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League of American Orchestras, in Partnership with American Composers Orchestra, Establishes Second 30-Orchestra Consortium, Continuing to Provide Opportunities for Women Composers Nationwide

Widely Acclaimed Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation Orchestral Commissions Program has Raised the Number of New Works and Repeat Performances by Women Composers Programmed Across the Country

New York, NY (December 13, 2023) – Underscoring the significant successes of the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation Orchestral Commissions Program’s ongoing 30-orchestra consortium, the League of American Orchestras and American Composers Orchestra (ACO) have announced the formation of a second consortium taking place from 2024-26.

As in the original consortium, six women composers will receive commissions—Brittany J. Green, Moni (Jasmine) Guo, Karena Ingram, Chelsea Komschlies, Marina López, and Meilina Tsui for this round—and a consortium of 30 U.S. orchestras (five orchestras paired with each composer) will perform the works beginning in the 2024-25 season.

“The Trustees of the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation are proud to continue its program for women and non-binary composers with the League of American Orchestras and American Composers Orchestra,” said Trustee Alexander C. Sanger. “The gender gap in works performed by symphony orchestras here and abroad remains too wide but is not insurmountable, thanks to this program. Mrs. Toulmin believed in equal opportunity and fairness for women, and this program embodies those values. We wish the composers a brighter future.”

“Recent data has documented a marked increase in orchestral performances of works by women on American stages,” said League of American Orchestras President and CEO Simon Woods, “and there’s no doubt that the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation’s vision and support have played a key role in this. Now a second consortium of 30 orchestras will spread the creative voices of women even further, resulting in more performances, deeper community engagement, and meaningful mentoring—all in support of greater equity within the orchestra field.”

“We are thrilled to partner with the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation and with the League of American Orchestras to advance the work of these six incredible artists,” says ACO’s President and CEO, Melissa Ngan. “While each of the composers and orchestras have participated in our EarShot Readings previously, this year is particularly special because half of the lead partners are continuing a relationship with an artist they met through the program over the last two seasons. These sustained creative relationships are key, and we look forward to making many more connections through this unprecedented consortium.”

Six lead orchestras will premiere the commissioned works in the 2024-25 and 2025-26 seasons:

- [Brittany J. Green](#) and Jacksonville Symphony
- [Moni \(Jasmine\) Guo](#) and Dallas Symphony Orchestra
- [Karena Ingram](#) and Memphis Symphony Orchestra
- [Chelsea Komschlies](#) and Tucson Symphony Orchestra
- [Marina López](#) and Grand Rapids Symphony
- [Meilina Tsui](#) and Artis Naples—Naples Philharmonic

Twenty-four additional orchestras will be selected over the coming months for repeat performances in 2024 through 2026. Orchestras interested in participating in the consortium should [fill out a response form](#) by Thursday, February 1, 2024.

Networking, mentoring, career development, and community engagement opportunities are built into the program, and the composer cohort meets annually at the League's [National Conference](#), taking place next year in Houston, June 6-8, 2024. Orchestras participating in the consortium demonstrate a commitment to engaging the composers in rehearsals, networking opportunities, and education or community engagement activities, and orchestras receive funds for marketing efforts, and to support composer attendance at performances and local educational and community events.

The Virginia B. Toulmin Orchestral Commissions Program is linked to EarShot, an initiative of American Composers Orchestra in collaboration with American Composers Forum, the League of American Orchestras, and New Music USA. The six commission recipients were selected from women and non-binary composers who have participated in EarShot reading sessions.

Read more about the composers on [the League's website](#).

Since its inception in 2014, the **Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation Orchestral Commissions Program** has commissioned works from twenty-eight women and non-binary composers, many who have since received additional commissions from America's orchestras. The program began with the awarding of two annual commissions, quickly increased to three, and then, in 2022, the first of the two national consortiums was formed. The **Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation Orchestral Commissions Program** is an initiative of the League of American Orchestras, in partnership with American Composers Orchestra (ACO) and supported by the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation.

The **League of American Orchestras** champions the vitality of music and the orchestral experience, supports the orchestra community, and leads change boldly. The only national organization dedicated to orchestras and their communities, the

League supports the field through advocacy, research, convenings, leadership development, artistic programs, and grants. Founded in 1942 and chartered by Congress in 1962, the League includes nearly 25,000 musicians, conductors, orchestra staff, board members, volunteers, and business partners working within our membership of 1600 world-renowned orchestras, community groups, summer festivals, student and youth ensembles, conservatories and libraries, businesses serving orchestras, and individuals who love symphonic music. Visit americanorchestras.org.

In 1977, a collective of fearless New York City musicians came together to form the **American Composers Orchestra (ACO)**, an ensemble dedicated to the creation, celebration, performance, and promotion of orchestral music by American composers. Over more than 40 years committed to artistry, creativity, community, and equity, ACO has blossomed into a national institution that not only cultivates and develops the careers of living composers, but also provides composers a direct pipeline to partnerships with many of America's major symphony orchestras. In addition to its annual concert series at Carnegie Hall, ACO produces national educational programs for all ages, and composer advancement programs to foster a community of creators, audience, performers, collaborators, and funders – all dedicated to American composition. Visit americancomposers.org for more information.

Now encompassing all of ACO's composer advancement initiatives, **EarShot** is the first ongoing, systematic program for developing relationships between composers and orchestras on the national level. Through orchestral readings, CoLABoratory fellowships, consortium commissions, publishing, and professional development, EarShot ensures a vibrant musical future by investing in creativity today. Serving over 350 composers since inception, ACO Readings in NYC began in 1991, and since 2008, national Readings have been offered in partnership with orchestras across the country in collaboration with the League of American Orchestras, New Music USA, and American Composers Forum. EarShot Readings composers have gone on to win every major composition award, including the Pulitzer, Grammy, Grawemeyer, American Academy of Arts and Letters, and Rome Prizes.