



Aaron Copland
COPLAND HOUSE

NEWS

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2012 COPLAND HOUSE RESIDENCY AWARDS ANNOUNCED

8 Composers Selected for Coveted Retreats at Aaron Copland's National Historic Landmark Home

Cortlandt Manor, NY, October 22, 2012 – Eight composers from five states have been selected for coveted, all-expenses-paid residencies during the 2012-13 season at Aaron Copland's National Historic Landmark house in New York's lower Hudson Valley. Copland House Artistic and Executive Director Michael Boriskin announced that the winners of the 2012 Copland House Residency Awards, are Lembit Beecher, 30, New York, NY; Martin Hennessy, 59, New York, NY; David Hertzberg, 22, Studio City, CA; Chiayu Hsu, 37, Eau Claire, WI; Amy Beth Kirsten, 40, New Haven, CT; Pierre Jalbert, 44, Houston, TX (who returns for his second stay); Gregory Spears, 35, Brooklyn, NY; and Joelle Wallach, 66, New York, NY. Brian Ciach, 35, Broomall, PA, was named an Alternate. This year's eminent jury, which included composers Alvin Singleton (a former Copland House Resident), Carman Moore, and Pulitzer Prize-winner Paul Moravec, reviewed the applications of 85 composers from 30 states.

"This year's pool of applicants was especially impressive," noted Mr. Boriskin, "which made the jury's work selecting only a small percentage that much more difficult. The winners reflect a wide range of creative styles and personal backgrounds." The residents will live and work, one at a time, at Copland's rustic, hilltop home one hour north of midtown Manhattan for stays ranging from three- to eight-weeks. There, they will be able to focus uninterruptedly on their creative work in the same bucolic, serene surroundings that Copland so enjoyed during the last 30 years of his life. They also become eligible for post-residency awards and performances that advance their work, including the Sylvia Goldstein Award, Borromeo String Quartet Award, Hoff-Barthelson Music School Commission, and others.

Reflecting on his Copland House stay this year, Greg Kallor said, "it was a gift, and a special and rare opportunity. I felt welcome in his house and encouraged to pursue my work there; there seemed to be a pervasive spirit of Copland's approval and his blessing. I was incredibly productive, and returned to my life in New York City invigorated, with a renewed sense of purpose." The Copland House Residencies occupy the House for 42 to 45 weeks throughout the year, and are among the organization's core programs. To date, Copland House has hosted residencies for over 100 composers from nearly 30 states and 3 countries. Works created during Copland House stays have won awards from ASCAP, BMI, the American Composers Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, European American Music Alliance, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and others, and have been premiered by leading artists and performing organizations around the world.

An Official Project of the federal *Save America's Treasures* program, Copland House is the only composer's home in the U.S. devoted to nurturing and renewing America's rich musical heritage through a broad range of musical, educational, public, informational, and electronic-media activities. Additional information about Copland House, its residencies, and other programs is at www.coplandhouse.org.

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RESIDENT BIOS

This fall, **Lembit Beecher** was appointed for a three-year term as the first Composer -in-Residence of the Opera Company of Philadelphia, in collaboration with Gotham Chamber Opera and Music Theatre Group of New York. Born of Estonian and American parents, he grew up under the redwoods in Santa Cruz, California. Since then, he has lived in Boston, Houston, Ann Arbor, Berlin, and New York, earning degrees from Harvard, Rice, and the University of Michigan. This varied background has made him particularly sensitive to place, ecology, and the strong emotional relationships that people forge with patterns in nature. He is also interested in memory and the various ways we tell stories, from emotional personal narratives to crisp, clean documentaries. His recent works have focused on reflections of the immigrant experience and the integration of recorded interviews with music. Active also as a pianist, his music has been performed at the Tanglewood, Aspen, and Cabrillo Festivals and he has received awards from the American Music Center, ASCAP, New York Youth Symphony, NewMusic@ECU, and Society for New Music.

Chiayu Hsu has derived inspiration from poems, myths, images, and other sources, and the combination of Chinese elements and Western techniques is a hallmark of her music. A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, Yale, and Duke, her work has been recognized with awards from Lynn University, music+culture, the Sorel Organization, International Harp Society, ASCAP, Maxfield Parrish Composition Contest, and Renée B. Fisher Foundation, among others. Her orchestral works have been performed by the London Sinfonietta, the Detroit, San Francisco, and Nashville Symphonies, American Composers Orchestra, Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, Aspen Festival Contemporary Ensemble, eighth blackbird, and Prism and Ciompi Quartets.

Pennsylvania-born composer-pianist **Martin Hennessy** has written two operas with librettist Mark Campbell (*A Letter to East 11th Street* and *The Good Friar*), and recently created music for two plays (Tom Rowan's *The Blue Djinn* and Barbara Dana's *A Voice of Her Own*). Other recent premieres include a song commission for the Five Boroughs Music Festival; a cycle for baritone, clarinets and piano at Westminster Choir College, *After Reading "To Kill a Mockingbird"* at Strathmore Hall with cellist Raman Ramakrishnan; and a vocal quartet cycle, *Renascence*, at the Dramatists' Guild. His music has also been presented by New York City Opera's *Vox* series, American Opera Projects, New York Festival of Song, Guggenheim Works & Process, Harvard Ballet Company, and Mirror Visions Ensemble. He has received awards from the American Music Center, ASCAP, Meet the Composer, and San Francisco Song Festival, and a residency from the Millay Colony. His music has been recorded on the Newport, Albany, and GPR labels.

This year, **David Hertzberg** received the American Academy of Arts and Letters' Charles Ives Scholarship and an ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award. As the newly-named Composer-in-Residence for Young Concert Artists, he will write two works for members of the YCA roster, the first of which will be premiered this season at the Kennedy Center and New York's Merkin Hall by the ensemble miXt. His *Nympharum*, which won the Juilliard Orchestra Competition, as well as the William Schuman Prize at the BMI Student Composer Awards, and the Arthur Friedheim Prize, was premiered last year at Tully Hal, and he will also compose a work for the New Juilliard Ensemble, to be premiered at the same hall in 2013. This past spring, he received his Bachelor's degree with Scholastic Distinction from Juilliard, and was awarded the John Erskine Prize for outstanding artistic and academic achievement; he is currently in the school's accelerated Bachelor's/Master's program working with Samuel Adler

Pierre Jalbert returns for his second Copland House residency. Among his many honors are the Rome Prize, BBC Masterprize, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's 2007 Stoecker Award (given biennially "in recognition of significant contributions to the chamber music repertory"), a 2010 award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and Copland House's Borromeo String Quartet Award. He has drawn inspiration from a variety of sources, from plainchant melodies to natural phenomena. His music has been performed worldwide, with four Carnegie Hall performances of his orchestral music.

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Recent orchestral performances include those by the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood and by the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra under Marin Alsop. He has served as Composer-in-Residence with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, California Symphony, and Chicago's Music in the Loft). Recent commissions and performances include those of the Ying, Borromeo, Maia, Enso, Escher, Chiara, and Emerson String Quartets, Music from Copland House, and violinist Midori. He is Professor of Music at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music in Houston, and serves as an artistic director of Houston's Musiqa ensemble. A disc of his chamber music is in production featuring the Music from Copland House ensemble.

Amy Beth Kirsten has received awards and grants from the Guggenheim, Rockefeller, and Fromm Foundations, The MAP Fund, ASCAP, and the State of Connecticut. She is currently composing a chamber opera – without singers – for eighth blackbird that will be choreographed and directed by Martha Clark for a 2013-14 premiere. Before coming to the East Coast to attend Peabody Conservatory, she was a singer-songwriter for 10 years in Chicago-area nightclubs. Since then, she has written orchestral, chamber, operatic, and instrumental works. Upcoming projects include a new work for Calyx Piano Trio, and a song cycle for the duo TwoSense, and a solo cello piece commissioned by Jeffrey Zeigler of the Kronos Quartet. She received degrees from Benedictine University, the Chicago College of Performing Arts, and Peabody. She teaches composition privately and at the HighSCORE festival in Pavia, Italy. She has previously taught at Peabody, Towson and Wesleyan Universities, and the University of Connecticut.

Gregory Spears writes instrumental and vocal music that blends stylistic aspects of romanticism, minimalism, and early music. His music has been performed by Houston Grand Opera, American Composers Orchestra, American Opera Projects, Center City Opera Theater, NOW Ensemble, So Percussion, and eighth blackbird. He was recently commissioned to write two songs for the New York Public Library's 2011 Rolex Arts Weekend, and a work for the JACK Quartet based on his experience as composer-in-residence at New Jersey's Buttonwood Psychiatric Unit. Other commissions include those from OPERA America, Present Music, choreographer Christopher Williams, and Houston Grand Opera. New Amsterdam Records released his early music-inspired, chamber Requiem to critical acclaim in 2011. He has won multiple prizes from both BMI and ASCAP, as well as awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, American Composers Forum, and Fulbright Foundation. He holds degrees from The Eastman School of Music, Yale School of Music, and Princeton University, and has been an artist-in-residence at Yaddo and the MacDowell Colony.

Joelle Wallach composes orchestral, chamber, choral, and vocal works. She wrote an octet, *From the Forest of Chimneys*, to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the New York Philharmonic Ensembles, and the New York Choral Society commissioned her secular oratorio, *Toward a Time of Renewal*, for 200 voices and orchestra to commemorate its 35th Anniversary Season in Carnegie Hall. A pre-concert lecturer for the New York Philharmonic and the Dallas Symphony, she speaks on a broad range of musical subjects, bringing fresh insights to familiar works and opening doors to modern ones and to those more infrequently heard. She grew up in Morocco, but makes her home in New York City, where she was born and to which she has just returned after a two-year visit as Professor of Composition at the University of North Texas College of Music.