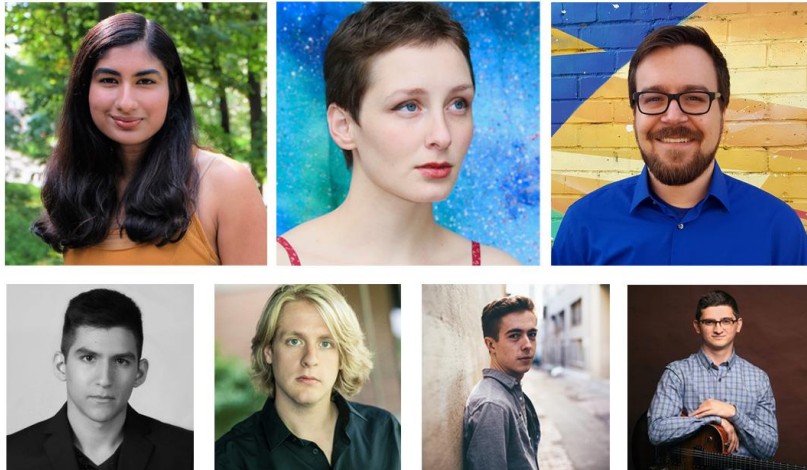


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## Tanner Porter, Nina Shekhar, and Gregory Weiss Awarded Grand Prize Commissions from New York Youth Symphony First Music Program

Through its **First Music** program, the **New York Youth Symphony (NYYS)** has selected seven of America's emerging orchestra, chamber music, and jazz composers under age 30 to write commissions for the 57<sup>th</sup> Season. **Marco-Adrián Ramos**, **Tanner Porter**, and **Patrick O'Malley** received orchestral commissions to be premiered by the NYYS Orchestra at Carnegie Hall under music director Michael Repper. **Nina Shekhar** received the chamber music commission and will write a new wind quintet to be premiered by NYYS students in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. **Matt Horanzy**, **Devin Reilly**, and **Gregory Weiss'** pieces will be premiered by the NYYS Jazz under artistic director Andy Clausen at Dizzy's Club *Coca-Cola*, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and The Appel Room, Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall. Expanding its partnership with the **Interlochen Center for the Arts**, two of the grand prize winners, Ms. Porter and Ms. Shekhar's pieces will be premiered at the Interlochen Arts Camp in of 2020. Greg Weiss, who received an honorable mention for his 2018-19 application, was awarded the jazz grand prize for the 2019-20 season. His piece will be premiered at The Appel Room, Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall.

This season's orchestra & chamber music jury was chaired by Pulitzer Prize winner Christopher Theofanidis, and included David T. Little, Eve Beglarian, Sarah Kirkland Snider, Eric Stomberg, and Michael Repper. The jazz jury was chaired by Arturo O'Farrill, a pianist, composer, and founder of Afro-Latin Jazz Organization, and included Roxy Coss, Darcy James Argue, Pedro Giraud, and Andy Clausen.

Shauna Quill, NYYS Executive Director says "We are excited to announce the next season of commissioned composers, all of whom are extremely talented. We are also excited to be able to expand our partnership with the Interlochen Center for the Arts who will now include second performances of our both grand prize winners in orchestra and chamber music! Each season we aim to broaden the reach of our program

and work to build a more diverse community of composers and I have no doubt this group brings us closer to those goals.”

Christopher Theofanidis, chair of the First Music program, speaks from his own experience as a previous winner. “The NYYS First Music competition is incredibly important in our field and has an unparalleled roster of prior winning composers among its ranks. The Carnegie performances have often launched the careers of young composers, and it has been an honor to serve as the advisory board chair for the past several seasons. I can’t wait to hear what our current group composes this year!”

Rory Baker, Executive Director of Interlochen Presents says, “Interlochen is honored to be able to continue our partnership with the New York Youth Symphony. In addition to offering commission prizes for and mid-West premieres of these fine new works by such extraordinary young composers, we are able to provide opportunity for our student musicians who work side by side with the composer during rehearsals and perform important new works.”

Arturo O’Farrill, newly-appointed chair of the First Music jazz advisory board says “The NYYS First Music program is an exceptional opportunity for young jazz composers and I am excited to hear the works these three outstanding composers produce.”

Called "invaluable" by *The New York Times*, the NYYS **First Music** commission program has been widely acknowledged as one of the leading forces in the United States for bringing the work of gifted young composers to the public’s attention for the past 36 years. The NYYS is proud to have commissioned over 160 original works for orchestra, chamber music, and jazz through First Music since 1984, all of which have been premiered by NYYS ensembles at venues including Carnegie Hall and Jazz at Lincoln Center. First Music commissions have been awarded to Aaron J. Kernis, David Lang, Kevin Puts, Julia Wolfe, Michael Torke, and Timo Andres, among others. We are proud that First Music composers have been recognized with 12 Rome Prizes, 16 Guggenheim Fellowships, two Grawemeyer Awards, and four Pulitzer Prizes.

The **First Music** commissions for the 2019-2020 Season:

#### ORCHESTRA

**Marco-Adrián Ramos:** Sunday, November 17, 2019, 2 PM  
Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage, Carnegie Hall

**Tanner Porter (Grand Prize Winner):** Sunday, March 1, 2020, 2 PM  
Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage, Carnegie Hall  
Mid-West premiere TBD at Interlochen Center for the Arts

**Patrick O’Malley:** Sunday, May 24, 2020, 2 PM  
Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage, Carnegie Hall

#### CHAMBER MUSIC

**Nina Shekhar:** Tuesday, May 5, 2020, 7:30 PM  
Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall  
Mid-West premiere TBD at Interlochen Center for the Arts

Orchestra/Chamber Honorable mentions: **Jonathan Cziner, Miles Walter, Robert Ge.**

#### JAZZ

**Matt Horanzy:** Tuesday, December 3, 2019, 7:30/9:30 PM

Dizzy's Club *Coca-Cola* at Jazz at Lincoln Center

**Devin Reilly:** Monday, March 9, 2020, 7:30/9:30 PM

Dizzy's Club *Coca-Cola* at Jazz at Lincoln Center

**Gregory Weiss (Grand Prize Winner):** Monday, May 4, 2020, 7:30 PM

The Appel Room, Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall

Honorable mentions: **Sam Blakeslee** and **Estar Cohen**.

**First Music** applications are accepted annually between September and December. Additional information about **First Music** can be found at <http://www.nyys.org/programs/first-music>

The remaining **First Music** commissions to be premiered in the 2018-19 Season include:

*brunetto* by **Baldwin Giang**

Wednesday, May 1, 2019, 7:30 PM at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall

For tickets and info, please visit: <http://www.carnegiehall.org>

*The Great Hill* by **Dave Meder**

Monday, May 6, 2019, 7:30 PM at The Appel Room, Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall

For tickets and info, please visit: <http://www.jazz.org/>

*Close Up At A Distance* by **Ryan Lindveit**

Sunday, May 12, 2019, 2:00 PM at Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall

July 21, 2019, 7:30 PM, Kresge Auditorium at Interlochen Arts Camp, performed by World Youth Symphony Orchestra, JoAnn Falletta, conductor

For tickets and info, please visit: <http://www.carnegiehall.org>

**First Music** is funded in part by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and New York State Council on the Arts.

### **Composer Biographies:**

**Marco-Adrián Ramos** (1995) is a Mexican-American composer and arranger. Composers with whom he has had the pleasure of working include Christopher Lacy, Christopher Rouse, Derek Bermel, Aaron Jay Kernis, Gabriela Lena Frank, Arturo Márquez, and Mari Kimura. He is the recipient of a 2016 ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award (as well as twice being a finalist), an artist grant from the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures in conjunction with composer-mentor Gabriela Lena Frank, and a 2019 Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He was also awarded the Arthur Friedman Prize in 2018 "for an outstanding orchestral work"; the piece *Toys in a Field* was premiered under the baton of Jeffrey Milarsky with the Juilliard Orchestra in Alice Tully Hall. Mr. Ramos studies at The Juilliard School, where he has been the recipient of the Gretchaninoff Memorial Prize, Henry Mancini Fellowship, and the Rodgers & Hammerstein Scholarship, as well as serving as a Teaching Fellow in the Ear Training department. He is currently in the studio of Juilliard faculty member Robert Beaser.

**Tanner Porter** is a composer-performer (voice and cello), songwriter and visual artist from California. In her "original art songs that are by turns seductive and confessional" (Steve Smith, *The New Yorker*), Ms. Porter's passion for storytelling manifests in her setting of original poetry; her love for the cross-mingling of art forms often brings Ms. Porter to incorporate her own artwork and animations into scores and performances. "A voice that should be heard" (*For Folk's Sake*), Ms. Porter's work has been performed at Ann Arbor's Threads All Arts Festival, by art-ensemble Willo Collective at New Music Detroit's Strange Beautiful Music 9, at the 2018 New Music Gathering, on the Modern Piano (+) Festival and Female

Composers' Festival at Spectrum Underground, and on Sō Percussion's Brooklyn Bound series. Ms. Porter received a Bachelors in Music Composition from the University of Michigan's School of Music, Theatre and Dance, and is currently pursuing a Masters in Music Composition from the Yale School of Music. She was thrilled to have been the 2017-2018 Artist in Residence for the Michigan-based all arts collective Red Shoe Company. Upcoming 2018-2019 season projects include a series of performances with Nu Deco Ensemble as a part of their Nu Works Initiative, a new piece for orchestra and voice for Albany Symphony (in collaboration with librettist Vanessa Moody), a work for stage titled "Harbor," and an upcoming song cycle, "Circle, Retrace." Ms. Porter is pleased to be attending the Djerassi Resident Artists Program and Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music this season. Her most recent album, "The Summer Sinks," was recorded with LA-based studio Oak House Recording and can be heard on all streaming platforms.

**Patrick O'Malley** (1989) is a composer of orchestral and chamber music, currently living in Los Angeles, California. He is inspired by mysterious dichotomies in nature and art, composing music that often embraces abstract worlds rather than concrete images. When writing a new piece, Mr. O'Malley considers the listener's imagination as much as every other musical element – an admittedly and enjoyably subjective endeavor. His works have been performed across the United States and also in Europe. Most recently, Mr. O'Malley has been recognized or performed by organizations including the Albany, Columbus and Milwaukee Symphonies, the Los Angeles Philharmonic's National Composer Intensive, and The American Prize. He was named Composer of the Year by the Sioux City Symphony for 2018, and he has been awarded various fellowships from Copland House, the Los Angeles Film Conducting Intensive, Avaloch Music Farm, and the Aspen Music Festival. He also serves as the arranger and a conductor for the concert series Journey LIVE with Fifth House Ensemble and Austin Wintory. Mr. O'Malley is completing his doctoral degree in music at the University of Southern California where he studies with Andrew Norman and Sean Friar. He divides his time between living in Los Angeles, and Lake Charlevoix, Michigan.

**Nina Shekhar's** music explores the intersection of identity, vulnerability, love, and laughter. Her works have been performed by Eighth Blackbird, ETHEL, Tony Arnold, Third Angle New Music, The New York Virtuoso Singers, and Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra, and have been featured by Carnegie Hall, Metropolitan Museum of Art, National Sawdust, National Flute Association, North American Saxophone Alliance, GLFCAM, I Care If You Listen, and WNYC/New Sounds. Upcoming projects include multiple performances by Eighth Blackbird, a piece for Music from Copland House, and a commission for the International Contemporary Ensemble to be premiered at LA Philharmonic's Noon to Midnight Festival at Walt Disney Concert Hall. She is a recipient of the 2015 ASCAP Morton Gould Award and 2018 Leonard Bernstein Award. Ms. Shekhar is also a versatile performing artist, studying flute with Amy Porter, performing as a piano soloist with the Lublin Philharmonic, and as a saxophonist in the Detroit International Jazz Festival. Ms. Shekhar is pursuing composition graduate studies at University of Southern California, studying with Ted Hearne and serving as a composition and aural skills teaching assistant. She earned dual undergraduate degrees in composition and chemical engineering at University of Michigan, studying with Evan Chambers, Bright Sheng, Kristin Kuster, Michael Daugherty, and Erik Santos.

**Matt Horanzy** is a jazz composer, guitarist, and educator living in Washington DC. Having recently completed a Master's Degree in Jazz Composition at the University of South Florida, Mr. Horanzy has shared the stage with musicians such as Nick Finzer, Danny Gottlieb, Frank Greene, John Clayton, John Beasley, and Steve Allee. During the summer of 2017, Mr. Horanzy joined the USF Jazz Ensemble to perform throughout the United Kingdom at the Edinburgh, Liverpool, and Birmingham Jazz Festivals. As a composer, Mr. Horanzy has written for ensembles ranging from solo performer to jazz orchestra. His composition entitled "init 1" received the 2018 USF Owen Prize in Jazz Composition, first prize in the ASMAC Bill Conti Big Band Composition and Arranging award, and first prize in the National Band Association Jazz Composition Competition, which resulted in a performance by the Airmen of Note at the Midwest Conference. Currently, Mr. Horanzy is a member of the BMI Jazz Composers Workshop in New York City, under the direction of Andy Farber and Alan Ferber. Mr. Horanzy has studied with Grammy nominated and award winning artists such as Chuck Owen, Jim McNeely, LaRue Nickelson, Joshua Bayer, and Fernando Benadon.

**Devin Reilly** is a San Francisco Bay Area-based composer, guitarist and producer. A 2016 graduate of Cornish College of the Arts, Mr. Reilly studied with three-time Latin Grammy nominee Jovino Santos-Neto, world renowned jazz French hornist Tom Varner, and big band composer Jim Knapp. Mr. Reilly has worked extensively with the Jim Knapp Orchestra, as well as with San Francisco's Friction Quartet, and members of the Seattle Symphony. Mr. Reilly also has had the pleasure of working extensively with Seattle's 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre, providing all orchestra music preparation for productions of Ragtime and Kiss, Me Kate; as well as providing original orchestrations for the Rising Star Project and Project Reprise, a collaboration with the University of Washington. In 2018, Mr. Reilly recorded his debut EP, *Talking in Circles*. Due out later this year, the EP draws on influences from traditional and modern big band to chamber and electronic music, to rock and metal. By combining elements of traditional instrumentation and orchestration with modern production techniques, *Talking in Circles* presents the large ensemble as a contemporary and vital musical format and explores what it means to make a big band record in the 21st century.

**Greg Weiss** is a composer and jazz trumpeter from St. Louis, Missouri, currently completing his doctoral studies at the University of Northern Colorado (UNC). He received his Bachelor's in Jazz Performance at Missouri State University, and he completed his Master's in Jazz Composition at UNC. His big band music is regularly performed by the DownBeat Award-winning University of Northern Colorado Jazz Lab Band I and his arrangements and compositions have been performed by Randy Brecker, Dave Pietro, Antonio Hart, Paul McKee, Greg Gisbert, Bob Sheppard, Jim White, Clay Jenkins, Tanya Darby, the Missouri State University Jazz Studies Ensemble, the Colorado Jazz Orchestra, the United States Air Force Airmen of Note, the Texas All-State Jazz Ensemble II, and numerous high school jazz bands. Mr. Weiss' music has received awards and honors from the International Society of Jazz Arrangers and Composers, the Jazz Education Network, the New York Youth Symphony, the American Society of Music Arrangers and Composers (ASMAC), and The American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP). In 2017, Mr. Weiss recorded an album with fellow composer Mike Conrad, the All Angles Orchestra, and jazz trumpeter Alex Sipiagin called *New Angle*. Two of Mr. Weiss' original compositions are featured on the recording.

**About the NYYS:**

The **New York Youth Symphony** is internationally recognized for its award-winning and innovative educational programs for talented young musicians. Founded in 1963 as an orchestra to showcase the metropolitan area's most gifted musicians, ages 12-22, its programs have since grown to include Chamber Music, Jazz, Apprentice Conducting, Composition, Musical Theater Composition, and the First Music commissioning program.

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