



# NEWS

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Aaron Copland  
COPLAND HOUSE

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## **COPLAND HOUSE NAMES CULTIVATE FELLOWS FOR 2015**

**6 Composers from 5 States Selected for Coveted Emerging Composers' Institute;  
June 7 Concert to Feature World Premieres of New Works;  
Collaboration with Nashville Symphony Launched**

Cortlandt Manor, NY, May 4, 2015 – Copland House announces the six Fellows chosen to participate this June in CULTIVATE, its acclaimed, annual emerging composers institute. The composers selected are Michael-Thomas Fomai (27, Honolulu, HI); Michael Gilbertson (27, Hamden, CT); Andrew McManus (29, Chicago, IL); Polina Nazaykinskaya (27, New Haven, CT); Gity Razaz (28, Brooklyn, NY); and Daniel Silliman (21, Los Angeles, CA). They were chosen out of nearly 85 applicants from 25 states by a distinguished composer panel comprised of CULTIVATE Director Derek Bermel; BBC Masterprize winner Pierre Jalbert, a two-time Copland House Resident; and Fulbright Scholar Dalit Warsaw.

CULTIVATE, an all-scholarship intensive creative workshop and mentoring program, will take place between June 1 and 7 in northern Westchester County, NY, at Aaron Copland's National Historic Landmark home in Cortlandt Manor and at the Merestead estate in nearby Mount Kisco. Launched in 2012, it has quickly become a coveted destination for highly-gifted composers on the threshold of their professional careers.

"CULTIVATE offers the chance for artists to think about process, and to ensure that these new compositions come alive throughout the week," says CULTIVATE Director Derek Bermel. "The program combines the notion of community – a value of great importance to Aaron Copland – with an intense week of analysis, inspiration, vision, revision, deconstruction, re-revision, contemplation, and perspiration." Reflecting on his CULTIVATE experience, Viet Cuong, a 2014 Westchester Community Foundation Valentine and Clark Fellow, said "it was an absolutely incredible week. I speak for all of the Fellows in truly appreciating every second Copland House has spent making CULTIVATE as great as it is. We feel so fortunate to have been given this opportunity."

Each of the six Fellows will create a new composition that will be the focus of an intensive week of collective and individual daily rehearsals and workshops with Bermel and artists from the widely-praised Music from Copland House ensemble. Evening discussion sessions focus on practical and professional career matters, and feature prominent, forward-looking arts leaders. CULTIVATE will conclude with a public concert by the ensemble on Sunday afternoon, June 7 on Copland House's mainstage performance series at Merestead, featuring the World Premieres of all the new works.

CULTIVATE offers a period of concentrated, reflective work within the kind of collegial, nurturing environment that Copland himself always fostered. Fellows also benefit from pre- and post-CULTIVATE creative and professional guidance. All costs of composer participation, working sessions and rehearsals, travel, accommodations, and meals are covered by Copland House.

In an important new collaboration with the Nashville Symphony, one CULTIVATE Fellowship beginning in 2016 may be offered to a participating composer in the orchestra's recently-launched Composers Lab & Workshop.

Major support for CULTIVATE comes from the ASCAP Foundation, Westchester Community Foundation Valentine and Clark Scholarship Fund, and John G. Strugar. Additional support comes from the Friends of Copland House. Tickets for the June 7 CULTIVATE concert are \$15 for the general public, and free to the Friends of Copland House and students. Ticket or reservation information is available at (914) 788-4659, [office@coplandhouse.org](mailto:office@coplandhouse.org), or [www.coplandhouse.org](http://www.coplandhouse.org).

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## **CULTIVATE 2015: Fellows' bios**

Hawaii-born composer **MICHAEL-THOMAS FOUMAI** (ASCAP Foundation Bart Howard Fellow) has received numerous honors from ASCAP, BMI, the Presser and Fromm Foundations, Maestro Lorin Maazel's Castleton Festival, and Music Teachers National Association (2013-14 Distinguished Composer of the Year Award). He has also been a Kaplan Fellow in Composition at the Bowdoin International Music Festival and a 2014 Intimacy of Creativity Fellow in Hong Kong. He was recently commissioned by the Wellesley Composers Conference, Michigan Music Teachers Association, Portland Symphony Orchestra (Maine), Hawaii Youth Symphony, and Royal Hawaiian Band, and his music has been performed by Alarm Will Sound, Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra, Dolce Suono Ensemble, and orchestras in Aspen, Buffalo, Cabrillo, Honolulu, and Milwaukee, among others. His music is inspired by storytelling, using any forms of musical language to explore the human experience. A graduate of the Universities of Hawaii and Michigan, he is on the faculty of the University of Hawaii.

The music of **MICHAEL GILBERTSON** (Sheila and Richard J. Schwartz Honorary Fellow) music has earned five Morton Gould Awards from ASCAP, a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a BMI Student Composer Award, and Juilliard's Palmer-Dixon Prize for the best student work of the year. His opera *Breaking*, with playwright Caroline McGraw, was commissioned by the Washington National Opera and premiered at the Kennedy Center in 2013. He has twice composed and conducted ballets for the New York Choreographic Institute, working with choreographers David Morse and Daniel Baker. His fifth ballet, with choreographer Norbert De La Cruz, was premiered by the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet. A graduate of Juilliard and Yale, his works have been performed by the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, New England and Michigan Philharmonics, Musica Sacra, Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, Symphony in C, and the Grand Rapids, Cheyenne, Cedar Rapids, Flint, and Dubuque Symphonies, among others.

The music of **ANDREW MCMANUS** (Friends of Copland House Fellow) mixes strange sounds and irregular rhythms - some beautiful, others bizarre - to find new ways of exploring spirituality, surrealism and theatrical drama. In May 2014, his opera *Killing the Goat*, based on Mario Vargas Llosa's novel *La Fiesta del Chivo* (*The Feast of the Goat*), about the traumas of the Trujillo regime, was premiered by eighth blackbird, the Pacifica Quartet and members of the Contempo Chamber Players at the University of Chicago. The following month, his *Strobe* was acclaimed at its premiere by the New York Philharmonic. Other works have been performed by the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, Spektral Quartet, Minnesota Orchestra, New York Youth Symphony and the Wellesley Composers Conference. A Massachusetts native, he is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and Yale University, and is a doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago.

Born in Togliatti, an industrial city on Russia's Volga River, **POLINA NAZAYKINSKAYA** (Westchester Community Foundation Valentine and Clark Fellow) studied piano, violin, and flute as a child, and as a teenager at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory concentrated on violin and composition. She came to the U.S. for post-graduate studies at the Yale School of Music. She is now pursuing a doctorate in composition at the City University of New York's Graduate Center. She has won numerous awards, and her music has been performed by the Minnesota Orchestra, Russian National Orchestra, Hermitage Orchestra and Chorus, Yale Philharmonia, Youth Symphony Orchestra of Russia, Omsk Philharmonic, St. Olaf Philharmonia, and the Juventas New Music Ensemble, which introduced her chamber opera, *The Magic Mirror*.

The music of **GITY RAZAZ** (Westchester Community Foundation Valentine and Clark Fellow) music ranges from concert solos and large symphonic works to scores for modern dance and electro-acoustic sonic landscapes. Her music has been commissioned and performed by the Moirae Ensemble, VisionIntoArt, Metropolis Ensemble, National Ballet School of Canada, Albany and Juilliard Symphonies, Plurimo ensemble, Agimus Venezia, New York Choreographic Institute, American Festival for the Arts, Amsterdam Cello Biennale, and Sirius String Quartet, among others. A Juilliard graduate, her compositions have received the 2013 Jerome Foundation Award, Libby Larsen Prize at the International Search for New Music Competition, Brain Israel Prize, three ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards, Juilliard's Palmer Dixon Award, and special recognition from the Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute, ASCAP, Margaret Blackburn Memorial Competition, and the League of Composers (ISCM).

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**DANIEL SILLIMAN** (Westchester Community Foundation Valentine and Clark Fellow) was the youngest composer to have a work performed by USC's Thornton Edge Ensemble, which premiered his piano quartet *aqueous solutions* (2012), and his cello-and-orchestra work *strain* (2014). In addition to various honors for both academic and musical excellence at USC, he has received several awards from Access Contemporary Music Chicago and the Texas Music Teachers Association, and was a participant in Maine's Atlantic Music Festival (2013), and his three pieces for solo cello was premiered at the 2014 Bowdoin International Music Festival.

CULTIVATE Director **DEREK BERMEL** has received commissions from the Pittsburgh, National, Saint Louis, New Jersey, and Pacific Symphonies, Los Angeles and Westchester Philharmonics, the New York Youth Symphony, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, WNYC Radio, eighth blackbird, the Guarneri String Quartet, Music from Copland House and Music from China, De Ereprijs (Netherlands), Jazz Xchange (U.K.), Figura (Denmark), violinist Midori, electric guitarist Wiek Hijmans, 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; commissions from the Koussevitzky and Fromm Foundations, Meet the Composer, and Cary Trust; 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 recently completed a 4-year stint as Artist-in-Residence at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton.

**MUSIC FROM COPLAND HOUSE** is the acclaimed touring, resident ensemble at Aaron Copland's National Historic Landmark home near New York City, an award-winning creative center for American music ([www.coplandhouse.org](http://www.coplandhouse.org)). Since its triumphant New York debut as the Opening Night of Merkin Hall's 1999-2000 season, Music from Copland House has occupied a special place on the U.S. musical scene as this country's only wide-ranging American repertory ensemble, journeying across 150 years of our nation's rich musical landscape. Hailed by The New York Times for performances that are "all exuberance and bright sunshine," MCH has been engaged by Carnegie Hall, the Library of Congress, Columbia University's Miller Theatre, the Caramoor, Cape Cod, Bard, and Ecstatic Music Festivals, and other leading concert presenters, and makes its Mexican debut this season. It has also collaborated with NPR and Euro-Radio on a special concert broadcast in over 20 countries. It has commissioned over 30 works by both emerging and established composers, including Sebastian Currier's *Static*, which won the prestigious Grawemeyer Award (2007). The ensemble records for Arabesque, Koch International, and the new 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. Inspired by Copland's peerless, lifelong advocacy of American composers, MCH also presents a wide variety of educational and community outreach activities. MCH concerts 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 – and an array of stellar Principal Artists and guest performers.

**COPLAND HOUSE**, winner of the American Music Center's coveted Letter of Distinction, is a unique creative center for American music based at Aaron Copland's National Historic Landmark home in New York's lower Hudson River Valley. It is the only composer's home in the U.S. devoted to nurturing and renewing America's rich musical heritage, and fostering greater public awareness and appreciation of our nation's composers and their work. Building upon Aaron Copland's seminal artistic and personal legacies, it furthers this mission through composer residencies; live, broadcast, and recorded performances; and educational and community outreach programs. In 2009, it began expanding its activities to the vast Merestead estate in Mount Kisco through an innovative public-private partnership with the Westchester County government. Support for Copland House's 2012-13 Merestead concerts comes from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, Aaron Copland Fund for Music, ArtsWestchester, Westchester Community Foundation, and Friends of Copland House.