



american composers orchestra

innovating right before your ears

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American Composers Orchestra

Playing it UNSafe

Call for Proposals

Receipt Deadline: April 30, 2010, 5:00 p.m.

American Composers Orchestra announces **Playing it UNSafe**, a research and development laboratory for the creation, reading, and performance of experimental new works by American composers. The goal of the program is to encourage composers to experiment and stretch their own musical sensibilities by developing new works (or works-in-progress) that expand the range of possibilities for—and challenge convention notions about—orchestral music. Playing it UNSafe was conceived to address the pressures and limitations often encountered by composers writing new works for orchestra, a situation that tends to inhibit risk-taking composition and encourages a “play it safe” approach. The program will include an extended series of rehearsal and public workshop/readings with ACO’s Orchestra Underground during the 2010-11 season, culminating in performance in Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall on March 4, 2011, conducted by ACO music director George Manahan.

Playing it UNSafe will feature Orchestra Underground, ACO’s groundbreaking small orchestra ensemble that seeks to redefine orchestra music by embracing a wide gamut of musical styles, unusual instrumentations and spatial orientations of musicians, technological innovations, and multimedia/multidisciplinary collaborations. Since its launch in 2004, Orchestra Underground has commissioned and premiered nearly 50 cutting-edge new works.

The core Orchestra Underground instrumentation for Playing it UNSafe is: Single winds and brass instruments (standard orchestra doublings are permitted); harp, keyboard, 2 percussion plus timpani (3 players); and strings (6.5.4.3.2). Proposals that use alternative instruments, soloist, electronics, digital technology, video or multidisciplinary elements are encouraged. Smaller instrumentations are permissible; however, proposed works should reflect the orchestral nature of the ensemble with multiple strings on a part. Proposed works may be up to 15 minutes in duration (single movements or sections of a larger work-in-progress are acceptable).

Up to six composers will be selected for participation in Playing it UNSafe. Composers at any stage of their career may apply. Composers selected to participate will receive an honorarium to support the creation of the work and to assist in covering the cost of the creation of instrumental parts. In addition, travel and accommodation expenses will be provided.

Composers may propose a musical work or project for Playing it UNSafe by submitting the following:

1. a one-page (500 words or less) description of the work or work-in-progress being proposed, including a statement addressing how the work advances the composer's output and aesthetics, and the goals of the Playing it UNSafe program;
2. a completed submission form (available at americancomposers.org/unsafe/);
3. one bound copy of a recent and representative musical score, clearly labeled with the composer's name and title of the work on the cover page (a recording may also be submitted, but is not required);
4. a current résumé for the composer including educational background, major teachers, awards, professional affiliations;
5. a list of works, including title, year composed, instrumentation, duration, and performance history;
6. for composers who have not had a work performed by a professional orchestra, a letter of recommendation from an established composer or other music professional, attesting to the applicant's accomplishments and potential as an orchestral composer (the recommendation may be sent under separate cover);
7. a self-addressed stamped envelope suitable for the return of materials (if you wish your material be returned to you). All supporting materials remain the property of American Composers Orchestra. ACO is not responsible for lost materials.

Proposals must be received (not postmarked) by 5pm on April 30, 2010. Participants will be selected by June 30. Full details and submission guidelines are available at:

www.americancomposers.org/unsafe_2011

The address to use for inquiries and for sending a proposal is:

American Composers Orchestra
ATTN: Playing it UNSafe
240 West 35th Street, Suite 405
New York, NY 10001-2506
web: www.americancomposers.org/unsafe_2011
email: unsafe@americancomposers.org
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