

NEW WORKS NEW VOICES



CHARLIE CARROLL



ANRU CHENG



ZACH G. DAVIS



JANE KOZHEVNIKOVA



DANIEL DE TOGNI

OPERA AMERICA

NOV. 5TH, 2022

8PM MARC SCORCA HALL

Performed by:

Rocío Díaz de Cossío, cello
Carami Hilaire, soprano
Heather Jones, mezzo-soprano
Michael Lewis, piano
Rachel Mikol, soprano

featuring the
winners of
ACP's

**EMERGING
COMPOSERS
COMPETITION**



A message from ACP's New Works Coordinator

Helloooooo

&

Welcome to ACP season four! Thank you for bringing yourself here whether in person or in spirit/virtual land. We hope you can find in the words, music, and energy of tonight's featured artists some level of comfort and challenge.

Tonight's event, **New Works New Voices**, is made possible by those who submitted their compositions to ACP's 2nd annual Emerging Composers Competition: a competition whose purpose is to build more connections with those in the world actively seeking out studies in composition. It is our intention to cast a wide net by prompting the applicants to reflect on topics of equity and representation in the arts, and, in doing so, share with audiences a *potentially* wide range of reflections!

Due to the support of you all, we were able to select five winners for a second year! Charlie Carroll, Anruo Cheng, Zach Gulaboff-Davis, Jane Kozhevnik, and Daniel De Togni!

(More info about the New Works New Voices team can be found near the back of your program)

Choosing to see art can be loaded.

If you feel like sharing how your **choice-to-see-art** went tonight, we want to hear it. We're happy to meet you in the lobby following the performance &/or engage your comments online.

-Dicky Dutton

do you want to draw here?



Program

Artists in order of performance:

Heather Jones, mezzo-soprano
Michael Lewis, piano
Carami Hilaire, soprano
Rocío Díaz de Cossío, cello
Rachel Mikol, soprano

Invitation to Love	Jane Kozhevnikova
Is this you?	Anruo Cheng
I felt a funeral in my brain	Charlie Carroll
Departure	Jane Kozhevnikova
The Lamp of Life	Zach Gulaboff Davis
Is it Fair? Crowned <i>from Songs for the African Violet</i>	Jasmine Barnes
The Cloud Watcher	Juan Calderon
Wild nights - Wild nights!	Charlie Carroll
Look to this Day	Daniel De Togni

THE POETRY

Invitation to Love

Come when the nights are bright with stars
Or come when the moon is mellow;
Come when the sun his golden bars
Drops on the hay-field yellow.
Come in the twilight soft and gray,
Come in the night or come in the day,
Come, O love, whene'er you may,
And you are welcome, welcome.

You are sweet, O Love, dear Love,
You are soft as the nesting dove.
Come to my heart and bring it to rest
As the bird flies home to its welcome nest.

Come when my heart is full of grief
Or when my heart is merry;
Come with the falling of the leaf
Or with the redd'ning cherry.
Come when the year's first blossom blows,
Come when the summer gleams and glows,
Come with the winter's drifting snows,
And you are welcome, welcome.

- Paul Lawrence Dunbar

Is this you?

Is this you?
Mask over mask
Door after door
Day by day
We are both onboard
I see people suffer
I see them struggle
I see people separate from their lovers
Like I do
The same to you
We're trying to make a deal
Make a deal with the devil
Release all the pain, all the suffering
Then a big defense will appeal

Is that you?
How are you?
I love you!

- Anruo Cheng

I felt a funeral in my brain

I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,
And Mourners to and fro
Kept treading - treading - till it seemed
That Sense was breaking through -

And when they all were seated,
A Service, like a Drum -
Kept beating - beating - till I thought
My mind was going numb -

And then I heard them lift a Box
And creak across my Soul
With those same Boots of Lead, again,
Then Space - began to toll,

As all the Heavens were a Bell,
And Being, but an Ear,
And I, and Silence, some strange Race,
Wrecked, solitary, here -

And then a Plank in Reason, broke,
And I dropped down, and down -
And hit a World, at every plunge,
And Finished knowing - then -

- Emily Dickinson

Departure

It's little I care what path I take,
And where it leads it's little I care,
But out of this house, lest my heart break,
I must go, and off somewhere!
It's little I know what's in my heart,
What's in my mind it's little I know,
But there's that in me must up and start,
And it's little I care where my feet go!
I wish I could walk for a day and a night,
And find me at dawn in a desolate place,
With never the rut of a road in sight,
Or the roof of a house, or the eyes of a face.
I wish I could walk till my blood should spout,
And drop me, never to stir again,
On a shore that is wide, for the tide is out,
And the weedy rocks are bare to the rain.
But dump or dock, where the path I take
Brings up, it's little enough I care,
And it's little I'd mind the fuss they'll make,
Huddled dead in a ditch somewhere.

- Edna St. Vincent Millay

The Lamp of Life

Always we are following a light,
Always the light recedes; with groping hands
We stretch toward this glory, while the lands
We journey through are hidden from our sight
Dim and mysterious, folded deep in night,
We care not, all our utmost need demands
Is but the light, the light! So still it stands
Surely our own if we exert our might.
Fool! Never can'st thou grasp this fleeting gleam,
Its glowing flame would die if it were caught,
Its value is that it doth always seem
But just a little farther on. Distaught,
But lighted ever onward, we are brought
Upon our way unknowing, in a dream.

- Amy Lowell

Is it Fair?

Is it Fair?
Is it fair that the lack of fair skin defines the way She navigates through life?
Is it Fair?
That the color of her skin means attitude and not assertiveness?
Is it Fair?
She's in a cycle and a system that reduces her to only stereotypes!
Is it Fair?
She hides who she is just to make You feel comfortable!
Is it Fair?
No! It isn't!

- Jasmine Barnes

Crowned

She stares in the mirror,
eyes filled with wishful thinking,
hoping and wishing,
her hair would detangle itself.
Worn with the pressures of society!
"Straighten it!"
"Hide your hair!"
No place to go,
head held low,
heart filled with despair.
She doesn't know her hair sits high,
because it is a Crown!

Let your hair defy gravity!
A Crown!
You've been Crowned by God Himself!
Your Crown won't flop, 'less you make it flop!
Your Crown won't break, 'less you break it!
When You've been Crowned by God Himself,
there's no way no man can take it!
You were born into royalty,
and then told you're a slave,
but one thing I know for certain dear
is that they can't take your crown away!
No they can't take your Crown away!

- Jasmine Barnes

The Cloud Watcher

Most of my life, I've been a cloud watcher.
It started when I was very young.
I would lay on my back, eyes fixed on the swirling mass.
Swollen with dreams on a path through time.
Starts became scribbles of direction and instruction.
Time wobbled in the spot-lit air. An ebony mist on the flat plain.
This was no ordinary place.
Not long ago our club was home to dozens of birds.
Lovebirds, finches, a quaker parrot, and a raven.
On the landing where bird cages once stood, stands a row of well-dusted
busts and a sculpture of two fighting lions. (continued on next page)

After a bitter dispute, the birds are gone.
Where have all the birds gone!
On a cold day in March, in the midst of conflict,
dozens of finches were found dead outside the club.
The birds were not mine. I deny any involvement.
I was never charged. Bird/Comtesse:
The episode heaped unflattering attention on the organization.
I was forced out into a leave of absence and never returned.
The birds left behind were equally shrouded in mystery.

Wild nights - Wild nights!

Wild nights - Wild nights!
Were I with thee
Wild nights should be
Our luxury!

Futile - the winds -
To a Heart in port -
Done with the Compass -
Done with the Chart!

Rowing in Eden -
Ah - the Sea!
Might I but moor - tonight -
In thee!

- Emily Dickinson

Look to this Day

Look to this day
Look to this day
for it is life
the very life of life
In its brief course lie all
the realities and truths of existence

the joy of growth
the splendor of action
the glory of hope
For yesterday is but a memory
And tomorrow is only a vision
But today well lived

makes every yesterday a memory of happiness
and every tomorrow a vision of hope
Look well, therefore, to this day.

- Ancient Sanskrit Poem

THE TEAM



Rocío Díaz de Cossío is a cellist and improviser.

They are dedicated to exploring the sonic possibilities of their instrument, implementing tape and live electronics often based on field recordings. Their performances include improvisation, solo and ensemble acoustic and electroacoustic pieces, collective compositions, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Rocío has participated at Darmstadt, Ferienkurse für Neue Musik, at the International Ensemble Modern Academy, Festival Expresiones Contemporáneas, The Center for Advanced Musical Studies at Chosen Vale, and Red Ecología Acústica México. Rocío concentrates their practice in México and the greater New York City area, focusing on performer-composer practices and cello teaching.

www.rociocello.com

Lyrico-spinto soprano **Carami Hilaire**, praised for her "marvelous sound, rich and luscious", (David Schengold, Opera News 2017) is poised to become an international contender in Verismo repertoire. In the fall of 2018 she joined the Metropolitan Opera Guild in excerpts from Tosca and sang her first Musetta in La Boheme with Regina Opera. Carami also sang the title role in Aida, where critics noted that "Hilaire's intimate phrasing floated over the tumult of the strings, and in the moments where her voice soared, she earned the applause which nearly brought the show to a stop." (Logan Martel, OperaWire 2018). 2019 engagements include a recital sponsored by the Wagner Society of New York, the title role in Suor Angelica with Si Parla Si Canta, and a concert with Opera Memphis. In 2020 she sung with Symphony of the Mountains in Mechem's Song of the Slave.



Ms. Hilaire's latest role has been Alice in Alice in the Pandemic with White Snake Opera Projects. Joanne Syndey Lessner of Opera News remarked: "With her rich, expressive soprano and intent, quiet listening, Carami Hilaire's Alice communicated all the anguish, anxiety and humanity of a woman trying to save her patients, her mother and, ultimately, herself". Ms. Hilaire received several encouragement awards from the Wagner Society of New York and sang throughout Switzerland with the Internationale Opernwerkstatt. She is a Hans Gabor Belvedere competition qualifier, Julian Autrey Foundation grant winner, and winner of the Premiere Opera International Vocal Competition Aprile Millo award.

The uniquely soulful soprano hails from Brooklyn and has appeared with Teatro Nuovo, Loft Opera, New Jersey Verismo Opera, Sarasota Opera, Saratoga Opera. In 2021 she will sing the role of Lady Macbeth with Knoxville Opera.



Heather Jones (they/them) is a mezzo and crossover artist performing classical and contemporary repertoire with “ mischievous freshness and enthusiasm .” A 2021 finalist in the American Traditions Vocal Competition and winner of the Sherrill Milnes American Opera Award, Heather is gaining recognition for their interpretation of new music, including recent productions of *As One* with Opera Maine, *Second Nature* with Opera Fayetteville, and a feature film production of *Candide* with Opera Company of Middlebury which Opera News called “superb.” This season, Heather will appear with City Lyric

Opera in the NYC premiere of Lori Laitman’s opera *Uncovered*, based on a memoir of the same title by Leah Lax, who confronted fundamentalism, reproductive autonomy, and her own repressed sexuality by challenging her Hasidic faith. Heather is also an active concert singer and in the 2022-2023 season will appear with Trinity Wall Street, *Voices of Ascension*, *Musica Sacra*, *Musica Viva*, *ChamberQUEER*, Spoleto Festival USA, and the LA-based experimental ensemble *Wild Up*. Heather has produced two short films featuring Britten’s *Abraham and Isaac* and Weill’s *Lost in the Stars* and wrote and starred in an all-queer adaptation of R&H’s *Cinderella* titled “*Happily Never After*.” For more info and upcoming projects, visit heatherjonesmezzo.com

Philadelphia-based pianist and vocal coach,

Michael Lewis (he/they), is a renowned collaborator known for his exciting interpretations and mastery of a multitude of styles. In 2021 he joined the faculty of Academy of Vocal Arts as a vocal coach and collaborative pianist. At Temple University, and University of Pennsylvania he serves as a vocal coach and music director of opera workshop courses. In 2019, Michael formed Aural Compass Projects. In addition to his work with ACP Michael has established a collaborative relationship with many singers performing with Aural Compass Projects, El Paso Opera’s Voice Recital Series, Opera Saratoga’s America Sings Recital Series, and Aspen Music Festival. In addition to vocal collaboration, Michael collaborates with smaller and larger chamber groups ranging from duos, trios, and quartets to work with orchestras like Albany Symphony and Aspen Chamber Symphony, and Aspen Contemporary Ensemble. Michael earned a Masters of Music degree from Arizona State University in collaborative piano and a Bachelors of Music at Ithaca College where he studied vocal performance as a baritone in the studio of Dr. David Parks. Previous appointments include Vocal Coach and Repetiteur on productions at Opera Philadelphia, Cincinnati Opera, The Glimmerglass Festival, Portland Opera, Mill City Summer Opera, and Tri-Cities Opera, Chorus Master at Arizona MusicFest and Tri-Cities Opera, and Assistant Music Director in the Marion Roose Pullin Studio at Arizona Opera.





Soprano **Rachel Mikol** is a passionate performer on both operatic and choral stages. This season, she returns to the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra as the soprano soloist in Mozart's Coronation Mass.

Rachel is a member of the all-professional Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church Chamber Choir and was recently the featured soloist in Aaron Copland's *In the Beginning*. She also enjoys singing regularly with the Bard Festival Chorale for their operatic and choral performances and is a new member of Santa Fe Desert Chorale. Rachel continues to engage with various new music projects, most recently with American Lyric Opera as

Lynn in their production of *The Halloween Tree*. She was a frequent soloist and member of NOTUS: IU Contemporary Vocal Ensemble and performed as Mary Bailey in the collegiate premiere of Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's *It's a Wonderful Life*. Recent operatic credits include *Gilda* (cover) in *Rigoletto* with St. Petersburg Opera, *Marie* (cover) in *La fille du régiment* with Opera Saratoga, *Frasquita* in *Carmen* with Opéra Louisiane, and *Anne Egerman* in *A Little Night Music* with Opera Ithaca. Rachel earned a Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance and music education from Ithaca College as well as both a Master of Music degree in vocal performance and a Performer Diploma from Indiana University.

COMPOSERS

Anruo Cheng is a Chinese composer based in New York who embraces cultural diversity and has varied professional backgrounds in music. Her music is described as melodious, inventive, imaginative, and vibrant. She was a music producer and pop songwriter in her earlier career, and later she expanded her fields to film music, contemporary classical music, and electronic music. She is always curious about new ideas, composition techniques, and diverse artistic styles and actively blends them into her compositions. For example, her film music frequently has elements of electronic music and unique sound designs, her contemporary classical music often combines with eastern traditional music, and her experimental/electronic is influenced by expressions of commercial music.

Anruo Cheng recently earned a D.M.A degree in music composition from Frost School of Music, University of Miami, where she studied composition and electronic music with Charles Mason, Dorothy Hindman, Juraj Kojs, (continued on the next page)



(Anruo Cheng continued)

Melinda Wagner, and Christopher Theofanidis. She also earned a Master's degree in Media Writing and Production at Frost School of Music. She studied film scoring and music production with Chris Boardman and Carlos Rafael Rivera. Currently, she continues her study in music composition with Dorthey Hindman and explores fields in music coding and circuit designing for electronic music instruments.



Charlie Carroll is a composer specializing in orchestral, chamber, and vocal music whose ultimate passion is to create music that moves people. A lifelong musician and Texas native, he received a BM in Vocal Performance and an MM in Composition from Baylor University in Waco. He currently lives with his lovely wife in Tallahassee, Florida where he works towards his DM in Composition at the Florida State University. His mentors include Scott McAllister, Liliya Ugay, and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich. Through his music he hopes to have a meaningful impact on his audience, connecting on an emotional level with every listener.

Described as “beautiful, lyrical” and brimming with “unexpected harmonic shifts” (International Trumpet Guild), the music of Macedonian-American composer **Zach Gulaboff Davis** centers on the expressive and dramatic possibilities of compositional narrative. Winner of the 2019 American Prize in Composition, Zach maintains an active schedule as a composer and collaborator across the globe. His works have been performed at venues including Carnegie Hall, Columbia University, University of Pennsylvania, Bulgaria’s National Palace of Culture, among others. A multi-disciplinary collaborator, Zach has partnered with a plethora of organizations and performers ranging from the Space Science Telescope Institute and New York City’s Apotheosis Opera to timpanist Jonathan Haas. D.M.A. in composition and M.M. in music theory pedagogy from the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University; an M.M. in composition from Mannes College of Music in New York City; and a B.A. in piano performance and composition/theor, from Linfield College, Oregon. In his spare time, Zach is active in American Kennel Club dog sports, traveling the country as a licensed Dog Agility judge. Don’t ask him about the (countless) similarities between composing and designing Agility courses unless you have hours to spare! Born in Los Angeles and raised in Oregon, Zach currently divides his time between Jersey City, NJ and Salem, OR.



Jane K (Evgeniya Kozhevnikova) is a composer, pianist, and educator. She composes in various styles and genres, from classical to jazz and tango, tastefully blending them together. In 2020, she released a jazz-tango album *Tango Avenue* and in 2022 an album of her art songs *Lift Up Your Hearts*. She holds two master's degrees, in Music Composition and Music Performance, from Western Michigan University and is working on her doctorate degree in Music Composition at the University of Florida.



Daniel De Togni was born in St. Louis (b. 1993), grew up in Arkansas, and is a composer currently living in the beautiful state of Oregon. His compositional style has been praised for its breadth and his ability to integrate a variety of soundworlds and influences into his music. Drawing from his Japanese and Italian heritage, Daniel's music is that of cross-pollination between genres and styles, and the exploration of sonic environments and the musical organisms that dwell in them. He enjoys drawing from musical ideas outside of the classical canon through the recontextualization of pop and folk elements. His focus is that of creating

an emotionally moving auditory experiences for the listener. His works have been performed by the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra, the Julius String Quartet, Estelí Gomez, Hypercube, Transient Canvas, and the Delgani String Quartet, among others. His works have also been performed in Japan, Taiwan, Italy, at the International Reed Society, June in Buffalo, the Alba Music Festival, the Hot Air Music Festival in San Francisco, Connecticut Summerfest, Fresh Inc Festival, New Music on the Point, Bowdoin International Music Festival, the American Music Festival, the UNK New Music Festival, and throughout the United States.

Emerging Composers Competition

Since 2020, ACP has connected with students of composition through the annual Emerging Composers Competition. Through this competition, we hope to build connections with the world's rising composers and provide a platform for young musicians to combine their values and their creative process without some of the bureaucracy that comes from a regular commission: we want the spaciousness of our prompts to allow the composer to share their convictions.

Submissions are required to be a minimum of three minutes in length, for solo or accompanied voice, and written by a student of composition either enrolled in a program or through private study. Applicants must also have received fewer than 3 professional commissions to be eligible. While composers are allowed to use any text from the public domain, we encourage composers to source their text from within their community (with permission).

Our three judges this year, composer **Jorge Sosa**, vocalist **Lucy Dhegrae**, and operatic baritone **Troy Cook**, adjudicated based on six categories:

Musical content, creativity, vocal writing, text setting, and appearance of the manuscript.

Those who cumulatively score the highest are awarded a modest cash prize as well as a guaranteed performance & recording of their submission in a project of ACP.

**OUR THIRD ANNUAL EMERGING COMPOSERS COMPETITION WILL BE OPEN
FOR SUBMISSIONS STARTING IN DECEMBER 2022!**

**CHECK OUT OUR OTHER
PROJECTS ON FACEBOOK,
INSTAGRAM, & YOUTUBE!**

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE COMPETITION HERE!



www.auralcompassprojects.org/competition



Aural Compass Projects is a non-profit music organization founded in 2019 that is dedicated to performing new and less-performed works. We strive to foster and develop a solid moral compass which guides our work in advancing towards equality and better representation in the arts. We believe that following a strong code of ethics while cultivating a space for new music and music that has not had the opportunity of being fully appreciated is our duty as artistic ambassadors and is incredibly important for the collective growth of our community and world.

In its first season, ACP produced four projects with 7 performances in 5 cities in New York and Arizona. The inaugural season started off with *Songs of the Rainbow*, a celebration of American, British, and Canadian LGBTQ+ composers, performed in October 2019 at the Marc Scorca Hall at Opera America in Manhattan. *Songs Without Borders*, a recital featuring composers and performers who are American immigrants and refugees, was then performed at the First Unitarian Universalist Congregational Society in Brooklyn and the Church of the Messiah in Rhinebeck, NY in December 2019. In January 2020, ACP took a trip to Phoenix, AZ with mezzo-soprano Daveda Karanas to produce two performances of *Much has Fallen Silent*, a recital honoring the lives and works of five Jewish composers who were affected by the Holocaust. They wrapped up their exciting first season with *Lift Every Voice*, a festival of songs written by African-American composers, again at First Unitarian Universalist Congregational Society in Brooklyn.

In its second season, ACP shifted, along with the rest of the world, to a digital platform and created five new projects that were able to be presented virtually. In its first venture into educational resources, ACP created *We, Too, Sing America*, a 13-episode series exploring the lives and works of 13 African-American composers and poets of song. Last summer also saw the start of their live talkshow and podcast, *What's the Tea with ACP*, hosted by Elliott Paige. Adding to the list of projects outside of the performance realm, was the *Emerging Composer Competition* in which composers were asked to submit works that reflect both their values and those of ACP. ACP still achieved success with presenting two main performance projects on a digital platform: *On Belonging*, a program celebrating Asian composers and performers with Fleur Barron and Myra Huang, and *Brown Sounds*, an award-winning collaboration with LA Opera and Raehann Bryce-Davis. At the end of last season, ACP held a workshop performance of *Before Body Meets Earth* in the Hudson Valley of New York in preparation for its Philadelphia premiere in November 2021.

ACP looks forward to growing and connecting with more people in the future as they continue to promote new and unheard works!

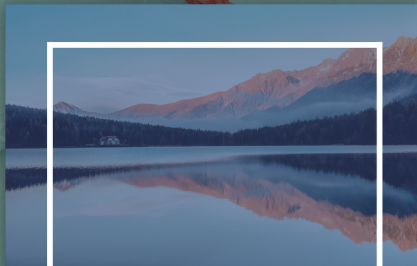
Thank you for joining us today!
For more about us, visit our website and social media.

www.auralcompassprojects.org



OPERA AMERICA
NOV. 5TH, 2022

**NEW
WORKS
NEW VOICES**



WORLD PREMIERE
APRIL 2023

**THE
GREATEST
PERSONAL PRIVATION**



ARIZONA OPERA
MAY 2023

**FLOATING
AWAY ON A
RANDOM THOUGHT**

DISCOVER MORE ABOUT ACP
USING OUR LINKTREE !

