

PRESS RELEASE
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Philadelphia Music Project to Hold Symposium: "New Frontiers in Music"

Listings Information:

Symposium: New Frontiers in Music
Wednesday, November 17, 2004
10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.: Interdisciplinary Art: New Directions
12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.: Complimentary Lunch
1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.: Chinese Currents in Contemporary Music
College of Physicians of Philadelphia, Thompson Hall
19 South 22nd Street

Tickets:

By reservation only. Tickets will not be sold at door without reservation.
Tickets: \$20 (includes both discussions and complimentary lunch)
Information and Reservations: Philadelphia Music Project (215) 893.0140

The **Philadelphia Music Project** (PMP), an Artistic Initiative of The Pew Charitable Trusts, will hold a symposium on two of contemporary music's most significant streams: interdisciplinary art and contemporary Chinese composition.

The symposium, called "New Frontiers in Music," will consist of two roundtable discussions and a complimentary lunch. The first discussion, "Interdisciplinary Art: New Directions," (10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) will bring together nationally prominent panelists with wide-ranging expertise in interdisciplinary art, encompassing composition, direction, production, and management. The panel will address the historical significance of interdisciplinary art, particularly as a means of bridging not only artistic disciplines, but also diverse cultures and audiences. The panel will discuss current artistic trends, how interdisciplinary work builds on work that falls within more traditional disciplines, and what audiences, programmers, and artists may expect to see and hear in the future. The panelists will include **Frank J. Oteri (Moderator)**, composer and Editor, *NewMusicBox*; **David Lang**, composer and Co-artistic Director, *Bang on a Can*; **Miya Masaoka**, composer, koto player, and performance artist; **Bob McGrath**, Director, Ridge Theater; **Joe Melillo**, Executive Producer, Brooklyn Academy of Music; and **Alisa Regas**, Associate Director, Pomegranate Arts.

The second discussion, "Chinese Currents in Contemporary Music," (1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.), will explore the profound influence of the work of leading Chinese and Chinese-American composers on Western music, including how modern Western performing and presenting organizations have integrated the cultural, aesthetic, and spiritual elements of Chinese music in recent years and how the work of Chinese composers and musicians has in turn been influenced by this East/West cultural exchange. The panelists will include **Frank J. Oteri (Moderator)**; **Jon Jang**, composer, pianist, and Artistic Director, Pan Asian Arkestra; **Zhou Long**, composer and Music Director, Music from China; **Ken Smith**, music journalist for

Gramophone and the *Financial Times*; **Min Xiaofen**, pipa player and vocalist, Sony, Verve, and Avant recording artist.

The **Philadelphia Music Project** is one of several regional initiatives of The Pew Charitable Trusts' Culture Program. Others include the Philadelphia Cultural Leadership Program, the Pew Fellowships in the Arts, the Philadelphia Theatre Initiative, Dance Advance, the Heritage Philadelphia Program, the Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, and the Philadelphia Cultural Management Initiative. Known collectively as the Philadelphia Program, each encourages continued creative growth and excellence within the local arts community.

The Pew Charitable Trusts (www.pewtrusts.org) serves the public interest by providing information, policy solutions and support for civic life. Based in Philadelphia, with an office in Washington, DC, the Trusts make investments to provide organizations and citizens with fact-based research and practical solutions on challenging issues. With approximately \$4.1 billion in dedicated assets, in 2003 the Trusts committed more than \$143 million to 151 nonprofit organizations.

Founded in 1908, **Settlement Music School** (www.smsmusic.org) is the largest community arts school in the country. With locations in Germantown, Jenkintown, Northeast, South, Southwest, and West Philadelphia, the school provides more than 9,000 students with quality music, voice, and dance instruction regardless of their age, background, or ability to pay.

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Panelist Biographies

interdisciplinary art: new directions

David Lang, composer and Co-artistic Director, Bang on a Can: "There is no name yet for this kind of music" writes Mark Swed about David Lang, the provocative American composer. Co-Founder of New York's legendary new music festival, Bang on a Can, Lang's distinct sound fuses classical music with urban aggressiveness, where melodies are accompanied by noise, and subtle harmonies are pulled apart by pounding rhythms. Commissioned by such organizations as the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the BBC Singers, the American Composers Orchestra and the Santa Fe Opera, Lang's works are regularly performed around the world: at the New York Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic; at the Tanglewood, the Aspen Music Festival, the Almeida, Holland, Berlin and Huddersfield festivals; the Munich Biennale; in the choreography of Twyla Tharp; in theater productions in New York, San Francisco and London; and at Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center and the South Bank Centre. Along with fellow Bang on a Can composers Michael Gordon and Julia Wolfe, Lang was commissioned by the Settembre Musica Festival in Turin, Italy to create a new comic-book opera, *The Carbon Copy Building*, in collaboration with comic-strip artist Ben Katchor. The revolutionary new opera premiered in Turin, Italy on 9 September 1999.

David Lang's awards include the Rome Prize, the BMW Music-Theater Prize (Munich), a Kennedy Center/Friedheim Award, the Revson Fellowship with the New York Philharmonic, and grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, the New York Foundation for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts. In 1999 he received a Bessie Award for his music for choreographer Susan Marshall's *The Most Dangerous Room in the House*, performed live by the Bang on a Can All-Stars at the Next Wave Festival of the Brooklyn Academy of Music. *The Carbon Copy Building* won the 2000 Village Voice OBIE Award for Best New American Work.

Miya Masaoka is a classically trained musician, composer and sound artist. She has created works for koto, laser interfaces, laptop and video, installations and written scores for ensembles, chamber orchestra and mixed choirs, and has led her own orchestra and numerous ensembles. In her performance pieces she has mapped the movement of insects whereby their movements trigger the sounds for the piece. These pieces investigate insect culture and behavior, extract various data as source material for sound and investigate the constructions of race, gender. In other works, she has monitored the physiological response of plants, the human brain and her own body as renderings for music and sound composition. In her plant pieces she explores the keen awareness of plants to their environment, and the plant's ability to think and respond.

Since forming and directing the San Francisco Gagaku Society (an ensemble studying and performing traditional Japanese court music) Masaoka has been performing her work in varied musical contexts in India, Europe, Japan, Canada and the US. Her works have been performed by Volti, the Ensemble of the Piedmont Choirs, Bang on a Can, ROVA Saxophone Quartet; her piece for Lines Ballet was performed at the Venice Biennale 2004. Other commissions include Engine 27, Harvestworks/The Kitchen, the faculty award for Student Composition of 1994, Mills College, the California Arts Council Composer Fellowship, Gerbode Fellowship. Her residencies include the Western Front, Steim, Other Minds Djerassi residency, and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Wattis Residency. She received the Alpert Arts Award in 2004. She holds a B.A. in Music, San Francisco State University; M.A. in Music Composition, Mills College and is currently a

professor in the Music/Sound department at the Milton Avery School of the Arts MFA program at Bard College, New York.

Bob McGrath, Director, Ridge Theater, is the winner of three OBIE awards for: Direction, "Jennie Richee" (2001), Best New American Work, "The Carbon Copy Building" (2000), and another for Sustained Achievement. He has directed all of Ridge Theater's productions. Mr. McGrath was awarded a fellowship from The Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts, and has taught at NYU and the Eugene O'Neil Theater Center. He has directed at venues including the American Repertory Theater, The Kitchen, Lincoln Center, La MaMa, ETC., MASS MoCA, The Kampfnagle (Hamburg, Germany), and The Carignano (Turin, Italy). He has worked with writers and composers including Mac Wellman, Ben Katchor, Susan Sontag, Robert Coover, Michael Gordon, Julia Wolfe, David Lang, Bang On A Can, and Cynthia Hopkins. As an actor and a writer, Mr. McGrath has collaborated on the Scott Saunders films *The Headhunter's Sister* (Winner, Independent Spirit Awards, 1998) and *The Lost Words*.

Joseph Melillo, Executive Producer, Brooklyn Academy of Music, is responsible for the artistic direction of BAM. Through June 1999, he was producing director at BAM; he was also the NEXT WAVE Festival director from its inception in 1983 to 1989. In 1990, he served as a consultant for the second New York International Festival for the Arts. He was general manager of the 1982 New World Festival of the Arts in Miami; Theater Program director for FEDAPT; marketing director for the Walnut Street Theater in Philadelphia; a Thematic Specialist in Contemporary American Theater for the Institute of International Education, Department of State, USIA; and producing director of the Chelsea Theater Center of New York. He has served on the board of directors for the Association of Performing Arts Presenters; and for En Garde Arts; as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts Dance Program; the New York State Council on the Arts; and as editor and speaker. In June of 1999, he was named Chevalier of Arts and Letters of the French Legion of Honor. Melillo received a B.A. in English and Theater at Sacred Heart University in Bridgeport, Connecticut and an M.F.A. in Speech and Drama at Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.

Frank J. Oteri, Moderator, composer and music journalist, joined the staff of the American Music Center in November 1998 to serve as the editor of its Web magazine *NewMusicBox*, which he has done since its launch in May 1999. Described as "passionate and knowledgeable" in the San Francisco Chronicle, Oteri is an outspoken crusader for new music who has given presentations about breaking down musical barriers at conferences and panels for the American Symphony Orchestra League, Chamber Music America, the American Music Personnel in Public Radio, the Music Critics Association of North America, and the Jazz Journalists Association, and has appeared on television and radio talk shows around the country to discuss the importance of contemporary music. Co-editor of *IAMIC News*, the newsletter of the International Association of Music Information Centres, Oteri has written booklet notes for CDs on the Albany, Argo/Decca, BMG Classics, CRI, First Edition, Koch International Classics, Naxos American Classics, and New Albion labels as well as features for *BBC Music*, *Chamber Music*, *Ear Magazine*, *Stagebill/Playbill*, *Symphony*, *Time Out New York* and the *Revised New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, and his comments about music have been quoted in *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *U.S. News and World Report*, the *Guardian* (U.K.) and *Jazz Times*. He is a frequent pre-concert speaker at new music concerts and has spoken before performances at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Merkin Concert Hall, and Columbia University's Miller Theatre.

Alisa Regas, Moderator, joined Pomegranate Arts as Associate Director immediately upon its formation in 1998. An independent production company based in New York City, Pomegranate

Arts is dedicated to the development of international contemporary performing arts projects. Pomegranate Arts produced the world-wide tour of *Dracula: The Music and Film* with Philip Glass and the Kronos Quartet, and is the American producer of *Shockheaded Peter*, a music theater work based on the *Strewwelpeter Tales* by Heinrich Hoffman, directed by Phelim McDermott and Julian Crouch and featuring the music of Martyn Jacques and The Tiger Lillies. Current projects include *Philip on Film*, a twenty-five year retrospective of Philip Glass' work for film; international touring of the theatrical documentary *Charlie Victor Romeo; Happiness*, a solo work by Laurie Anderson, and the family music project Dan Zanes and Friends. While at Pomegranate Arts, she has served as a consultant for the Creative Capitol Fund and the National Dance Project for the New England Foundation for the Arts.

From 1994-1998, Alisa worked closely with producer Jedediah Wheeler and producing director Linda Brumbach at International Production Associates (IPA). At IPA, she also served as the project manager for *Les Enfants Terribles*, a dance opera spectacle by Philip Glass and Susan Marshall; and was the project manager for performance artists Spalding Gray, Lisa Kron and Diamanda Galás as well as several international touring projects by composer Philip Glass. Also at IPA, Alisa worked as the marketing and communications manager for all IPA artists and projects including Twyla Tharp, Philip Glass, Robert Wilson, Richard Foreman, Elizabeth Streb, Meryl Tankard, and Sankai Juku.

chinese currents in contemporary music

Jon Jang, composer, pianist, and Artistic Director, Pan Asian Arkestra, has followed his own path of creating music which has become "two flowers on a stem," a metaphor expressing the symbiotic relationship of his cultural identity as a Chinese American as well as his musical philosophy of honoring tradition and encouraging innovation. "My music does not come from the third stream, but the flowing stream."

As a composer, Jang has received commissions from the Library of Congress, Kronos Quartet, Chanticleer and others. He has also received major grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Meet the Composer, Rockefeller, Creative Work Fund and Creative Capital. Jang composed the score for the dramatic adaptation of Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* which was staged at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Huntington Theatre in Boston and Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles. Jang recently completed the score for the film, "Race is the Place," a 90 minute documentary featuring Amiri Baraka and other artists who give their perspectives on racism. Jang is currently working on his first symphony that will pay tribute to the Chinese who built the first transcontinental railroad in United States.

As a pianist and artistic director of ensembles, Jon Jang's ensembles have toured at major concert halls and music festivals in China, South Africa (1994), Europe, Canada and the United States. As part of the Beijing Trio featuring Max Roach, Jon performed in Washington DC, Chicago, San Francisco, Chicago, Zurich, Berlin, Milan, and the Royal Festival Hall in London. Last April, Jon Jang and James Newton Ensemble performed their composition, *When Sorrow Turns to Joy - A Musical Tribute to Paul Robeson* at the Banlieues Bleues Festival in Paris.

Zhou Long, composer and Music Director, Music from China, is internationally recognized for creating a unique body of music that brings together the aesthetic concepts and musical elements of East and West. Deeply grounded in the entire spectrum of his Chinese heritage, including folk, philosophical, and spiritual ideals, he is a pioneer in transferring the idiomatic sounds and techniques of ancient Chinese musical traditions to modern Western instruments and ensembles. His creative vision has resulted in a new music that stretches Western

instruments eastward and Chinese instruments westward, achieving an exciting and fertile common ground.

Zhou Long is currently Visiting Professor of Composition and director of Musica Nova at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music. In 2003 he was recipient of the Academy Award in Music, a lifetime achievement award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His works have been recorded on many labels, including BIS, EMI, and Teldec. His music is published exclusively by Oxford University Press.

Frank J. Oteri, Moderator, see above.

Ken Smith, music journalist, divides his time between New York and Hong Kong, where he serves as both the North American correspondent for *Gramophone* magazine and the Asian performing arts critic for the *Financial Times*. As a critic and journalist, he has traveled widely, covering music on five continents for a wide range of publications including the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time Out New York*, the *Washington Post*, *Newsday* and *Travel & Leisure*.

From the earliest days as a critic, he has focused on composed music of his time. His 1996 article on Tan Dun for the Los Angeles Times was the first profile of the composer to appear in a major U.S. paper, and since that time he has devoted much of his career to following contemporary composition among Chinese-born composers. He has lectured at the 2002 Beijing Music Festival and the 2003 Chinese Composers Festival in Hong Kong, and has curated contemporary music events for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Da Camera of Houston and the La Jolla Chamber Music Festival. He is a frequent guest critic on WNYC's "Soundcheck," as well as a regular commentator and occasional presenter for RTHK Radio 4 in Hong Kong.

Min Xiaofen, pipa player and vocalist, Sony, Verve, and Avant recording artist, is internationally known for her virtuosity and fluid style. Her work as a pipa soloist for the famed Nanjing National Music Orchestra from 1980 to 1992 set the standard for the rest of her career. After arriving in the United States in 1992, she began working with composers Carl Stone, Zhou Long and Chen Yi, then recorded *The Moon Rising* (Cala), hailed by *BBC Music Magazine* as "one of the best CDs of 1996," and *Spring, River, Flower, Moon, Night* (Asphodel), a brilliant solo set of traditional repertoire.

Adventure and exploration have always been a hallmark of this great artist's work, and Ms. Min has received high acclaim for her classical, new music and jazz performances. She was featured soloist with the New York City Opera, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the vocal ensemble Chanticleer, the San Diego Symphony and the Shanghai Radio Symphony Orchestra. She has performed solo concerts at the Vienna Music Festival, the Brussels Lute Festival, the Geneva Music Festival, the Berlin Chinese Music Festival, the New York Guitar Festival and at various jazz festivals in Paris, Quebec and Jakarta.

In 1998, Ms. Min premiered composer Tan Dun's *Peony Pavilion* (Sony), an opera with director Peter Sellars. Her recording *Viper* (Avant), improvisations with Derek Bailey, was one of *The Wire* Magazine's "1998 Albums of the Year," and she released *Min Xiao-Fen with Six Composers* (Avant) in 1999, an exciting solo album of modern works. She was featured on *Shaolin Ulysses* and *The Port of Last Resort* (both Tzadik), two movie soundtracks composed by John Zorn, and composed "The Shang" with pianist Randy Weston, recorded Khepera (Verve) then toured the project worldwide. In January 2003, Ms. Min became the first Chinese musician to ever perform at the IAJE Conference when she played with saxophonist Jane Ira Bloom in Toronto. Min performed a pair of Philip Glass's chamber operas, *The Sound of a Voice* and *Hotel of Dreams*,

at the Court Theater in Chicago. She was invited to play the music of Thelonius Monk in a solo concert at Lincoln Center in December 2003.