

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND PRINCETON UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC ANNOUNCE INAUGURAL COMPOSERS OF NJSO EDWARD T. CONE COMPOSITION INSTITUTE

**INSTITUTE PROMOTES NEW MUSIC AND EMERGING COMPOSERS
FIVE-DAY PROGRAM INCLUDES SESSIONS WITH STEVEN MACKEY,
JACQUES LACOMBE, NJSO MUSICIANS AND OTHER INDUSTRY LEADERS**

Funded in part by the Edward T. Cone Foundation

July 15–19 at Princeton University

NEWARK, NJ (May 22, 2014)—The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and Princeton University Department of Music announce the four composers of the inaugural **NJSO Edward T. Cone Composition Institute**, a multi-faceted program that promotes new music and emerging composers. The Institute is a collaboration between the NJSO and the Princeton University Department of Music and is generously funded in part by the Edward T. Cone Foundation.

Selected from an international applicant pool of 28 university composition students and composers in the early stages of their professional careers, the four composers of the Institute will participate in five days of intense compositional evaluations and consultations July 15–19 on the Princeton University campus; the program will culminate in a live concert performance of the participants' works by the NJSO and Music Director Jacques Lacombe on July 19 at the Richardson Auditorium.

Lembit Beecher—praised by *The San Francisco Chronicle* for his “hauntingly lovely and deeply personal” music and by *The New York Times* for his “alluring, emotive” work—is currently serving a three-year appointment as the first composer-in-residence of Opera Philadelphia in collaboration with Gotham Chamber Opera and Music Theatre Group of New York.

David Biedenbender has garnered two ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards and has collaborated with diverse ensembles including Alarm Will Sound, PRISM Saxophone Quartet, Stenhammar String Quartet, Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, United States Navy Band, Philharmonie Baden-Baden and Boston New Music Initiative.

Daniel J. Choi, who recently completed bachelor's degrees in music composition and economics at the University of Miami, has heard his music read by the Cleveland Orchestra three yearly workshop residencies; his music has also been performed by the Pulse Chamber Ensemble, Borup-Ernst Duo and members of the soundSCAPE festival, a contemporary new-music festival in the Italian Alps.

Chris Rogerson has received praise from *The Washington Post* for his “confident, fully-grown composing talent” and from *The New York Times* for his music's “virtuosic exuberance” and “haunting beauty.” Rogerson has received commissions and performances from the Kansas City, New World and Grand Rapids symphonies; Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra; Chicago Sinfonietta; Cabrillo Festival Orchestra and Brentano Quartet.

Lacombe says: “The talent level—and the accomplishments—of the applicants was very high. [Institute Director Steven Mackey] and I saw imagination and creativity, and we also saw that these composers have a real understanding of [writing for orchestra], that their work was not just pure invention but also connected to a solid musical background. That mixture of personality and understanding is what I look for [when programming] new music, and I saw that in these compositions. It is going to be a very strong first year for the Institute.”

At the Institute, the four composers will hear their work in daily rehearsals with the NJSO, receiving feedback from Lacombe and NJSO musicians, and will participate in one-on-one coaching sessions and group master classes with Institute Director Steven Mackey. The Institute will also provide career-enriching sessions with music-publishing industry leaders, including Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., President Zizi Mueller, to broaden awareness of current practices in publishing, licensing, promotion and music preparation. By the conclusion of this laboratory experience, participants will have gained invaluable musical and practical feedback about writing for orchestra.

Mackey says: “This Institute is a major opportunity to workshop with a professional orchestra. Over the past 15 years, I have seen firsthand what excellent mentors these musicians are for emerging composers in the reading sessions the NJSO has held for Princeton University composition graduate students. Their desire to give feedback and help young composers strengthen their work will serve the Institute’s participants well.

“What is truly unique about this Institute is the multifaceted experience the composers will receive. The business of composing goes beyond the creative musical process, and at the Institute, industry leaders will illuminate key elements of publishing, promotion and other important practical issues these composers will encounter as they launch and sustain successful careers.”

The NJSO will present the world premiere of each composer’s work at a special public concert on July 19 at Richardson Auditorium on the Princeton University campus. Lacombe conducts the performance, which begins at 8 pm. General-admission tickets are \$15 and are available for purchase online at www.njsymphony.org or by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476).

The Orchestra may program Institute composers’ works on future regular-season concerts, Lacombe says. “The NJSO believes strongly in finding and sharing new talents in soloists, conductors and composers. We hope this will be the beginning of a relationship between these composers and the Orchestra.”

The launch of the NJSO Edward T. Cone Composition Institute coincides with the NJSO’s presentation of the world premiere of Cone’s Symphony at a special July 18 concert/lecture at Richardson Auditorium. Cone has been a connective element through the five seasons of the Orchestra’s critically lauded New Jersey Roots Project, which celebrates composers born in New Jersey or influenced by their time spent in the Garden State. Through the project, the NJSO has presented not only Cone’s music but also the work of composers whose artistic identity was influenced by the late Princeton University professor. The Institute further celebrates Cone’s legacy as both a composer and a teacher.

Additional information about the Institute is available at www.njsymphony.org/institute.

WORLD-PREMIERE SATURDAY

Saturday, July 19 at 8 pm | Richardson Auditorium in Princeton

Jacques Lacombe, conductor
Steven Mackey, Institute director
New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

LEMBIT BEECHER	<i>Kalevipoeg in California</i>
DAVID BIEDENBENDER	<i>Strange, Beautiful Noises</i>
DANIEL J. CHOI	<i>Scaena Ager</i>
CHRIS ROGERSON	<i>Night and the City</i>

Additional concert information is available at www.njsymphony.org/events/detail/cone-composition-institute.

World-Premiere Weekend Special Offer: five world premieres in two days

A special World-Premiere Weekend package for the NJSO Edward T. Cone Institute world premieres and the [NJSO's world premiere of Cone's Symphony](#) on Friday, July 18, is available for \$25. The World-Premiere Weekend package is available for purchase online at www.njsymphony.org or by phone at 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476).

COMPOSERS OF THE INAUGURAL NJSO EDWARD T. CONE COMPOSITION INSTITUTE

Lembit Beecher

Praised by *The San Francisco Chronicle* for his “hauntingly lovely and deeply personal” music and by *The New York Times* for his “alluring, emotive” work, Lembit Beecher is a composer who strives to create intimate, heartfelt and dramatically potent musical experiences. Beecher is currently serving a three-year term as the first composer in residence of Opera Philadelphia in collaboration with Gotham Chamber Opera and Music Theatre Group of New York. Gotham Chamber Opera premiered his chamber opera *I Have No Stories To Tell You* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in February 2014, in what *The Wall Street Journal* dubbed an “ingenious project.”

Born to Estonian and American parents, Beecher grew up under the redwoods in Santa Cruz, California, a few miles from the Pacific Ocean. He has lived in Boston, Houston, Ann Arbor, Berlin and New York, earning degrees from Harvard, Rice and the University of Michigan. This varied background has made him particularly sensitive to place, ecology, memory and the multitude of ways in which people tell stories. Beecher’s work has been performed at the Tanglewood, Aspen and Cabrillo Music Festivals and by the Del Sol String Quartet, Aizuri Quartet, Shepherd School Symphony, New York Youth Symphony and Opera Philadelphia, among others. He has been in residence at the Copland House and Scrag Mountain Music; he was a fellow at the University of Michigan Institute for the Humanities. More information is available at www.lembitbeecher.com.

David Biedenbender

David Biedenbender’s first musical collaborations were in rock and jazz bands as an electric bassist and in wind and jazz bands as a bass trombone and euphonium player. A musical omnivore and a passionate collaborator, Biedenbender is inspired by a diverse array of interests and experiences, and his creative interests include working with diverse artists from classically trained musicians to improvisers, acoustic chamber music to large ensembles, and interactive electronic interfaces to live brain data. Biedenbender has collaborated with many renowned performers and ensembles, including Alarm Will Sound, the PRISM Saxophone Quartet, Stenhammar String Quartet (Sweden), Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, VocalEssence, United States Navy Band, Eastman Wind Ensemble, Philharmonie Baden-Baden (Germany), Atlantic Chamber Ensemble, Detroit Symphony Orchestra bass trombonist Randall Hawes and University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Choir, among others.

Recent recognition for his work includes two ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards and the 2012 Lee Ettelson Composers Award. He received a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in composition at the University of Michigan and has also studied at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study, the Aspen Music Festival and School and in Mysore, India, where he studied South Indian Carnatic music. His primary musical mentors include Stephen Rush, Evan Chambers, Kristin Kuster, Michael Daugherty, Bright Sheng, Christopher Lees, David R. Gillingham, José Luis-Maurtua, John Williamson and Mark Cox. More information is available at www.davidbiedenbender.com.

Daniel J. Choi

Daniel J. Choi, who recently completed bachelor’s degrees in music composition and economics at the University of Miami, continues to establish himself as an emerging composer in both university and professional scenes. The Cleveland Orchestra has read Choi’s compositions in three consecutive annual workshop residencies; his music has also been performed by the Pulse Chamber Ensemble, Borup-Ernst Duo and members of the soundSCAPE festival, a contemporary new-music festival in the Italian Alps. In addition to his participation in the NJSO Edward T. Cone Composition Institute, Choi will attend the ICA ClarinetFest—where his most recent work will be performed by

MiamiClarinet—in early August. Choi’s past teachers include Lansing McLoskey and Robert Gower at the University of Miami’s Frost School of Music. Choi will begin graduate studies at the Boston Conservatory in the fall.

Chris Rogerson

The Washington Post has hailed Chris Rogerson as a “confident, fully-grown composing talent,” and *The New York Times* has praised his music for its “virtuosic exuberance” and “haunting beauty.” Rogerson has received commissions and performances from the Kansas City, New World and Grand Rapids symphonies; Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra; Chicago Sinfonietta; Cabrillo Festival Orchestra; New York Youth Symphony; Brentano Quartet and JACK Quartet, in venues including Carnegie Hall, the Library of Congress, Kennedy Center and Symphony Center in Chicago.

Recently, Rogerson was honored with a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He has won awards from ASCAP, BMI, the Theodore Presser Foundation, National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts, National Association for Music Education, New York Art Ensemble and Aspen Music Festival (Jacob Druckman Award).

Rogerson has been in residence at the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo and Ucross Foundation. He has also been composer-in-residence for the Chamber Music Festival of Lexington, young composer-in-residence at Music from Angel Fire and a fellow at the Aspen Music Festival, Cabrillo Festival and Norfolk New Music Workshop.

Born in 1988, Rogerson studied at the Curtis Institute of Music and Yale School of Music with Jennifer Higdon, Aaron Jay Kernis and Martin Bresnick; he is currently a doctoral fellow at Princeton University.

NJSO EDWARD T. CONE COMPOSITION INSTITUTE LEADERS

Steven Mackey, Institute Director and Princeton University Department of Music Chair

Steven Mackey was born in 1956 to American parents stationed in Frankfurt, Germany. He is regarded as one of the leading composers of his generation and has composed for orchestra, chamber ensemble, dance and opera. His first musical passion was playing the electric guitar in rock bands based in northern California. He blazed a trail in the 1980s and 90s by including the electric guitar and vernacular music influence in his concert music, and he regularly performs his own works, including two electric guitar concertos and numerous solo and chamber works. He is also active as an improvising musician and performs with his band Big Farm.

Mackey’s music has been performed by leading musical institutions throughout the world, including the Los Angeles, BBC and New York philharmonics; San Francisco and Chicago symphonies; Philadelphia and Concertgebouw orchestras and Brentano, Kronos and Arditti string quartets, among others. He has received numerous awards, including a Grammy Award in 2012 for his album “Lonely Motel: Music From Slide.”

Jacques Lacombe, NJSO Music Director

A remarkable conductor whose artistic integrity and rapport with orchestras have propelled him to international stature, Jacques Lacombe has been Music Director of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra since 2010 and Orchestre Symphonique de Trois-Rivières since 2006. He was previously Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal and Music Director of orchestra and opera with the Philharmonie de Lorraine.

Lacombe has garnered critical praise for his creative programming and leadership of the NJSO. The Orchestra’s acclaimed “Man & Nature” Winter Festivals have featured innovative programs, including a realization of Scriabin’s “color organ.” He created the New Jersey Roots Project, presenting music by New Jersey composers. *The New York Times* wrote, “It was an honor to be in the hall” for Lacombe and the NJSO’s performance at the 2012 Spring for Music Festival at Carnegie Hall.

This season, Lacombe’s NJSO highlights include the world premieres of an NJSO commission by Geri Allen and a new work by Lowell Liebermann and the U.S. premiere of Tan Dun’s Earth Concerto. He conducts the Montréal, Québec and Columbus Symphony Orchestras, returns to the Opéra de Monte-Carlo for *La Favorite* with tenor Juan Diego Florez and leads Chausson’s *Le roi Arthus* in Strasbourg.

He has appeared with the Cincinnati, Toronto, Vancouver and New Zealand Symphony Orchestras and National Arts Centre Orchestra of Ottawa. He is a frequent guest conductor in France, Spain and Australia and has led tours and recordings with the National Youth Orchestra of Canada.

Opera highlights include all-star productions of *La bohème* and *Tosca* at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, numerous productions with the Deutsche Oper Berlin and engagements with the Metropolitan Opera and opera houses in Marseille and Turin. He has recorded for the CPO and Analekta labels; he has recorded Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Janáček's Suite from *The Cunning Little Vixen* with the NJSO. His performances have been broadcast on PBS, the CBC, Mezzo TV and Arte TV, among others.

Born in Cap-de-la-Madeleine, Québec, Lacombe attended the Conservatoire de Musique de Montréal and Hochschule für Musik in Vienna. He was named a Chevalier de l'Ordre national du Québec in 2012 and a Member of the Order of Canada in 2013—among the highest civilian honors in the country.

THE NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Named “a vital, artistically significant musical organization” by *The Wall Street Journal*, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra embodies that vitality through its statewide presence and critically acclaimed performances, education partnerships and unparalleled access to music and the Orchestra's superb musicians.

Under the bold leadership of Music Director Jacques Lacombe, the NJSO presents classical, pops and family programs, as well as outdoor summer concerts and special events. Embracing its legacy as a statewide orchestra, the NJSO is the resident orchestra of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark and regularly performs at the State Theatre in New Brunswick, Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank, Richardson Auditorium in Princeton, Mayo Performing Arts Center in Morristown and bergenPAC in Englewood. Partnerships with New Jersey arts organizations, universities and civic organizations remain a key element of the Orchestra's statewide identity.

In addition to its lauded artistic programming, the NJSO presents a suite of education and community engagement programs that promote meaningful, lifelong engagement with live music. Programs include the three-ensemble Greater Newark Youth Orchestras, school-time Concerts for Young People performances and multiple initiatives that provide and promote in-school instrumental instruction. The NJSO's Resources for Education and Community Harmony (REACH) chamber music program annually brings original programs—designed and performed by NJSO musicians—to a variety of settings, reaching as many as 17,000 people in nearly all of New Jersey's 21 counties.

For more information about the NJSO, visit www.njsymphony.org or email information@njsymphony.org. Tickets are available for purchase by phone 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476) or on the Orchestra's website.

The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra's programs are made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, along with many other foundations, corporations and individual donors. United is the official airline of the NJSO.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY'S DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Princeton University's Department of Music is at the epicenter of a musical culture that is broad and deep, reaching from edge to edge of the campus, from the classroom to the concert hall, into the community and from faculty-led groups to those run exclusively by students.

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