



american composers orchestra

news release

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American Composers Orchestra announces Orchestra Underground: Conversations



Paquito D'Rivera. Photo by Lane Pederson available in high-resolution at www.christinajensenpr.com.

featuring
**Two world premieres by Sebastian Currier & Roger Zare
plus *Conversations with Cachao* by Paquito D'Rivera**

Anne Manson conducts

Friday, January 29, 2010 at 7:30pm
Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall | 57th St. & 7th Avenue, NYC
Tickets: \$38 or \$48 at www.carnegiehall.org, 212-247-7800,
or the Carnegie Hall Box Office

Saturday, January 30, 2010 at 7:30pm
Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts | 3680 Walnut Street, Philadelphia
Tickets: \$25 at www.AnnenbergCenter.org, 215-898-3900,
or the Annenberg Center Box Office

**“The American Composers Orchestra has brought to the city a repertory of music of our time
which leaves all the major American orchestras far behind.” – *The New York Times***

For audio samples, videos, and more information: www.americancomposers.org

For high resolution photos: www.christinajensenpr.com (in ACO's gallery)

For press tickets & inquiries: Christina Jensen PR, 646.536.7864 or christina@christinajensenpr.com

New York, NY – **American Composers Orchestra** (ACO) presents a concert entitled **Orchestra Underground: Conversations** on Friday, January 29, 2010 at 7:30pm at Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall and on Saturday, January 30 at 7:30pm at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts in Philadelphia. The program includes two world premieres: **Sebastian Currier's** *Next Atlantis*, inspired by New Orleans and written for string orchestra and pre-recorded sound, with video by **Pawel Wojtasik**; and **Roger Zare's** *Time Lapse*, a piece for orchestra influenced by photographic techniques, commissioned by ACO as part of its Underwood Composers Readings for Emerging Composers. Latin jazz innovator **Paquito D'Rivera's** *Conversations with Cachao* is the centerpiece of the program, and receives its New York City and Philadelphia premieres in these performances. A tribute to **Israel “Cachao” López**, the Havana bass player who made Cuban Mambo a worldwide phenomenon, the piece is a double concerto featuring D'Rivera's clarinet and alto sax in dialogue with the double bass, played by **Robert Black**, recalling the style and

personality of the man who served as friend and mentor to D’Rivera and many Cuban musicians. **Anne Manson** makes her ACO concert debut conducting Orchestra Underground.

The program’s two world premieres explore dialogue between the aural and the visual:

Next Atlantis is a multimedia collaboration between composer Sebastian Currier and video-artist Pawel Wojtasik. The piece is a meditation on an imagined future when New Orleans is but a collective memory, having been fully submerged by the rising sea. Juxtaposing water imagery and scenes of New Orleans with a string orchestra, enhanced with four-channel sampled and electronically altered sounds of water, the music becomes a dialogue between strings and liquid sounds.

At 24, composer Roger Zare has already honed his own unique style and sound. In 2008, he was one of six young composers selected for ACO’s Underwood New Music Readings. His work *Green Flash* won that year’s Underwood Commission prize, and *Time Lapse* is the resulting commissioned work. This performance reunites Zare with conductor Anne Manson, who led the 2008 Underwood Readings. Manson calls Zare “an exciting and sophisticated young composer and a wonderful orchestrator.” *Time Lapse* explores manipulation of the sense of time and makes musical reference to two kinds of artistic photography: time-lapse and stop-action.

Founded in 1977, American Composers Orchestra remains the only orchestra in the world dedicated exclusively to the creation, performance, preservation, and promulgation of music by American composers. To date, ACO has performed music by more than 600 American composers, including 200 world premieres and newly commissioned works. **Orchestra Underground** is ACO’s subversive and entrepreneurial exploration of the orchestra as an elastic ensemble that can respond to composers’ unhindered creativity in experimental and innovative ways. The ensemble has embraced new technology, eclectic instruments and influences, spatial orientation, new experiments in concert format, and multimedia and multi-disciplinary collaborations. Since the opening of Zankel Hall, Carnegie Hall’s subterranean state-of-the-art auditorium, Orchestra Underground has played to sold-out audiences, with 50 world premieres and newly commissioned works.

Paquito D’Rivera: *Conversations with Cachao*

(New York City Premiere; Philadelphia Premiere)

For more information and audio: www.paquitodrivera.com

Paquito D’Rivera is one of today’s giants of Latin jazz, celebrated for his soaring improvisations and technical mastery on clarinet and saxophone, as well as his vibrant energy-infused compositions that pulsate with the spirit of his native Havana, Cuba. His recordings include more than 30 solo albums and nine GRAMMY awards, and his highly acclaimed ensembles—the Chamber Jazz Ensemble, the Paquito D’Rivera Big Band, and the Paquito D’Rivera Quintet—have performed worldwide. At the age of 17 in Havana, D’Rivera became a member of the Cuban National Symphony and went on to found the Orquesta Cubana de Musica Moderna and the influential ensemble Irakere. As a composer, D’Rivera is the recipient of a Guggenheim fellowship and has been commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra, the Rotterdam Philharmonic, the Library of Congress, Turtle Island String Quartet, and Caramoor Festival.

Built on elements of Cuban traditional music, *Conversations with Cachao* is an homage to D’Rivera’s longtime friend and mentor, the bassist and founding father of Cuban mambo, Israel “Cachao” López. The

piece reflects Cachao's extraordinary sense of humor, as well as the eclectic career of the bassist, who played everything from symphonies, operas, and ballets, to silent movies, Jazz, the circus, dance parties and nightclubs, and who helped spread Cuban music worldwide. A three-movement double concerto for the contrabass and clarinet/alto sax soloists, the piece is filled with references to traditional Cuban music, and includes a bass "lick" (G-C-Bb-C) that was Cachao's signature, as well as improvised cadenzas. Robert Black will be the bass soloist in "conversation" with Mr. D'Rivera.

Robert Black, double bass

Robert Black's performance spectrum is as wide as Cachao's, ranging from traditional orchestral and chamber music to solo recitals, collaborations with actors, music with computers, movement-based improvisations with dancers, and live action-painting performances with artists. He has commissioned, collaborated, or performed with musicians from John Cage to D.J. Spooky, Elliott Carter to Meredith Monk, Cecil Taylor to Paquito D'Rivera, as well as many young emerging composers. His recital activities frequently take him to five continents, and he has appeared at major festivals, on radio and television broadcasts, and as an artist-in-residence. Currently, he performs with the Bang on a Can All Stars, among others.

Sebastian Currier: *Next Atlantis* for string orchestra, video & pre-recorded sound (World Premiere, ACO Commission)

For more information and audio: www.sebastiancurrier.com

Sebastian Currier's music has been performed at major venues worldwide. His last outing with ACO was *Microsymph*, commissioned by ACO and premiered at Carnegie Hall in 1997. Since then he has gone on to win the 2007 Grawemeyer Award; he has also won the Berlin Prize, Rome Prize, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, and an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Next Atlantis is inspired by New Orleans after hurricane Katrina—a new Atlantis, not of the mythic past, but one of the too possible future. Originally conceived as a work for string quartet, the piece has been expanded into a multimedia collaboration for strings, four-channel sound and video, with video-artist Pawel Wojtasik. *Next Atlantis* weaves together sounds of water and elegiac strains, with murmurings of Dixieland. Currier says, "I've always loved the sound of water and have had in mind for some time to write a piece that weaved water sounds into a musical fabric. And here the sound of water is especially poignant, because for New Orleans water is both the life-blood of the city and its potential destroyer."

Pawel Wojtasik, videographer

Born in Lodz, Poland, educated at Yale, and now living in Brooklyn, Pawel Wojtasik creates documentary-style video that explores society's obsessions with rapid consumption, industrial overproduction, and its environmental impact. His videos are meant to take us behind the scenes of our throw-away society, providing visceral experiences that can be both beautiful and horrific. *Firehole* (2005) was set in an automobile junkyard, while *Dark Sun Squeeze* (2003-04) was shot at a sewage treatment plant. Wojtasik has had exhibitions and screenings at Smack Mellon, MASS MoCA, Anthology Film Archives, the New York Armory Show, Art Basel/Miami, PS1, among many others. He is represented by Martos Gallery in New York and Jail Gallery in Los Angeles.

Roger Zare: *Time Lapse* (World Premiere, ACO/Underwood Commission)

For more information and audio: <http://rogerzare.com>

In 2008, Roger Zare was one six young composers selected for ACO's Underwood New Music Readings. His work *Green Flash* garnered that year's Underwood Commission prize, with composer-mentor Christopher Rouse saying, "Roger Zare writes for orchestra like a real natural. It's a medium that seems to be in his blood."

Time Lapse is an essay for orchestra focusing on coloristic possibilities and dramatic gestures when the techniques of time-lapse (the speeding up of slowly moving objects) and stop-action (in which the motion of a high-speed object is slowed down to become perceptible to our senses) photography are applied to musical motives. Exploring these two modes of temporal perception, Zare gives the listener a sense of timeless expanse.

Roger Zare received a BMI Student Composer Award in 2007 and 2009, and the ASCAP Rudolf Nissim Prize in 2009. Originally from Sarasota, FL, Zare started composing at age fourteen. His music has been performed by the Minnesota Orchestra, the Sarasota Orchestra, ensembles at the Sarasota Music Festival, the Santa Monica Symphony Wind Quintet, and the USC Thornton Symphony and Wind Ensemble. He holds a B.M. in composition from the University of Southern California and an M.M. in composition at the Peabody Conservatory, where he studied with Christopher Theofanidis. Currently, he is a doctoral candidate at the University of Michigan.

Anne Manson, conductor

Anne Manson previously conducted ACO during the 2008 Underwood New Music Readings and makes her Orchestra Underground debut in this concert. Her reputation for excellence in the central German repertory, combined with a passionate advocacy of music of the present, has led to invitations to leading orchestras worldwide. She has conducted Paris' Ensemble Intercontemporain, the London Philharmonic, Royal National Scottish Orchestra, BBC Scottish Orchestra, Swedish Chamber Orchestra, Leipzig Radio Orchestra, and the Residentie Orchestra of The Hague. In the US she has led the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Houston Symphony, and St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, among others.

Manson recently led the Portland Opera Company in Philip Glass's *Orpheé* of which *Opera* magazine praised her "always spot on" conducting. A recording of *Orpheé* will be released on Orange Mountain Music in February 2010. She led Barber's *Vanessa* for New York City Opera, about which *The New York Times* wrote, "Ms. Manson...has broken into the New York opera scene, and it's about time." She also conducted the world premiere of Scott Wheeler's *Democracy* (commissioned by Placido Domingo) for Washington National Opera and *Orpheé* by Philip Glass for Glimmerglass. She is music director of the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra and has led tours with world famous soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian and famed percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie. In April, she will lead the Juilliard Opera Center in Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. Recent recordings include two releases for BIS with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra and the Singapore Symphony Orchestra. Manson was the first woman to conduct at the Salzburg Festival, leading the Vienna Philharmonic and a cast that included Samuel Ramey and Philip Langridge in a production of *Boris Godunov*. She is the third woman to have been appointed music director of a leading American symphony orchestra, having served in that role with the Kansas City Symphony from 1999 to 2003. She came to

prominence in 1988 as music director of London's Mecklenburgh Opera, programming operas ranging from Mozart to 20th-century rarities, while commissioning world premieres from a host of composers.

Tickets & Info

Tickets for the January 29 performance in Zankel Hall are \$38 and \$48 and can be purchased via CarnegieCharge at 212-247-7800, www.carnegiehall.org, or at the Carnegie Hall Box Office.

Tickets for the January 30 performance at the Annenberg Center for the Performing arts are \$25 and can be purchased via telephone at 215-898-3900, www.AnnenbergCenter.org, or at the Annenberg Center Box Office.

About ACO

Now in its 33rd year, American Composers Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world dedicated to the creation, performance, preservation, and promulgation of music by American composers. ACO makes the creation of new opportunities for American composers and new American orchestral music its central purpose. Through its concerts at Carnegie Hall and other venues, recordings, radio broadcasts, educational programs, New Music Readings, and commissions, ACO identifies today's brightest emerging composers, champions prominent established composers as well as those lesser-known, and increases regional, national, and international awareness of the infinite variety of American orchestral music, reflecting geographic, stylistic, and temporal diversity. ACO also serves as an incubator of ideas, research, and talent, as a catalyst for growth and change among orchestras, and as an advocate for American composers and their music.

To date, ACO has performed music by 600 American composers, including 200 world premieres and newly commissioned works. Among the orchestra's innovative programs have been Sonidos de las Américas, six annual festivals devoted to Latin American composers and their music; Coming to America, a program immersing audiences in the ongoing evolution of American music through the work of immigrant composers; Orchestra Tech, a festival and long-term initiative to integrate new digital technologies in the symphony orchestra; Improvise!, a festival devoted to the exploration of improvisation and the orchestra; Playing it UNsafe, a new laboratory for the research and development of experimental new works for orchestra; and, of course, Orchestra Underground, ACO's entrepreneurial cutting-edge orchestral ensemble that embraces new technology, eclectic instruments, influences, and spatial orientation of the orchestra, new experiments in the concert format, and multimedia and multi-disciplinary collaborations.

Among the honors ACO has received are special awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and from BMI recognizing the orchestra's outstanding contribution to American music. ASCAP has awarded its annual prize for adventurous programming to ACO 31 times, singling out ACO as "the orchestra that has done the most for new American music in the United States," and most recently awarding ACO the 2008 ASCAP Morton Gould Award for Innovative Programming. ACO received the inaugural METLife Award for Excellence in Audience Engagement, and a proclamation from the New York City Council. ACO recordings are available on ARGO, CRI, ECM, Point, Phoenix USA, MusicMasters, Nonesuch, Tzadik, New World Records, and InstantEncore.com. More information about American Composers Orchestra is available online at www.americancomposers.org.

American Composers Orchestra: Orchestra Underground, January 29 and 30, 2010

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ACO programs are also made possible with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts and New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and by New York City Council Member Gale A. Brewer.

ACO's residency at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is made possible with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Roger Zare's commission was made possible by Paul Underwood.

American Composers Orchestra: Upcoming Events

Friday, January 29, 2010 at 7:30pm. Presented by Carnegie Hall, Zankel Hall

Saturday, January 30, 2010 at 7:30pm. Presented by Annenberg Center, Philadelphia

Orchestra Underground: Conversations

Anne Manson, conductor

Paquito D'Rivera, clarinet and saxophone

Robert Black, double bass

Pawel Wojtasik, video

ROGER ZARE: *Time Lapse* (World Premiere, ACO/Underwood Commission)

SEBASTIAN CURRIER: *Next Atlantis* for string orchestra, video, and pre-recorded sound (World Premiere, ACO Commission)

PAQUITO D'RIVERA: *Conversations with Cachao* (New York City/Philadelphia Premiere)

Monday, February 22, 2010, at 6:30pm. Queens Public Library, Flushing Branch. FREE ADMISSION.

Donal Fox: Composers OutFront!

DONAL FOX, composer/pianist in a solo evening of "Transformations, Variations, Improvisations" on music by Chopin, Ellington, Bach, Gershwin, Monk, Schumann, Scarlatti, and Fox

Sunday, March 21, 2010 at 4:00pm. Dweck Center, Brooklyn Public Library for Performing Arts. FREE ADMISSION.

Missy Mazzoli: Composers OutFront!

Original music by MISSY MAZZOLI and her ensemble, VICTOIRE

Friday, April 9, 2010 at 7:30pm. Presented by Carnegie Hall, Zankel Hall

Orchestra Underground: Louis & the Young Americans

Jeffrey Milarsky, Conductor

John Korsrud, trumpet

LOUIS ANDRIESEN: *Symphony for Open Strings* (New York City Premiere)

MISSY MAZZOLI: *These Worlds in Us* (World Premiere, new orchestration)

MICHAEL FIDAY: *HST: In Memoriam Hunter S. Thompson* (World Premiere, ACO Commission)

JOHN KORSRUD: *New Work* (World Premiere, ACO Commission)

May 21 & 22, 2010 Miller Theatre, Columbia University, New York

May 21 – 10:00am / May 22 – 8:00pm. FREE ADMISSION.

Underwood New Music Readings

ACO's annual roundup of the country's brightest young and emerging composers selected through a national search

This press release is available online at: www.americancomposers.org/press.

american composers orchestra

Robert Beaser, *Artistic Director* | Dennis Russell Davies, *Conductor Laureate*

Steven Sloane, *Principal Guest Conductor* | Derek Bermel, *Creative Advisor*

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