

Composer Institute History

ABOUT THE MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA COMPOSER INSTITUTE

The Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute, now celebrating the 20th anniversary of its debut in March 2002, grew from the Orchestra's Perfect Pitch program, an annual series of new music reading sessions for emerging Minnesota composers launched during the 1995–96 season in collaboration with the American Composers Forum. In 2002 the program was reformulated as the Composer Institute and opened to composers from across the country, Pulitzer Prize-winner Aaron Jay Kernis became its director, and the program added seminars with industry leaders and Orchestra musicians, mentoring and other activities. In 2006, the Orchestra added a public Future Classics concert, now called MusicMakers, conducted by Music Director Osmo Vänskä, as the Institute's capstone. Pulitzer Prize-winner Kevin Puts is now in his eighth season as the Institute's director.

The program's influence has spread throughout the music world via the success of participants such as 2004 alumnus Andrew Norman, winner of the 2017 Grawemeyer Award and a finalist for the 2019 Pulitzer Prize for Music; 2006 alumnus Anna Clyne, a 2015 Grammy nominee; fellow 2006 alumnus Missy Mazzoli, a trailblazer in the field of contemporary opera; and film and TV composer Trevor Gureckis, a 2007 alumnus whose recent projects include scoring the 2021 M. Night Shyamalan movie *Old* and the current Apple TV+ series *Servant*. In 2018 both of the finalists for the Pulitzer Prize for Music were past Institute participants: 2016 alumnus Michael Gilbertson and 2008 alumnus Ted Hearne; in 2021 Hearne was again a Pulitzer finalist. At the 2022 Grammy Awards, violinist Jennifer Koh won the award for Best Classical Instrumental Solo for an album that included short works by 40 contemporary composers, 10 of whom are past or present Composer Institute participants, among them 2022 participants Adeliia Faizullina and Nina Shekhar.

Several past Composer Institute participants have subsequently fostered connections with other Minnesota ensembles. The Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, which is conducted by William Schrickel, the Minnesota Orchestra's assistant principal bass, has commissioned two alumni to each compose their first symphony: 2010 participant Polina Nazaykinskaya and 2015 participant Matthew Peterson; the latter's *Symphony No. 1: The Singing Wilderness* was co-commissioned with the St. Olaf Orchestra and Northern Symphony Orchestra, and will be performed by the MSO in its 2022–23 season. The MSO also commissioned and premiered Nazaykinskaya's large-orchestra revision of *Fenix* and has performed three additional works by her in the years since she participated in the Institute, all with Schrickel conducting.

PERFECT PITCH (ORIGINAL INCARNATION OF THE COMPOSER INSTITUTE)

1995–96 SEASON

Carol Barnett
Keith M. Bradshaw
Thomas E. Fitch
Randall Stokes
Paul A. Suskind
David Evan Thomas

1996–97 SEASON

Michael Karmon
Russell Platt
David Schober
David Evan Thomas
Michael Wittgraf

1997–98 SEASON

Anthony Gatto
Melissa M. Hannah
David Schober
Michael Wittgraf

1998–99 SEASON

Erika Foin
Philip Fried
Peter Lothringer
Nathaniel Riley
Mark Warhol
Carl Witt

1999–2000 SEASON

Anthony Gatto
Geoffrey Gordon
Brian J. Nelson
Paul Paccione
Justin Henry Rubin

2000–01 SEASON

James F. Crowley
Stacy Garrop
Michael Klingbeil
Mei-Fang Lin
Rich Pressley
Justin Henry Rubin

MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA COMPOSER INSTITUTE

2001–02 SEASON

Gordon Beeferman
Lisa Bielawa
Anthony Cheung
Stacy Garrop
Michael Gatonska
Keith Murphy
Stephan Prock
Mischa Zupko

2002–03 SEASON

Todd Coleman
Christopher Dietz
Lu Pei
Russell Platt
Erich Stem
Nathan Stumpff
Michael Twomey
Orianna Webb

2003–04 SEASON

Anthony Cheung
Philip Fried
Michael Gatonska
Gregory Hutter
Mark Koval
Robert Paterson
William A. Ware

2004–05 SEASON

Patrick Burke
Fang Man
Andrew Norman
John Christian Orfe
David Plylar
Sheridan Seyfried
Rob Smith

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2005-06 SEASON

J. Anthony Allen
Mark Dancigers
Matthew Fields
Ed Martin
Norbert Palej
Sean Shepherd
Reynold Tharp
Zhou Tian

2006-07 SEASON

Garrett Byrnes
Anna Clyne
Kurt Erickson
Stephen Gorbos
Missy Mazzoli
Ashley Nail
Alejandro Rutty
Dan Visconti
Gregg Wramage

2007-08 SEASON

Daniel Bradshaw
Jacob Cooper
Trevor Gureckis
Wes Matthews
Elliott Miles McKinley
Xi Wang
Stephen Wilcox

2008-09 SEASON

Antonio Carlos DeFeo
Ted Hearne
Wang Lu
Andrew McManus
Justin Merritt
David Schneider
Ming-Hsiu Yen

2009-10 SEASON

Fernando Buide
Geoff Knorr
Angel Lam
Kathryn Salfelder
Carl Schimmel
Spencer Topel
Roger Zare

2010-11 SEASON

Taylor Brizendine
Wang Jie
Polina Nazaykinskaya
Clint Needham
Ben Phelps
Narong Prangcharoen
David Weaver

2011-12 SEASON

Brian Ciach
Michael R. Holloway
Adrian Knight
Hannah Lash
Andreia Pinto-Correia
Shen Yiwen

2012-13 AND 2013-14 SEASONS

[no Composer Institute
due to lockout]

2014-15 SEASON

Kati Agócs
Eugene Birman
Texu Kim
Loren Loiacono
Evan Meier
Matthew Peterson
Michael Schachter

2015-16 SEASON

Kirsten Broberg
Matthew Browne
Joshua Cerdnia
Emily Cooley
Nick DiBerardino
Michael Gilbertson
Anthony Vine

2016-17 SEASON

Katherine Balch
Michael Boyman
Judy Bozone
Michael-Thomas Foumai
Tonia Ko
Phil Taylor
Conrad Winslow

2017-18 SEASON

Saad Haddad
Andrew Hsu
Charles Peck
Hilary Purrington
Daniel Schlosberg
Peter S. Shin
Nina C. Young

2018-19 SEASON

TJ Cole
Viet Cuong
Jonathan Cziner
Will Healy
Matthew Ricketts
Connor Elias Way
Alyssa Weinberg

2019-20 SEASON

Theo Chandler
Paul Frucht
Clare Glackin
Marc Migó
Patrick O'Malley
Liza Sobel
Nicky Sohn

2020-21 SEASON

[no Composer Institute due
to the COVID-19 pandemic]

2021-22 SEASON

Henry Dorn
Adeliia Faizullina
Bobby Ge
Ryan Lindveit
Molly Joyce
Nina Shekhar
Sam Wu