Composers Now Celebrates Festival Opening & Launches First Commission Initiative

The January 31 event kicks off the month-long festival with a diverse program and the annual Composers Now Visionary Award – presented, this year, to composer Carman Moore

Composers Now empowers living composers, celebrates the diversity of their voices, and honors the significance of their contributions to our society. On Friday, January 31 @ 7:00, the 11th annual Composers Now Festival opens at The National Opera Center’s Marc A. Scorca Hall in Manhattan.

Hosted by Founding Artistic Director Tania León (whose Stride will be premiered by the New York Philharmonic as part of its Project 19 on February 13 & 18), the evening celebrates the first-ever recipient of the organization’s First Commission initiative – Ilaria Loisa Hawley. This new program awards young composers with support aimed to encourage artistic potential and creative development. Eleven-year-old Ilaria, whose music has been performed by the New York Philharmonic, will hear her Quando L’acqua riflette (When the Water Reflects) premiered by Face the Music Ensemble under director Vasudevan Panicker.

The program also features cellist Amanda Gookin performing Niloufar Nourbakhsh’s
Veiled, composer/flutist Robert Dick performing his Book of Shadows, and composer/violinist Darian Thomas performing his Fluid. Composer Lisa Bielawa will speak briefly about her process for large-scale work and screen a video of a recent project. Additionally, clarinetist/composer Noah Becker and his trio Retumbra will perform his Jamaica, Despues (Hibiscus, After).

The fifth annual Composers Now Visionary Award will be presented to composer Carman Moore. Given annually at the opening event of the festival, the award recognizes members of the arts community who, through their own creative practice and advocacy for others, have made a profound, positive and lasting impact in our culture.

The annual festival is the centerpiece of the ongoing advocacy work initiated by Composers Now placing the spotlight on living composers and their importance in communities. Through residency programs both at The Pocantico Center in the Hudson Valley and at the Civitella Ranieri Foundation in Italy, the Dialogues Music + Discourse series in NYC, the Composers-Interviewing-Composers events during the festival, and the new Commission Young Composers Initiative, Composers Now supports composers by creating opportunity and interaction with audiences.

2020 COMPOSERS NOW FESTIVAL OPENING EVENT
Friday, January 31, 2020, 7:00PM
The National Opera Center
Marc A. Scorca Hall
330 Seventh Avenue, NYC
Tickets: $25 general admission: subsidize someone in need / $20 general admission: regular price / $15 general admission: student/artist/in need, advance purchase suggested
INFO / BUY TICKETS

VISIT WWW.COMPOSERSNOW.ORG FOR AN UP-TO-DATE SCHEDULE OF THE 2020 FESTIVAL
COMPOSERS NOW OPENING EVENT
January 31, 7PM
Program

Ilaria Loisa Hawley (b. 2009)
*Quando L’acqua riflette (When the Water Reflects)*
Performed by Face the Music, a program of the Kaufman Music Center
Vasudevan Panicker, Conductor
Isabella Carucci, flute
Yusei Hata, melodica
Oriana Hawley, viola
John Wallar, triangle

**Niloufar Nourbakhsh**
*Veiled*
Amanda Gookin, solo cello and electronics
A Forward Music Project commission

**Robert Dick**
*Book of Shadows*
for bass flute

**Lisa Bielawa**
*Video: The Spiritual Biography of a Witch’s Accuser, Episode 5: The Cow Song*

**Darian Thomas**
*Fluid* for violin and electronics

**Noah Becker**
*Jamaica, Después (Hibiscus, After)*
Performed by Retumbra
Noah Becker, clarinet
Jonah Udall, resonator guitar
Steve Williams, upright bass
**2020 COMMISSION YOUNG COMPOSERS WINNER**

**ILARIA LOISA HAWLEY**  
Born in 2009, Ilaria Loisa Hawley is the recipient of a 2019 ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award and the inaugural recipient of Claire Chase’s Pnea Foundation Young Flutist Award. Ilaria’s music has been performed by the New York Philharmonic and Face the Music, and she is a composition student of Mathew Fuerst and a flute student of Zara Lawler. She attends PS 314 Muscota New School and enjoys drawing, drama, reading, rock climbing, and making earrings.

**2020 VISIONARY AWARD WINNER**

**CARMAN MOORE**  
Carman Moore's credits include commissions and performances by the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra. In the 60s and 70s he became the first new-music critic for the *Village Voice*. His multimedia *Mass for the 21st Century* was commissioned by Lincoln Center and premiered outdoors in 1994 before an audience of thousands. He and the Skymusic Ensemble, which he founded and conducts, were long-time Artists in Residence at St. John the Divine Cathedral. His *Concerto for Ornette* was premiered in 2013 at Juilliard by The New Juilliard Ensemble. In 2013 he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship. His *Madiba* honoring the late Nelson Mandela, was commissioned and premiered by the American Composers Orchestra in 2015. Moore has recently co-created and performed, with Danish singer Lotte Arnsbjerg, a multi-media song cycle on the scourge of child sexual abuse, *Girl of Diamond Mountain*. 
COMPOSERS NOW

During the month of February, the festival brings together approximately 100 performances of music by living composers presented by venues, ensembles, composers, orchestras, opera companies, dance companies, and others, throughout New York City. From jazz to indie-rock, from classical to electronic and beyond - and with composers in attendance at all events - Composers Now aims to provide an all-encompassing platform for composers and audiences.

In 2017, the opening event coincided with a proclamation from the Mayor's office calling the day “Composers Now Festival Day.” The organization boasts an expanding list of Presenter Partners, including The Morgan Library, Harlem Stage, Concert Artists Guild, and Face the Music.

Composers Now is a project partner of The Fund for the City of New York. Composers Now gratefully acknowledges the support of the ASCAP Foundation, the Cheswatyr Foundation, the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, the Dubose and Dorothy Heyward Memorial Fund, the Newburgh Institute for the Arts and Ideas, and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

“Thank the heavens that Composers Now exists. Tania León has taken her torch out into the forest and has gathered the tribe. And we are a mighty tribe with a wealth of stories to share.”

- Jason Moran (composer/pianist, and MacArthur Grant recipient)

OPEN CALL TO ARTISTS + VENUES

All artists and presenters are invited to enroll in the festival by adding their performance via this intake form. Those who register by January 15 are eligible for the subsidized “Composers-Interviewing-Composers” event add-on.
COMPOSERS-INTERVIEWING-COMPOSERS

Composers-Interviewing-Composers is a series of live conversations within the festival. These Composers Now-sponsored events will feature live discourse between featured composers at select performances during the festival. These conversations, hosted by the venue, will take place in proximity to the featured festival performance.

TANIA LEÓN / FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Tania León, (b. Havana, Cuba) is highly regarded as a composer and conductor and recognized for her accomplishments as an educator and adviser to arts organizations. She has been profiled on ABC, CBS, CNN, PBS, Univision, Telemundo, and independent films. León's opera Scourge of Hyacinths, based on a play by Wole Soyinka with staging and design by Robert Wilson, received over 20 performances throughout Europe and Mexico. Commissioned by Hans Werner Henze and the city of Munich for the Fourth Munich Biennale, it took home the coveted BMW Prize. The aria “Oh Yemanja” (“Mother's Prayer”) was recorded by Dawn Upshaw on her Nonesuch release, The World So Wide.

Commissions include works for Ursula Oppens and the Cassatt Quartet, Nestor Torres, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, New World Symphony, Koussevitzky Foundation, Fest der Kontinente (Hamburg, Germany), Cincinnati Symphony, National Endowment for the Arts, NDR Sinfonie Orchester, American Composers Orchestra, The Library of Congress, Ensemble Modern, The Los Angeles Master Chorale, The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, The Los Angeles Philharmonic, and International Contemporary Ensemble among others. Recent commissions include: the score for the opera, The Little Rock Nine, with a libretto by Thulani Davis, and historical research by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., commissioned by the University of Central Arkansas's College of Fine Arts and Communication.
León has also received Honorary Doctorate Degrees from Colgate University, Oberlin, and SUNY Purchase College, and has served as U.S. Artistic Ambassador of American Culture in Madrid, Spain. A Professor at Brooklyn College since 1985 and at the Graduate Center of CUNY, she was named Distinguished Professor of the City University of New York in 2006. In 2010 she was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters and in 2017 she received the Mad Women Festival Award in Music, in Madrid, Spain.

Her honors include the New York Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award, Symphony Space’s Access to the Arts, the American Academy of Arts and Letters Award, and the Fromm, Koussevitzky, and Guggenheim Fellowships. In 2012 she received both a Grammy nomination (for “Best Contemporary Classical Composition”) and a Latin Grammy nomination (for “Best Classical Contemporary Composition”) and in 2013 she was the recipient of the prestigious 2013 ASCAP Victor Herbert Award. Most recently she was awarded a 2018 United States Artists Fellowship and inducted as a 2018 member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.