



american composers orchestra

news release

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Carlos Bandera Wins \$15,000 Underwood Commission from American Composers Orchestra

Tomàs Peire Serrate wins \$15,000 Audience Choice Commission



Photos by Maitreyi Muralidharan (Bandera) & Jason Buchanan (Serrate) available upon request.

Carlos Bandera: www.carlosbandera.com | **Tomàs Peire Serrate:** www.tomaspeire.com
American Composers Orchestra: www.americancomposers.org

New York, NY – **American Composers Orchestra (ACO)** has awarded composer **Carlos Bandera** its **2018 Underwood Commission**, bringing him a \$15,000 commission for a work to be premiered by ACO in a future season. Chosen from six finalists during ACO’s 27th **Underwood New Music Readings** on June 21 and 22, 2018, in one of the most coveted opportunities for emerging composers in the United States, Bandera won the top prize with his work *Lux in Tenebris*.

In addition, for the ninth year, audience members at the Underwood New Music Readings had a chance to make their voices heard through the **Audience Choice Commission**. The winner this year was composer **Tomàs Peire Serrate**, for his piece *Rauxa*. As the winner, Serrate also receives a \$15,000 commission from ACO for a composition to be premiered in a future season.

“Carlos Bandera’s orchestral writing speaks with clarity and purpose,” says ACO Artistic Director **Derek Bermel**. “We were impressed by the expansive, colorful landscape in his tone poem *Lux in Tenebris* and look forward with great enthusiasm to his new work for ACO.”

ACO President **Ed Yim** adds, “Tomàs Peire Serrate’s piece *Rauxa* takes the audience on a visceral ride of arresting rhythms and colors. He harnesses the forces of a large orchestra with such amazing command, and we applaud our audience’s good taste in picking his piece as the Audience Choice Commission. The commission that goes with the

audience favorite vote puts a high value on the input of our listeners in the discovery of the future of orchestral music.”

2018 mentor composer **Gabriela Ortiz** says of the Readings, “It is essential for any young composer to hear his or her own music be played by a professional orchestra. ACO has done incredible work by having the annual Underwood New Music Readings for emerging composers.” On her experience this year, she adds, “As a mentor composer, I had the opportunity to hear the orchestral music of six young talented artists. We spent three days working together, discussing their pieces along with the view of other mentor composers and performers, and exchanging new ideas about how to make music. The great part about this experience is that all of us learned from each other, music is always the way for communication, understanding and enriching our souls and lives.”

“Being a part of this year’s Underwood New Music Readings was an absolutely incredible experience,” **Carlos Bandera** said. “The feedback sessions with the musicians of ACO, the mentor composers, and George Manahan, in addition to the presentations during the career development workshop, were immensely informative and will without a doubt be on my mind for many future projects. I am so honored to have received the Underwood Commission, it is difficult to put into words how excited I am to have another opportunity to work with ACO!”

“My participation in the ACO Underwood Readings was an incredibly rewarding experience,” adds **Tomàs Pierre Serrate**. “I was thrilled to share my music with the other participating composers, mentors and ACO musicians. Receiving impressions and feedback from them was both enlightening and a real privilege.”

2018 Underwood Commission winner **Carlos Bandera** (b. 1993) is fascinated by musical architecture and by the music of the past. His recent music explores these fascinations, often by placing a musical quotation, be it a phrase, scale, or sonority, within dense microtonal textures.

Carlos’ music has been performed in the Faroe Islands, Scotland, Uzbekistan, China, and several spaces in the US, including Stern Auditorium, Carnegie Hall. In 2018, he attended CULTIVATE, where his piece *Spirare* was premiered, as well as Time of Music in Viitsaari, Finland, where he studied with Chaya Czernowin. He has also attended the Fresh Inc Music Festival where he studied composition with Dan Visconti and the Wintergreen Summer Music Academy where he studied with Daron Hagen and Gilda Lyons and had his *Florestan* premiered by members of the Wintergreen Festival Orchestra.

Carlos earned his Bachelor of Music degree in Music Theory and Composition from the John J. Cali School of Music at Montclair State University, where he studied with Elizabeth Brown, Dean Drummond, and Marcos Balter. Carlos recently received his Master of Music degree in Composition from The Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, where he participated in masterclasses with Christopher Rouse and Georg Friedrich Haas and studied privately with Kevin Puts.

Carlos notes about his piece, “Upon first hearing the music of Anton Bruckner, I felt deeply connected to the composer and his work. His Eighth Symphony in particular, with its immense harmonic landscapes, devastating silences, and profound ‘darkness-to-light’ narrative, continues to be one of my greatest influences – no doubt, in more ways than I am even aware of. *Lux in Tenebris* explores these elements of the Eighth Symphony by allowing Brucknerian light to pierce through a dense micropolyphonic fabric.” For more information, visit www.carlosbandera.com.

2018 Audience Choice Commission winner **Tomàs Peire Serrate** (b. 1979) studied piano at the Sant Cugat del Vallès conservatory and composition at the Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya (Barcelona) with Salvador Brotons and the Sibelius Academy (Helsinki) with Tapio Tuomela and Risto Väisänen. In 2013 he graduated from New York University with a Master’s in Scoring for Film and Multimedia, where he studied with Ron Sadoff, Mark Suozzo, Justin Dello Joio and Julia Wolfe. That year he moved to Los Angeles to explore the film music industry and participate as a composer in different projects including writing the music for the films *The Anushree Experiments* and *Prism*, and orchestrating and arranging music for *Love and Friendship*, *If I Stay*, and *Minions*.

In the fall of 2015, Tomàs initiated his PhD at UCLA, where studies with Bruce Broughton, Mark Carlson, Richard Danielpour, Peter Golub, Ian Krouse, and David S. Lefkowitz. His research at UCLA is about music, space and

media, with a particular interest in new technologies and virtual reality. His concert works have been performed in Europe, US and Asia, and is currently working on the English version of his monodrama *Hillary*, recently premiered at the Off-Liceu series in Barcelona in June 2018. For more information, visit www.tomaspeire.com.

Of his piece, Serrate notes, “*Rauxa* is a sudden determination, like the impulse I had to write this piece, or an outburst, which actually is how this work begins. It is a Catalan word used in pair with another one, *Seny*, meaning balance and sensibleness, to describe or refer to the Catalan people and their character. This duality, like in other cultures and traditions, is essential, indivisible, and necessary to understand each part separately, which is what I tried to explore here. I worked on sketches and sections of *Rauxa* in different moments and places, always away from my home country, Catalonia, and I kept coming back to it looking to improve it as well as to learn more about myself and about music.”

About the Underwood New Music Readings

The 27th Annual Underwood New Music Readings were under the direction of ACO’s Artistic Director, composer **Derek Bermel**, and were conducted by ACO Music Director **George Manahan**, with **Bermel, Gabriela Ortiz, John Corigliano**, and **Robert Beaser** as mentor composers. The conductor, mentor composers, and principal players from ACO provided critical feedback to each of the participants during and after the sessions. In addition to the Readings, the composer participants took part in Career Development Workshops with industry professionals. This year's New Music Readings attracted over 250 submissions from emerging composers around the country.

For over a generation, **ACO's Underwood New Music Readings** have provided all-important career development and public exposure to the country's most promising emerging composers, with over 150 composers participating. Readings alumni have won every major composition award, including the Pulitzer, Grammy, Grawemeyer, American Academy of Arts & Letters, and Rome Prizes. Orchestras around the globe have commissioned ACO Readings alumni.

The New Music Readings have helped launched many of today's top composers, such as ACO’s own Artistic Director **Derek Bermel**, **Lisa Bielawa**, **Anthony Cheung**, **Anna Clyne**, **Cindy Cox**, **Sebastian Currier**, **Jennifer Higdon**, **Pierre Jalbert**, **Aaron Jay Kernis**, **Hannah Lash**, **Carter Pann**, **P.Q. Phan**, **Tobias Picker**, **Narong Prangcharoen**, **Paola Prestini**, **Daniel Bernard Roumain**, **Huang Ruo**, **Eric Samuelson**, **Carlos Sanchez-Guiterrez**, **Kate Soper**, **Gregory Spears**, **Joan Tower**, **Ken Ueno**, **Dan Visconti**, **Wang Jie**, **Dalit Warshaw**, **Randall Woolf**, **Nina Young**, and **Roger Zare**.

In addition to Carlos Bandera and Tomàs Peire Serrate, the 2018 Underwood New Music Readings participants were:

Lily Chen: *A Leaf Falls After*

Taiwanese-born Lily Chen (b. 1985) is a composer exploring timbral materials with subtle theatrical potentials in both acoustic and electronic music. Lily has received first Prize of Asian Composers League Young Composers Award, first and second Prizes of Nicola de Lorenzo Prize in Music Composition, among others. Her music has been performed at June in Buffalo, Mise-en Festival, International Computer Music Conference, SEAMUS, New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, and Asian Composers League Conference and Festival. Lily has collaborated with St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Eco Ensemble, Ensemble Signal, Mivos Quartet, Ensemble Mise-en, and National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra. In December 2017, she received her Ph.D. in music composition from the University of California at Berkeley, where she studied with Ken Ueno, Franck Bedrossian, Edmund Campion, and Cindy Cox. She also holds M.M. (2009) and B.F.A. (2007) from Taipei National University of the Arts in Taiwan, under the instruction of Chung-Kun Hung. For more information, visit www.chenlily.com.

Scott Lee: *Anadyr*

Composer Scott Lee (b. 1988) writes concert music infused with the visceral sounds of popular music. Lee has worked with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the North Carolina Symphony, the Portland Symphony Orchestra, Winston-Salem Symphony members, Symphony In C, and the Peabody Symphony Orchestra, chamber groups such as the Jack Quartet, yMusic, the Da Capo Chamber Players, Deviant Septet, chatterbird, and ShoutHouse, as well as multi-platinum pop artist Ben Folds. He has received commissions from the Aspen Music Festival, the Baltimore Classical Guitar Society, loadbang, the Raleigh Civic Symphony, and the American Craft Council. Notable honors

include a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, two ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards, winner of the Symphony In C Young Composers Composition, the grand prize in the PARMA Student Composer Competition, and the Gustav Klemm Award in Composition from the Peabody Institute. Lee has also received fellowships to attend the Tanglewood and Aspen Music Festivals. As a James B. Duke Fellow, Lee recently earned a PhD in Composition at Duke University, mentored by Scott Lindroth and Steve Jaffe. He earned the Master of Music degree at the Peabody Institute, where he was the recipient of the Philip D. Glass Endowed Scholarship in Composition and studied with Michael Hersch. He received his Bachelor of Music degree from the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University, where he studied with Michael Rose, Michael Slayton, Stan Link, and Michael Kurek. For more information, visit www.scottleee.net.

Ryan Lindviet: *Like an Altar with 9,000 Robot Attendants*

Ryan Lindviet's (b. 1994) works have been performed across the United States and abroad by Alarm Will Sound, "The President's Own" United States Marine Band, Orkest de Ereprijs, the USC Thornton Symphony, the Donald Sinta Quartet, FearNoMusic, and the City of Tomorrow, among others. His music has received recognition from BMI, ASCAP, SCI, the American Modern Ensemble, the National Band Association, Tribeca New Music, and the Texas Music Educators Association. Ryan grew up in Texas and is a graduate of the University of Southern California, where he was selected as Salutatorian for the class of 2016 and named the Thornton School of Music's Outstanding Graduate. He is currently a master's student at the Yale School of Music. His past teachers include Aaron Jay Kernis, Christopher Theofanidis, Andrew Norman, Ted Hearne, Frank Ticheli, and Donald Crockett. Recent and upcoming projects include *Mysterious Butterflies* for chamber ensemble and eight voices, a wind ensemble version of *Like an Altar with 9,000 Robot Attendants* commissioned by a consortium of 30 university wind ensembles organized by conductor H. Robert Reynolds, a commission for the Big 12 Band Directors Association, and pieces for chamber ensemble and orchestra to be premiered at the Aspen Music Festival in the summer of 2018. For more information, visit www.ryanlindviet.com.

Liliya Ugay: *Rhapsody in Color*

Music by the award-winning composer and pianist Liliya Ugay (b. 1990) has been performed in many countries around the globe. Recipient of a 2016 Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a 2017 Horatio Parker Memorial prize from the Yale School of Music, Ugay has collaborated with the Nashville Symphony, Albany Symphony, New England Philharmonic, Yale Philharmonia, Raleigh Civic Symphony, Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, Molinari Quartet, Antico Moderno, Omnibus ensemble, and Paul Neubauer among others. Her music has been featured at the Aspen, American Composers, New York Electroacoustic Music, June in Buffalo, and Darmstadt New Music festivals, as well as the 52nd Venice Biennale. During 2017-2018 season Ugay has worked on a new opera as a Resident Composer at the American Lyric Theater. Originally from Uzbekistan, Liliya is currently a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at the Yale School of Music studying with Aaron Kernis and David Lang. Besides new music, Liliya is passionate about the music of the repressed composers from the Soviet era. She regularly presents a series of the lecture-recitals on this topic with guidance of Boris Berman. For more information, visit www.liliyaugay.com.

About American Composers Orchestra

Founded in 1977, American Composers Orchestra is dedicated to the creation, performance, preservation, and promotion of music by American composers. ACO makes the creation of new opportunities for American composers and new American orchestral music its central purpose. Through concerts at Carnegie Hall and other venues, recordings, internet and radio broadcasts, educational programs, New Music Readings, and commissions, ACO identifies today's brightest emerging composers, champions prominent established composers as well as those lesser-known, and increases regional, national, and international awareness of the infinite variety of American orchestral music, reflecting geographic, stylistic, and temporal diversity. ACO also serves as an incubator of ideas, research, and talent, as a catalyst for growth and change among orchestras, and as an advocate for American composers and their music. ACO programs seek to innovate and experiment, educate students and the public, and open the orchestra to diverse new influences and audiences. For more information, visit www.americancomposers.org.

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