

JACKSONVILLE SYMPHONY PRESENTS FOUR NEW ORCHESTRAL WORKS ON EARSHOT

Jacksonville, FL (April 11, 2018) --- The Jacksonville Symphony will perform a concert in partnership with the *EarShot* program on **Friday, April 20 at 8pm in Jacoby Symphony Hall**. *EarShot* is part of a national program that supports the music of emerging young composers by pairing them with symphonies across the country. In addition to the concert, there will be an open panel discussion in Jacoby Symphony Hall starting at **6:45pm** on *The Role of New Music and Living Art in the 21st Century*.

In support of the educational opportunities presented in this program, all **students** who present a valid student ID will receive **FREE** admission to both the concert and the pre-concert discussion.

EarShot enables connections between orchestras and emerging composers. Drawing from a national network of advisors and advocates, *EarShot* works with orchestras around the country to identify and support promising composers in the early stages of their careers. Orchestras have relied on *EarShot* to advise them on commissions, competitions and program design in addition to identifying composers consistent with the orchestra's artistic vision. *EarShot* residencies include established composer mentorship, orchestra readings as well as musician and conductor feedback sessions. *EarShot* is a partnership between the American Composers Orchestra, League of American Orchestras, American Composers Forum and New Music USA.

For a week of workshops and rehearsals, Courtney Lewis and the Jacksonville Symphony will be joined by four emerging composers and three established composers serving as mentors. Works being featured on the April 20 concert are written by Nicholas Bentz, Will Healy, Ursula Kwong-Brown and Meng Wang.

Nicholas Bentz is forging a path of the composer-performer that hasn't been explored in generations. His music often takes its inspiration from pieces of literature and poetry, film and visual art. As a composer he has received commissions from the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, the Robinson Jeffers Association, the College of Charleston Contemporary Music Ensemble, SONAR New Music Ensemble, Troika, Symphony Number One, and the Charleston Symphony Orchestra. He has had his music played by the Peabody Modern Orchestra and the Peabody String Sinfonia. Bentz was a winner of SONAR New Music Ensemble's RADARLab Competition and was also a finalist for the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards in 2014. Bentz was the Composer in Residence for Symphony Number One's 2016-17 season.

Meng Wang is a Chinese composer currently based in New York City. Her composition portfolio shows a prolific collection of orchestral, chamber, and electronic works.

Wang's music has been performed throughout North America, China and Europe, by esteemed ensembles such as The Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, Thin Edge New Music Collective, LONGLEASH trio and MSM Composer's Orchestra. Her piece, *Beloved by Artemis*, won the 2012 Chinese National Chamber Music Composition Competition and was selected for the composition showcase by the Xi'an Conservatory of Music in China. Wang has been a fellow at Aspen Music Festival and School and was named The Deolus W. Husband Scholarship for Composition in 2015-2017.

Ursula Kwong-Brown is a composer and media artist from New York City. Described as “atmospheric and accomplished” by *The New York Times*, her work has been performed in diverse venues including Carnegie Hall, le Poisson Rouge, and the Manhattan Movement & Arts Center in New York. Awards include a 2017-2019 fellowship with the Berkeley Symphony, the 2016 George Ladd Prix de Paris Prize, the 2015 Composers, Inc. BAMM Prize, and the 2014 Bowdoin Festival Prize.

This past year she was commissioned by the Composers, Inc. Matthew Paul Finnegan Commissioning Prize to write a string quartet, and by the San Francisco Friends of Contemporary Music to write for the Black Cedar trio.

Noted by *The New York Times* for his “lushly bluesy” sound and “adroitly blended...textures,” **Will Healy** is a composer and pianist based in New York. He is the artistic director of ShoutHouse, an ensemble of 15 hip-hop, jazz, and classical musicians. After his time playing trumpet in an Afrobeat band, he grew interested in collaborating with performers from many corners of the New York music scene. In addition, he is an accomplished pianist specializing in Bach. Healy was the recipient of the Richard Rodgers Scholarship at The Juilliard School, where he studied with John Corigliano.

Recent awards include a 2017 Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, an ASCAP Morton Gould Award, the W.K. Rose Fellowship and a JFund commission from the American Composers Forum. Healy’s work has appeared at The Apollo Theater, on the NY Philharmonic’s Biennial series, on "New Sounds" with John Schaefer (WNYC) and "Making Music" (WBAI). His commissions include Copland House, the Great Lakes Chamber Festival, Novus New Music, Kyo Shin-An Arts and Robert Fleitz.

The three established mentor composers joining Music Director Lewis and the Symphony are Marcos Balter, Steven Mackey and Courtney Bryan.

WHEN: Friday, April 20 at 8pm.

WHERE: Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts in the Jacoby Symphony Hall.

TICKETS: For more information or to purchase tickets, please call the Ticket Office at 904.354.5547 or visit JaxSymphony.org.

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The Jacksonville Symphony is North Florida’s leading music nonprofit offering live performances at Jacoby Symphony Hall in the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts and other venues throughout the area. In addition, the Symphony provides music instruction for youth and operates the Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestras. For more information about the Symphony, visit JaxSymphony.org, like them at facebook.com/JaxSymphony; follow them on @jaxsymphony, on Instagram at JaxSymphony and on YouTube at JacksonvilleSymphony.