE, Copland House commissions each of the six Fellows to create a new composition that serves as the focus of an intensive week of collective and individual daily rehearsals and workshops with Bermel and artists from Music from Copland House, “one of the leading champions of contemporary music” (*Louisville Weekly*). Evening discussion sessions focus on practical career matters featuring prominent, forward-looking arts leaders. Depending on COVID restrictions later this spring, CULTIVATE will either take place in-person (as in all previous years), or virtually (as in 2020). Conditions permitting, CULTIVATE will conclude with concerts by Music from Copland House this June on Copland House's mainstage performance series in Westchester County, NY and in New York City, featuring the World Premieres of all the new works; otherwise, all of the new compositions will be premiered in a Copland House livestream series spotlighting each of the 2021 Fellows. Composers selected for CULTIVATE also become eligible for future performance, recording, commissioning, and other career advancement opportunities.

Support for CULTIVATE comes from the ASCAP Foundation, BMI Foundation, Alice Ditson Fund, Jandon Foundation, and John G. Strugar. Additional funding comes from ArtsWestchester, Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Amphion Foundation, Friends of Copland House, National Endowment for the Arts, and New York State Council on the Arts.



CULTIVATE 2021: Fellows' bios

The music of **Juhi Bansal** weaves together themes celebrating musical and cultural diversity, nature and the environment, and strong female role models. Her work draws upon progressive metal, Hindustani music, spectralism, and musical theatre to create deeply expressive, evocative sound-worlds. As an Indian composer raised in Hong Kong, her work is inspired by both those cultures, entwining them closely with the gestures of Western classical music. Current projects include *Waves of Change*, a digital experience on womanhood, identity, and culture clashes inspired by the story of the Bangladesh Girls Surf Club; and *Edge of a Dream*, an opera commissioned by Los Angeles Opera about Ada Lovelace, daughter of infamous poet Lord Byron and a 19th century pioneer in computing. Recent seasons have featured commissions from the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Beth Morrison Projects, New York Virtuoso Singers, Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre, and AIDS Quilt Songbook 20th Anniversary Project. She is a staunch proponent of bringing new audiences to contemporary music, and encouraging the creative impulses of musicians of all backgrounds.

The art of composer-violinist **Nick Bentz** is drawn to the remote fringes and recesses of human experience, as he seeks to render intimately personal spaces imbued with an individual sense of storytelling and narrative. His music has been performed by flutist Marina Piccinini, yMusic, New Opera West, TEMPO Ensemble, and the Charleston, Jacksonville, and Suzhou (China) Symphonies, and featured at Ethan Cohen Galleries, New Music on the Point, and the Bowdoin, Piccolo Spoleto, and Sounding Now Festivals. His work has received top honors from the Tribeca New Music Festival, American Prize, iSING International Festival, Boston New Music Initiative, and Hartford Opera Theater. A graduate of the Peabody Conservatory and University of Southern California, he was previously a Composition Teaching Artist Fellow at Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and Composer-in-Residence at Symphony Number One.

Bobby Ge is a Baltimore-based composer and avid collaborator who seeks to create vivid emotional journeys that navigate boundaries between genre and medium. He has created multimedia projects with the Space Telescope Science Institute, Baltimore Rock Opera Society, Scattered Players Theater Company, writer-poet Jenny C. Lares, and the painters' collective Art10Baltimore. A graduate of the Peabody Conservatory, his works have been performed on four continents by the Harbin (China) Symphony, Bergamot Quartet, Concerto Chamber Orchestra, Pique Collective, and Future Symphony Competition Orchestra.

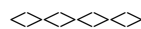
Yaz Lancaster is a transdisciplinary artist interested in practices aligned with relational aesthetics and the everyday, fragments and collage, and anti-oppression. They perform as a violinist, steel pannist, and vocalist in a wide variety of settings from DIY to orchestras, and their work is presented in many different mediums and collaborative projects that often reckon with specific influences ranging from politics of identity and liberation to natural phenomena and poetics.

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They have created in the U.S., Canada, and Trinidad and Tobago with Andy Akiho, Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti Contemporaneous, Hypercube, JACK Quartet, Skiffle Steel Orchestra, Wadada Leo Smith, and other artists and ensembles. An NYU graduate in violin and poetry, Yaz is in a "post-genre" duo with guitarist-producer Andrew Noseworthy; serves as visual arts editor at *Peach Mag*; and loves chess, horror movies, and bubble tea.

Rejecting grandiose narratives, **Paul Novak**'s music is driven by a love of small things like miniature forms, delicate soundscapes, and condensed ideas; explores the subtleties of instrumental color; and is influenced by literature, art, and poetry. His works have been performed in the U.S. and abroad by the Reno Philharmonic, Austin and Orlando Symphonies, and National Youth Orchestra-USA, and he has collaborated on interdisciplinary projects with poets, dancers, and visual artists. He has been commissioned by the Kinetic Ensemble, ASCAP, Society of Composers, Boston New Music Initiative, and American Composers Orchestra (for a Carnegie Hall premiere). A graduate of Rice University's Shepherd School of Music and Doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago, he has had awards from the ASCAP Foundation, League of Composers/ISCM, Tribeca New Music, Webster University, and YoungArts Foundation.

The music of **Daniel Reza Sabzghabaei** emphasizes the malleability of time and how we experience it, in the concert hall and everyday life. His work has been presented or commissioned by major international presenters and artists, including the Intimacy of Creativity Festival, International Contemporary Ensemble, National Sawdust, JACK Quartet, Guerilla Opera, Banff Centre, OPERA America, Beth Morrison Projects, New York Festival of Song, TAK Ensemble, Moab Music Festival, Pro Coro Canada, Young New Yorkers Chorus, Contemporaneous, Thailand New Music and Arts Symposium, Israeli Chamber Project, Romania's ICon Arts Festival, and South Korea's Busan Choral Festival. A graduate of the University of North Texas and Peabody Conservatory, he is currently a doctoral candidate at Cornell University, and has undertaken research on time and form within Persian *moosiqi sonati*.



Copland House bios

CULTIVATE Director **DEREK BERMEL** has been commissions by the Pittsburgh, National, Saint Louis, New Jersey, and Pacific Symphonies, Los Angeles and Westchester Philharmonics, New York Youth Symphony, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, WNYC Radio, Eighth Blackbird, Guarneri Quartet, Music from Copland House, Music from China, De Erepijs (Netherlands), Jazz Xchange (U.K.), Figura (Denmark), Koussevitzky and Fromm Foundations, violinist Midori, cellist Fred Sherry, and pianists Christopher Taylor and Andrew Russo, among others. His many honors include the Alpert Award in the Arts, Rome Prize, Guggenheim and Fulbright Fellowships, American Music Center's Trailblazer Award, and Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters; and residencies at Yaddo, Tanglewood, Aspen, Banff, Bellagio, Copland House, Sacatar, and Civitella Ranieri. He is Artistic Director of the American Composers Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, and served as Artist-in-Residence at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, and Composer-in-Residence of the Seattle Symphony and Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra.

COPLAND HOUSE is an award-winning creative center for American music based at Aaron Copland's National Historic Landmark home in New York's lower Hudson River Valley. Praised by *The New York Times* for "all the richness of its offerings," it has, for over 20 years, welcomed, mentored, and collaborated with musical dreamers, explorers, and innovators, who, like Copland, change the way we see, hear, feel, understand, and engage. The only composer's home in the U.S. devoted to nurturing and renewing America's rich musical legacy, its wide-ranging programs singularly embrace the entire artistic process, from creation and development to study, performance, and preservation, with multi-faceted composer support, live and recorded performances, and educational and community outreach.

The internationally-acclaimed **MUSIC FROM COPLAND HOUSE** ensemble has been hailed by *The New York Times* for "illuminating essential truths about the music." It has been featured on *CBS Sunday Morning*, NPR, the European Broadcasting Union in a multi-national production aired in 20 countries, and many other media outlets, and has been engaged by Tanglewood, the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, Smithsonian Institution's Freer Gallery of Art, Library of Congress, Yale, University of Chicago, Miller Theatre, Monday Evening Concerts in Los Angeles, the Caramoor, Cape Cod, Bard, Ecstatic, Bowdoin, and SONiC Festivals, and many other leading presenters. MCH records for Arabesque, Koch International, and the COPLAND HOUSE BLEND labels, and is regularly featured on Copland House's main-stage concert series in Westchester County, NY, and at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Inspired by Copland's peerless, lifelong advocacy of American composers, MCH also presents a wide variety of educational and community outreach activities. Launched in 1999 by flutist **Paul Lustig Dunkel**, clarinetist **Derek Bermel**, violinist **Nicholas Kitchen**, cellist **Wilhelmina Smith**, and pianist **Michael Boriskin**, MCH boasts a stellar roster of Founding, Principal, and Guest Artists, of whom, *The Chicago Tribune* raved, "Copland would have been proud of all of them."