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COPLAND HOUSE NAMES CULTIVATE 2025 FELLOWS

6 GIFTED COMPOSERS FROM 5 STATES SELECTED FOR
ACCLAIMED CREATIVE INSTITUTE

June 10 Concert in New York City to Feature World Premiere of 6 New Works



Cortlandt Manor, NY, February 3, 2025 – [Copland House](#) today announced the six gifted young creative artists selected as the 2025 Fellows of its widely-acclaimed CULTIVATE emerging composers institute. They are (clockwise from upper left): **Leigha Amick**, 27 (Philadelphia, PA); **Tommy Dougherty**, 34 (San Diego, CA); **Rolando Gomez**, 23 (Miami, FL); **Geli Li**, 32 (St Paul, MN); **Ryan Lindveit**, 30 (Knoxville, TN); and **Xavier Muzik**, 29 (Los Angeles, CA).

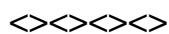
These outstanding composers were chosen from over 200 applicants in 36 states, the District of Columbia, and four countries by this year’s jury, comprised of CULTIVATE Director **Derek Bermel**, and former Copland House Residents **Shen-Hui Chen**, **Michael Gilbertson**, **Saad Haddad**, **Pascal LeBoeuf**, **Zibuokle Martinaityte**, and **Tyler Taylor**. Bermel said, “this year’s extraordinary half-dozen CULTIVATE Fellows outdo themselves in creative energy, spanning a wide range of musical styles and sonic territory. It’s gratifying and invigorating to be part of this process that bears witness to the rich talent pool in the next generation of American composers.”

Since 2012, CULTIVATE has been an important destination each year for gifted composers of all backgrounds and identities on the threshold of their professional careers. An intensive, weeklong, all-scholarship creative workshop and mentoring program, CULTIVATE 2025 will take place from June 2 through 10 at **Aaron Copland**'s National Historic Landmark home in northern Westchester County, NY. Each year, Copland House commissions six Fellows to each create a new small-ensemble composition that serves as the focus of an eventful week of collective and individual daily rehearsals and workshops with Bermel and artists from the Copland House Ensemble, "one of the leading champions of contemporary music" (*Louisville Weekly*). Evening discussion sessions enhance the experience, as forward-looking arts leaders providing real-life perspectives on practical career matters, and the artist's all-important role within the wider community.

CULTIVATE 2025 will conclude with a public concert on Tuesday evening, June 10 at 6:30pm by the Copland House Ensemble on its mainstage performance series at Elebash Recital Hall at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York. The program features the World Premieres of the six new works created for CULTIVATE, performed by clarinetist **Moran Katz**, violinist **Pala Garcia**, cellist **Alexis Pia Gerlach**, and pianist **Margaret Kampmeier**. The performances of all the new works will also be filmed for streaming on Copland House's YouTube Channel. In addition, all composers selected for CULTIVATE become eligible for future performance, recording, commissioning, and other career advancement opportunities.

Reflecting on her CULTIVATE Fellowship last year, **Claire Hu** said, "I had an unforgettable experience. I learned immensely from CULTIVATE, which was masterfully designed and implemented, revelatory, and warmly personal. Few other programs can match this level of excellence. It was an amazing opportunity and extraordinary."

Copland House gratefully acknowledges support for CULTIVATE from the Amphion Foundation, ArtsWestchester, ASCAP Foundation, BMI Foundation, Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Alice M. Ditson Fund, Friends of Copland House, David and Ezlbieta Grove Foundation, Jandon Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, NewMusic USA, New York State Council on the Arts, and Westchester Community Foundation.



2025 FELLOWS BIOS

Leigha Amick writes music to spark intellectual curiosity and express the human experience. Her compositions have been performed by the New Jersey and Curtis Institute Symphonies, Boulder and Orlando Philharmonics, Denver Young Artists Orchestra, Indiana University New Music Ensemble, St. Martin's Chamber Choir, and others. She has been a composition fellow at the Aspen Music Festival, and also wrote both the libretto and the music for *Rhiannon's Condemnation*, a one-act chamber opera based on a medieval Welsh legend from *The Mabinogion*. A graduate of Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music and Curtis Institute of Music, she teaches at the Curtis Institute's Young Artists Initiative.

Pittsburgh-born **Tommy Dougherty** is passionate about using improvisation to generate musical material, while drawing on his experience as both a composer and a violinist to foster deeper, more meaningful collaborations. His *Winterthur Suite*, a fixed-media collaboration with violist and historian Alexandra Cade, was created through their shared Maker-Creator Fellowship at Delaware's Winterthur Museum, where it was featured at the *Transformations: Contemporary Artists at Winterthur* exhibit. As a DeGaetano Composition Institute fellow, he worked on a new composition for the Orchestra of St. Luke's. His music has also been performed by Alarm Will Sound, the Modern Violin

Ensemble, and Kinetic Ensemble; as a violinist, he has performed with the Pittsburgh and San Diego Symphonies. He mentors young composers in San Diego through Art of Elan's Young Artists in Harmony Program.

Miami-born **Rolando J. Gomez** is a composer, tresero, lyricist, and music educator. His compositions blend Cuban, Jazz, and Classical influences, and he has recently focused on promoting and preserving Cuban musical traditions within the classical genre, particularly through the tres, Cuba's national instrument. One of his major projects involves creating repertoire for the tres by arranging studies, composing new pieces, and commissioning works from emerging composers. As an educator, he has created music that teaches Cuban grooves to young string players as part of the New Canon Project. He is a graduate of Syracuse University, where he is a teaching assistant, and his music has been recognized by The American Prize, the Society of New Music, and Tribeca New Music.

American-based with Chinese roots, **Geli Li** works to bridge Eastern and Western cultures. She has explored both acoustic and electronic media, collaborating with the Orchestra of St. Luke's, Talea Ensemble, Klangforum Wien, Alarm Will Sound, and many others. Her award-winning works have been performed globally, earning over 38 international composition awards and recognition at more than 30 festivals and conferences. Her creative endeavors have been supported by over 10 prestigious fellowships and residencies, including the Mizzou International Composer Festival, DeGaetano Composition Institute, ManiFeste Academy at France's famed IRCAM, and Intimacy of Creativity at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. Her academic journey spans Asia, Europe, and North America, embodying a global perspective on music and a commitment to innovation and cross-cultural dialogue. She studied at the University of Texas at Austin, Hamburg's Hochschule für Musik und Theater, and Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music; she is a passionate educator who is a Visiting Assistant Professor at Macalester College in Minnesota's Twin Cities.

Ryan Lindveit takes inspiration from nature, art, science, technology, and personal experience in order to craft colorful and emotionally vivid musical journeys. His catalog includes works for orchestra, wind and chamber ensembles, voice, electronics, and visual media, and he enjoys collaborating with a wide variety of musicians, young and old. His works have been commissioned and performed by the Minnesota Orchestra, Alarm Will Sound, Akropolis Reed Quintet, "The President's Own" U.S. Marine Band, U.S. Navy Concert Band, and the wind ensembles at dozens of American universities. He has received the Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award, and BMI Composer Award, among many others. A graduate of the University of Southern California, Yale University, and University of Michigan, he is a deeply committed educator, and is currently on the University of Tennessee, Knoxville faculty.

Xavier Muzik is fascinated by the tools used to assign meaning and purpose to individuals, places, and things, and his work has undertaken a lifelong negotiation around race. His compositions also consider mental health, spiritualism, and connection, utilizing metaphor and musical convention as creative tools resulting in music that is narratively organized and sonically specific. He is a graduate of the California Institute of the Arts and the Mannes College of Music at The New School.

COPLAND HOUSE BIOS

CULTIVATE Director **Derek Bermel** has been commissioned 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 Ereprijs (Netherlands), Jazz Xchange (U.K.), Figura (Denmark), Koussevitzky and Fromm Foundations, and violinist Midori, among others.

His many honors include two Grammy Award nominations, 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 has served as Artistic Director of the American Composers Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, 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 has long welcomed past and present musical dreamers, explorers, and game-changing innovators of all backgrounds and identities, who – like Aaron Copland – have changed the way we engage with the world. An award-winning creative center for American music based at Rock Hill, Copland's longtime residence and a National Historic Landmark in New York's Lower Hudson Valley, it is undertaking a transformational expansion with its recent acquisition of a vast new satellite venue at Bluestone Farm, a 24-acre former grade school campus on the New York-Connecticut border. Copland House is the only composer's home in the U.S. devoted to nurturing America's vibrant, diverse cultural legacy through a broad range programs that uniquely embrace the entire artistic process, from creation and development to study, performance, and presentation. Hailed by *The New York Times* for "all the richness of its offerings," Copland House's activities resonate far beyond its walls, nationally and globally, and are built upon three primary programmatic areas: multi-faceted composer support, live and recorded performances, and in-school and on-site educational activities. Among its honors are the Yale Distinguished Music Educator Award, American Music Center's Letter of Distinction, *Westchester* magazine's "Best of the Decade" recognition and "Top 52 Reasons to Love Westchester," and ArtsWestchester's Arts Organization of the Year Award; its Artistic and Executive Director Michael Boriskin was named one of *Musical America's* "Top 30 Professionals of 2023."

The internationally-acclaimed **Copland House Ensemble** offers "spellbinding journeys" (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*) across 150 years of America's vibrant musical landscape. Its programs link centuries and cultures within exhilarating human and historical narratives, championing classic and forgotten voices from the past, and celebrating today's established and rising composers of all backgrounds and identities. The Ensemble's "polished, communicative, and colorful playing" (*Opera News*) has been featured on *CBS Sunday Morning*, NPR (including *Tiny Desk*), and Euro-Radio, and it has been engaged by Tanglewood, the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, Library of Congress, Smithsonian Institution, Universities of Chicago and Virginia, the Bard, Caramoor, Bowdoin, and Ecstatic Festivals, and many other leading North American concert presenters. It has also recorded for Arabesque, Koch International, and Copland House Blend, and commissioned nearly 100 works. Founded in 1999, its Founding, Principal, and Guest Artists have been hailed as "excellent musicians in vital performances ... Copland would have been proud of all of them" (*Chicago Tribune*).

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