American Composers Orchestra Presents Next Composer to Composer Talks in January

William Bolcom & Gabriela Lena Frank
Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 5pm ET – Online
Registration & Information: http://bit.ly/ComposerToComposerBolcom

John Corigliano & Mason Bates
Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 5pm ET – Online
Registration & Information: http://bit.ly/ComposerToComposerCorigliano

Free, registration recommended.

New York, NY – American Composers Orchestra (ACO) presents its next Composer to Composer Talks online in January, with composers William Bolcom and Gabriela Lena Frank on Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 5pm ET, and John Corigliano and Mason Bates on Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 5pm ET. The talks will be live-streamed and available for on-demand viewing for seven days. Tickets are free; registration is highly encouraged. Registrants will receive links to recordings of featured works in advance of the event.

ACO’s Composer to Composer series features major American composers in conversation with each other about their work and leading a creative life. The intergenerational discussions begin by exploring a single orchestral piece, with one composer interviewing the other. Attendees will gain insight into the work’s genesis, sound, influence on the American orchestral canon, and will be invited to ask questions of the artists.

On January 13, Gabriela Lena Frank talks with William Bolcom about his Symphony No. 9, from 2012, of which Bolcom writes, “Today our greatest enemy is our inability to listen to each other, which seems to worsen with time. All we hear now is shouting, and nobody is listening because the din is so great. Yet there is a ‘still, small voice’ that refuses to disappear…I pin my hope on that voice. I search for it daily in life and in music – and possibly the ‘Ninth Symphony’ is a search for that soft sound.”

On January 27, Mason Bates talks with John Corigliano about Corigliano’s work Circus Maximus (Symphony No. 3 for Large Wind Ensemble) from 2004. Corigliano writes of the piece, “The Circus Maximus of ancient Rome was the largest arena in the world. 300,000 spectators were entertained by chariot races, hunts, and battles. The Roman need for grander and wilder amusement grew as its empire declined. The parallels between the high decadence of Rome and our present
time are obvious. Entertainment dominates our reality, and ever-more-extreme ‘reality’ shows dominate our entertainment."

These conversations will be archived by Oral History of American Music (OHAM) within Yale University’s Irving S. Gilmore Music Library.

About the Composers:

National Medal of Arts, Pulitzer Prize, and Grammy Award-winner William Bolcom (born May 26, 1938) is an American composer of keyboard, chamber, operatic, vocal, choral, and symphonic music. Born in Seattle, Washington, he began composition studies at the age of eleven with George Frederick McKay and John Verrall at the University of Washington. He later studied with Darius Milhaud at Mills College while working on his Master of Arts degree, with Leland Smith at Stanford University while working on his D.M.A., and with Olivier Messiaen and Milhaud at the Paris Conservatoire, where he received the 2ème Prix de Composition. Bolcom won the Pulitzer Prize for music in 1988 for 12 New Etudes for Piano, and his setting of William Blake’s Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience on the Naxos label won four Grammy Awards in 2005. As a composer, Bolcom has written four violin sonatas; nine symphonies; four operas (McTeague, A View from the Bridge, A Wedding, and Dinner at Eight), plus several musical theater operas; twelve string quartets; two film scores (Hester Street and Illuminata); incidental music for stage plays, including Arthur Miller's Broken Glass; fanfares and occasional pieces; and an extensive catalogue of chamber, choral, and vocal works. Nine world premieres in 2018 of new Bolcom works commemorated his 80th year. See: www.williambolcom.com

Currently serving as Composer-in-Residence with the storied Philadelphia Orchestra and included in The Washington Post’s list of the 35 most significant women composers in history, identity has always been at the center of composer/pianist Gabriela Lena Frank’s music. Born in Berkeley, California (September 1972), to a mother of mixed Peruvian/Chinese ancestry and a father of Lithuanian/Jewish descent, Frank explores her multicultural American heritage through her compositions. In 2017, Frank founded the award-winning Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music, a non-profit training institution held on her two rural properties in Boonville, CA for emerging composers from a vast array of demographics and aesthetics. Winner of a Latin Grammy Award and nominated for Grammys as both composer and pianist, she also holds a Guggenheim Fellowship and a USA Artist Fellowship, given each year to 50 of the country’s finest artists. Her work has been described as “crafted with unself-conscious mastery” (The Washington Post), “brilliantly effective” (The New York Times), “a knockout” (Chicago Tribune), and “glorious” (Los Angeles Times). See: www.wisemusicclassical.com/composer/2388/gabriela-lena-frank

John Corigliano’s music has been performed and recorded by many of the most prominent musicians in the world. Upcoming: his second opera, The Lord of Cries, to a libretto by Mark Adamo, commissioned by the Santa Fe Opera, and Triathlon: Concerto for Saxophonist and Orchestra, commissioned by San Francisco Symphony, both scheduled for premiere in 2021. Of his many orchestral, chamber, and film scores are those that have won him the Oscar (The Red Violin), the Pulitzer Prize (Symphony No. 2,) the Grawemeyer Award (Symphony No. 1,) and three Grammys for Best Original Composition (Symphony No. 1; String Quartet, Mr. Tambourine Man: Seven Poems of Bob Dylan.) His first opera, The Ghosts of Versailles, was commissioned and introduced in 1991 by the Metropolitan Opera; it was revived at the MET in 1994 and subsequently performed at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Ireland’s Wexford Festival, Hannover Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, and Los Angeles Opera, whose recording won a Grammy for Best Opera Recording of 2017. Corigliano serves on the composition faculty at the Juilliard School of Music after retiring from the position of Distinguished Professor of Music at Lehman College, (CUNY.) See: www.johncorigliano.com

Composer of the Grammy-winning opera The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs, Mason Bates is imaginatively transforming the way classical music is created and experienced as a composer, DJ, and curator. As the first composer-in-residence appointed by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, he presented a diverse array of artists on his series KC Jukebox using immersive production and stagecraft. Championed by legendary conductors from Riccardo Muti to Michael Tilson Thomas, his symphonic music is the first to receive widespread acceptance for its unique integration of electronic sounds, and he was named the most-performed composer of his generation in a recent survey of American music. Bates has also composed for films, including Gus Van Sant’s The Sea of Trees starring Matthew McConaughey and Naomi Watts. Upcoming premiers include Philharmonia Fantastique: The Making of the Orchestra, for animated film and live orchestra, by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the San Francisco Symphony. A collaboration with Gary Rydstrom of Lucasfilm and Jim Capobianco of Aerial Contrivance, additional commissioners of the work include the National,
Pittsburgh, and Dallas Symphonies. Also upcoming is the Philadelphia Orchestra premiere of The Rhapsody of Steve Jobs, based on his hit opera. He is currently at work on The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay for the Metropolitan Opera. Highly informed by his work as a DJ, Bates’ curatorial approach integrates adventurous music, ambient information, and social platforms in a fluid and immersive way. See: www.masonbates.com

**About American Composers Orchestra**

American Composers Orchestra (ACO) is dedicated to the creation, celebration, performance, and promotion of orchestral music by American composers. With commitment to diversity, disruption and discovery, ACO produces concerts, middle school through college composer education programs, and emerging composer development programs to foster a community of creators, audience, performers, collaborators, and funders.

ACO identifies and develops talent, performs established composers, champions those who are lesser-known, and increases regional, national, and international awareness of the infinite variety of American orchestral music, reflecting gender, ethnic, geographic, stylistic, and age diversity. To date, ACO has performed music by 800 American composers, including over 350 world premieres and newly commissioned works. ACO recordings are available on ARGO, CRI, ECM, Point, Phoenix USA, MusicMasters, Nonesuch, Tzadik, New World Records, InstantEncore.com, Amazon.com and iTunes.

EarShot – in collaboration with the League of American Orchestras, New Music USA and American Composers Forum – enables ACO and partner orchestras across the country to identify talented young composers. With guidance from ACO, partner orchestras – such as the Detroit Symphony, the Sarasota (FL) Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony, and the Philadelphia Orchestra – undertake readings, residencies, performances and composer-development programs that speak directly to their communities and leverage local resources. ACO itself holds annual readings in New York with a multi-performance commission awarded to the most promising participant through the Composing a New Orchestra Audience platform.

For nearly two decades, ACO has brought composers and musical teaching artists into New York City public schools through Sonic Spark (formerly known as Music Factory). Sonic Spark aims to leverage composition as a platform for creativity, and creativity as a platform for achievement in all areas of student’s life. Students in Brooklyn, Bronx, Manhattan and Queens, work directly with professional composers to create and perform original music. ACO also offers the intensive Compose Yourself! seminars, during which high school and college composers participate in hands-on composition classes, culminating in a performance of student compositions played by ACO’s professional musicians.

More information about American Composers Orchestra and resources about American orchestral composers is available online at www.americancomposers.org.

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