



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AMERICAN MUSIC PROJECT LAUNCHES AUGUST 4

Nonprofit Foundation to Support the Performance and Creation of Music by American Composers

Lawrence A. Johnson, a Chicago-based writer, music critic, and founder of the Classical Review websites devoted to the coverage of music in Chicago, Boston, New York and South Florida, announced today the creation of a new initiative: the American Music Project (AMP). AMP is a nonprofit foundation dedicated to facilitating, commissioning and underwriting performances of classical American repertoire.

“As a critic, one of my greatest concerns has been the lack of performances of existing American repertory,” said Johnson. “We do hear a few works by Gershwin, Copland and Bernstein, which are all, of course, terrific.

“But I believe there is a vast and rich existing body of American music—operas, symphonies, and chamber music—which is in danger of being lost since the music is rarely performed and few people get a chance to hear it.”

“I decided to start the American Music Project to encourage and underwrite performances of American classical music,” said Johnson. “The goal of the foundation is to facilitate more performances of our great musical legacy, as well as to raise awareness and, ultimately, help increase the amount of American music that is performed regularly in our concert halls and opera houses.”

American Music Project will also selectively commission new works by American composers. The first commission is Chicago pianist-composer Amy Wurtz’s Piano Quintet, which will receive its world premiere October 5 at Ganz Hall in Chicago as part

of an all-American program that also includes works by Charles Ives, David Diamond and Irving Fine (marking Fine's centennial year). Wurtz and the Chicago Q Ensemble will perform this program, which Johnson plans to repeat in Boston and New York next spring.

"I am thrilled to have received the inaugural commission from the American Music Project and excited to contribute to the repertoire with my Piano Quintet," said Wurtz. "I look forward to a second collaboration with the Chicago Q Ensemble."

Each new work commissioned by the American Music Project will be premiered in three different cities and recorded, in order to reach as broad an audience as possible. The second AMP commission will be announced in December.

Music organizations, ensembles and presenters will be able to apply for grants from the AMP Foundation for performances of American music during the 2015-16 season. Details and guidelines for submitting grant proposals can be found at americanmusicproject.net.

Johnson hopes to raise enough money through individual donors and foundation grants by summer of 2015 to be able to facilitate several performances across the country in the 2015-16 season, in addition to presenting the second AMP commission. Information on how to contribute to the tax-deductible foundation can be found at americanmusicproject.net.

Conductors Carlos Kalmar, Leonard Slatkin, and Susanna Mälkki and composer William Bolcom have joined the AMP Advisory Board, with additional musicians to be announced shortly.

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American Music Project inaugural concert
Sunday, October 5, 2014 at 2 p.m.
Ganz Hall at Roosevelt University
Chicago

Chicago Q Ensemble
Amy Wurtz, pianist

Ives: Violin Sonata No. 4
Fine: Fantasia for String Trio
Diamond: String Quartet No. 2
Wurtz: Piano Quintet (world premiere, AMP commission)
Tickets: \$30
tickets@americanmusicproject.net

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