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**Composers Niloufar Iravani, Leanna Primiani, and Hilary Purrington
to Receive \$15,000 Women Composers Commissions from the
League of American Orchestras**

**Now in its Sixth Year, Program Has Provided Forty Women
with Career Development via
American Composers Orchestra and EarShot Readings;
Sixteen Have Received Commissions Since Inception**

New York, NY (July 9, 2020) – Composers Niloufar Iravani, Leanna Primiani, and Hilary Purrington will each receive orchestral commissions of \$15,000 as part of the **Women Composers Readings and Commissions program**, an initiative of the League of American Orchestras, in partnership with American Composers Orchestra (ACO) and supported by the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation.

[Hilary Purrington](#)'s *Words for Departure* will be premiered by The Philadelphia Orchestra, conductor Stéphane Denève, the Westminster Symphonic Choir, and director Joe Miller on February 12, 13, and 14, 2021.

[Niloufar Iravani](#)'s work will be premiered by the South Dakota Symphony

Orchestra and music director Delta David Gier, and [Leanna Primiani](#)'s, by ROCO (dates to be announced).

"This program is providing an extraordinary career boost and professional opportunity for so many women composers while introducing the orchestra community to this rich reservoir of talent," said Jesse Rosen, the League's President and CEO. "We are grateful for the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation's support for this vital program."

"The body of exciting and excellent new work generated by this program is genuine cause for celebration during these difficult times," said ACO President and CEO Ed Yim. "As a partner of the League, ACO is proud to support and share these important women creators' work with the field."

The Women Composers Readings and Commissions program is embedded in EarShot, an initiative of American Composers Orchestra in collaboration with American Composers Forum, the League of American Orchestras, and New Music USA. EarShot is the nation's first ongoing program for identifying and promoting the most promising orchestral composers on the national stage. ACO's artistic and administrative staff collaborates with participating orchestras, assisting with planning, program design, and execution. EarShot residencies include mentorship from the most accomplished orchestral composers in the country, orchestra readings, and musician and conductor feedback sessions. The program is customized to each host orchestra's aesthetic, demographic, community, and educational interests.

The current recipients were selected from all female/female identifying/non binary composers who have participated in EarShot residencies, including participants during the 2018-2019 season from Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Grand Rapids Symphony, Sarasota Orchestra and ACO's Underwood New Music Readings.

The program has been renewed for an additional cycle; female/female identifying/non binary composers participating in 2019-20 EarShot residencies will be added to the pool of candidates for a new round of commissions next year. The 2019-20 residencies include Aguascalientes Symphony Orchestra (Mexico) (August 12-14, 2019) Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (January 28-29, 2020), and American Composers Orchestra's Underwood New Music Readings (March 13, 2020). Houston

Symphony readings, previously scheduled for May 5-7, 2020, have been postponed due to the pandemic.

Since its inception in 2014, the Women Composers Readings and Commissions program has shown impressive results: forty women composers benefitted from career development via the EarShot Readings and sixteen composers have now received commissions, with eight (premieres by Julia Adolphe, Courtney Bryan, Melody Eötvös, Robin Holcomb, Chen-Hui Jen, Hannah Lash, Andreia Pinto Correia, and Andrea Reinkemeyer) completed.

2014 commission recipient **Julia Adolphe's** *Unearth, Release* (Concerto for Viola and Orchestra) received its New York premiere November 17-19, 2016 by the New York Philharmonic, conductor Jaap van Zweden, and Principal Viola Cynthia Phelps as soloist. **Melody Eötvös's** *Red Dirt | Silver Rain* was premiered at Carnegie Hall in 2015 by American Composers Orchestra as part of the orchestra's SONiC: Sounds of a New Century, a festival devoted to new music written in the 21st century by composers age 40 and under.

The recipients of the 2015 Women Composers Readings and Commissions were composers **Andreia Pinto Correia** and **Xi Wang**. Andreia Pinto Correia's *Ciprés* was premiered on April 6 and 7, 2018 by the Columbus Symphony. Xi Wang is working on a piece for the Berkeley Symphony (California) and music director Joseph Young, to be premiered in a future season.

2016 program recipients were **Chen-Hui Jen**, whose work *in eternal dusk* was premiered by the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra on January 27, 2018; **Hannah Lash** whose Double Concerto for piano, harp, and orchestra was premiered by the Naples Philharmonic and conductor Arvo Volmer on November 14 and 16; and **Wang Jie** (details tbd).

2017 commission recipients were **Andrea Reinkemeyer**, whose *Water Sings Fire* was premiered by the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and music director Carlos Miguel Prieto on January 10, 11, and 12, 2019; **Stacy Garrop**, whose *Goddess Triptych* will be premiered by the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and Music Director Stéphane Denève on September 25, 26, and 27, 2020; and **Robin Holcomb**, whose

No Thing Lives to Itself was premiered by the Portland Symphony Orchestra (Maine) and music director Eckart Preu on January 19 and 21, 2020.

2018 commission recipients were **Courtney Bryan**, whose work *Rejoice* was premiered by the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and music director Carlos Miguel Prieto on November 21, 22, and 23, 2019; **Cindy Cox**, whose premiere by the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and conductor Pekka Kuusisto was postponed due to the pandemic; and **Fang Man**, whose work will be premiered by the San Francisco Symphony and music director designate Esa-Pekka Salonen on March 11, 12, and 13, 2021.

2019 commission recipients are **Niloufar Iravani**, whose work will be premiered by the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra and music director Delta David Gier (date tbd); **Leanna Primiani**, whose work will be premiered by ROCO (dates tbd); and **Hilary Purrington**, whose work *Words for Departure* will be premiered by The Philadelphia Orchestra, conductor Stéphane Denève, the Westminster Symphonic Choir, and director Joe Miller on February 12, 13, and 14, 2021.

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, an annual New Music Reading session through EarShot, 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's Sonic Spark education programs leverage composition as a platform for creativity, and creativity as a platform for achievement, in public schools throughout New York City. Its Composer Yourself! intensive for high school and college students provides hands-on composition instruction. ACO recordings are

available on labels including ECM, Nonesuch, Tzadik, and New World Records. www.americancomposers.org.

EarShot, a network of New Music Readings and composer-development programs, is the nation's first ongoing, systematic program for identifying emerging orchestral composers, which provides professional-level working experience with orchestras from every region of the country and increases awareness of these composers and access to their music throughout the industry. American Composers Orchestra plays one New Music Reading each year, in addition to collaborating with participating orchestras nationwide by assisting with planning, program design, and execution. EarShot residencies include mentorship from the most accomplished orchestral composers in the country, orchestra readings, and musician and conductor feedback sessions. EarShot is a partnership of **American Composers Orchestra, American Composers Forum, New Music USA**, and the **League of American Orchestras**. To date, more than sixty composers have been selected for New Music Readings with ACO and with orchestras across the country.

The **League of American Orchestras** leads, supports, and champions America's orchestras and the vitality of the music they perform. Its diverse membership of more than 1,700 organizations and individuals across North America runs the gamut from world-renowned orchestras to community groups, from summer festivals to student and youth ensembles, from conservatories to libraries, from businesses serving orchestras to individuals who love symphonic music. The only national organization dedicated solely to the orchestral experience, the League is a nexus of knowledge and innovation, advocacy, and leadership advancement. Its conferences and events, award-winning *Symphony* magazine, website, and other publications inform people around the world about orchestral activity and developments. Founded in 1942 and chartered by Congress in 1962, the League links a national network of thousands of instrumentalists, conductors, managers and administrators, board members, volunteers, and business partners. Visit americanorchestras.org.