

Guest Ensemble Concert:

2022-11-09 – JACK Quartet



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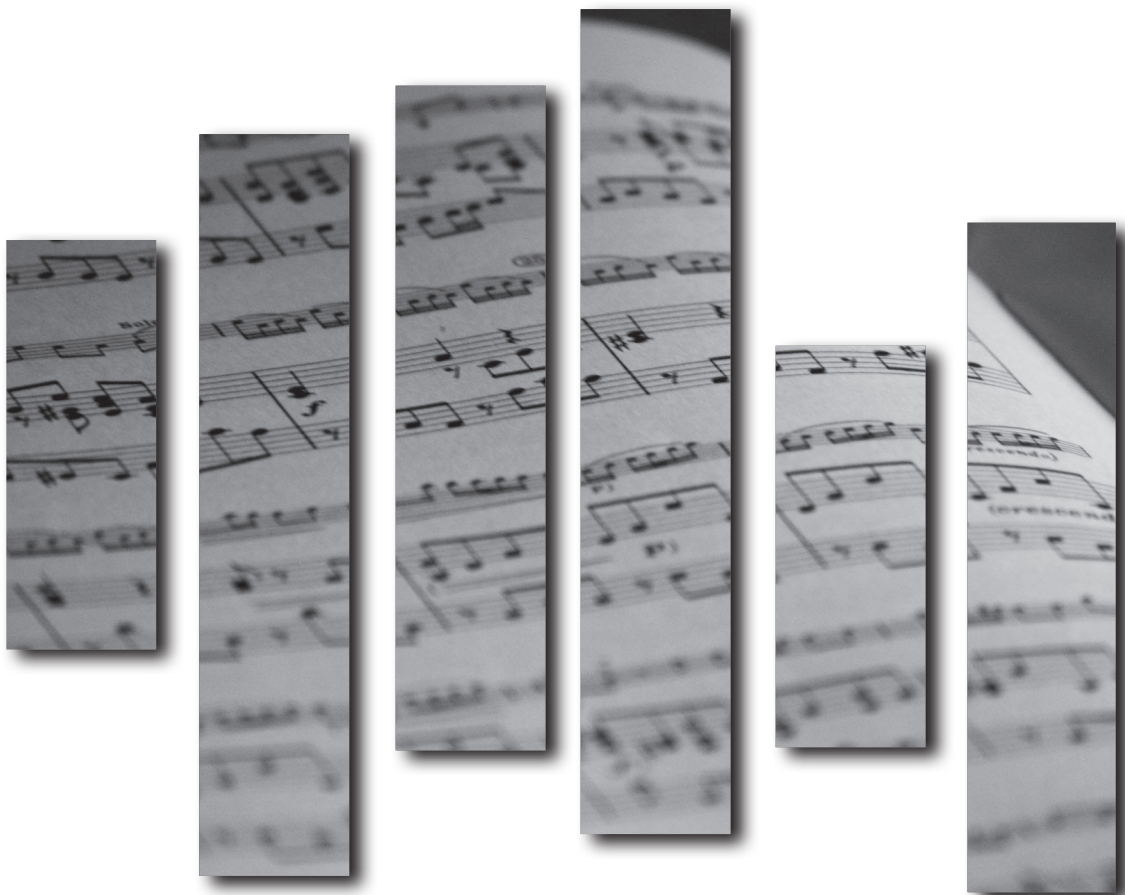


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School of Music



UI STRING QUARTET RESIDENCY PROGRAM

Elizabeth Oakes, *director*

in collaboration with the

CENTER FOR NEW MUSIC

David Gompper, *director*

presents **JACK Quartet**

Wednesday, November 9, 2022 at 7:30pm
Voxman Music Building Concert Hall

The Center for New Music
Season 57, Concert 8

This concert is part of the 10th Anniversary of the UI String Quartet Residency Program.

JACK Quartet

Christopher Otto & Austin Wulliman, *violin*

John Pickford Richards, *viola*

Jay Campbell, *cello*

PROGRAM

Mouthpiece 39, for string quartet (2022)*

Erin GEE
(b. 1974)

String Quartet 4.5 “Partial Truth”

George LEWIS
(b. 1952)

INTERMISSION

String Quartet No. 2 “Reigen seliger geister” (1989)

Helmut LACHENMANN
(b. 1935)

* indicates US premiere

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHY



Hailed by The New York Times as “our leading new-music foursome”, the **JACK Quartet** is one of the most acclaimed, renowned, and respected groups performing today. JACK has maintained an unwavering commitment to their mission of performing and commissioning new works, giving voice to underheard composers, and cultivating an ever-greater sense of openness toward contemporary classical music. The quartet was selected as Musical America’s 2018 “Ensemble of the Year”, named to WQXR’s “19 for 19 Artists to Watch”, and awarded an Avery Fisher Career Grant.

Through intimate relationships with today’s most creative voices, JACK embraces close collaboration with the composers they perform, leading to a radical embodiment of the technical, musical, and emotional aspects of their work. The quartet has worked with artists such as Julia Wolfe, George Lewis, Chaya Czernowin, Helmut Lachenmann, Caroline Shaw, and Simon Steen-Andersen. JACK’s all-access initiative, JACK Studio, commissions a selection of artists each year, who will receive money, workshop time, mentorship, and resources to develop new work to be performed and recorded by the quartet.

Committed to education, JACK is the Quartet in Residence at the Mannes School of Music, who host the JACK Frontiers Festival, a multi-faceted festival of contemporary music for string quartet. They also teach each summer at New Music on the Point, a contemporary chamber music festival in Vermont, and at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. JACK has long-standing relationships with the University of Iowa String Quartet Residency Program, where they teach and collaborate with students each fall and spring, as well as with the Lucerne Festival Academy, of which the four members are all alumni. Additionally, the quartet collaborates with young composers at schools including Columbia University, Harvard University, New York University, Princeton University, and Stanford University.

Comprising violinists Christopher Otto and Austin Wulliman, violist John Pickford Richards, and cellist Jay Campbell, JACK operates as a nonprofit organization dedicated to the performance, commissioning, and appreciation of new string quartet music.

PROGRAM NOTES & BIOGRAPHIES

Mouthpiece 39, for string quartet (2022) (US premiere)

California-born Erin Gee, who earned her BM (piano) and MA (composition) at the University of Iowa and completed her training with Beat Furrer in Graz, asks the players to use their mouths and vocal cords as well as their hands and fingers. She wrote *Mouthpiece 39* for the JACK, who programmed *Mouthpiece 22* during their 2017-2018 season, both works belonging to a series that has been her major creative endeavor since 2000. The performers of these compositions have to make vocal sounds and also use their instruments in a vocal manner, enveloping the two, voice and instrument, in the one utterance.

‘I notate the vocal sounds using the International Phonetic Alphabet’, Gee explains on her website, ‘in order to accurately transcribe both the type of sound and the place of articulation in the mouth....The articulatory possibilities of the mouth are often mapped onto the instruments, mirroring and expanding the vocal sounds to form a kind of “super-mouth”. And she concludes: ‘Not pre-meaning, simply never in the direction of meaning.’

One might say alternatively that the mouth, the voice, draws towards meaning of another sort. Gee, who herself performs as a vocalist (her very first *Mouthpiece* was a short solo for herself, a recording of which may be found on YouTube), began her work for this new piece in her usual way, improvising and gathering together a small collection of brief modules, each just a few seconds long. From these, and from interactions among them, the composition grows. – *Paul Griffiths*



In January 2014, **Erin Gee** was cited by Alex Ross, music critic for *The New Yorker*, as a member of the short list of the most influential composer-vocalists of the 21st century and since then has been awarded the Arts and Letters Awards in Music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, which honors outstanding artistic achievement and acknowledges composers who have arrived at their own voice. Her debut portrait CD, *Mouthpieces* was released in January 2014 on the col legno label in Vienna. Other works can be found on CDs by the TAK ensemble, Ekmeles Ensemble and the International Contemporary Ensemble. Erin Gee is an associate professor of composition at Brandeis University.

Gee’s awards for composition include a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Radcliffe Fellowship, the 2008 Rome Prize, Zürich Opera House’s Teatro Minimo, Koussevitzky Award, Fromm Commission, and the Rostrum of Composers Award among others. She has been commissioned by the Zurich Opera House for the opera *SLEEP*, by the Radio Symphony Orchestra Vienna, the Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group under Esa-Pekka Salonen, by Klangforum Wien and others. In the mouthpiece series of works for voice and ensemble, the articulatory possibilities of the mouth are often mapped onto the instruments, mirroring and expanding the vocal sounds to form a kind of “super mouth” that can move beyond the

physical limitations of a single vocal track. Merging the voice with the breath and instruments has been the idea behind the *Mouthpiece* series which began in 2000 and consists of more than 30 works for different sound combinations, devoid of semantic text or language.

String Quartet 4.5 “Partial Truth” (2022)

George Lewis has built a whole distinguished life as a jazz trombonist, working with Anthony Braxton and many others besides groups of his own. Meanwhile, he has been fully active—and increasingly so—as a composer. Most of his notated works are for relatively small groups of instruments, sometimes with electronics, but he has also written for symphony orchestra, harpsichord, choir, and computer-driven piano. He has held posts at Harvard and Berkeley and is currently head of composition and musicology at Columbia University.

He numbers this new quartet “4.5” on the grounds that his first was only half a quartet, being for string quartet and percussion. At the first performance of Quartet No. 4.5, which the JACK gave in New York in April 2022, he said from the stage that he wrote the piece “against complacency,” which suggests we should understand the work’s subtitle, “Partial Truth,” to have political as well as musical connotations. We might note that all four of Lewis’s string quartets date from 2016 and after, as if, during a time when political discussions in the United States ran into the mire, the discussions of four string players with one another could be bracing.

Part of the work’s lesson comes in how we are challenged simply to keep with the program, as the musicians charge through a variety of situations, usually swiftly, staying together as they jump from one playing technique to another: glissandos, tremolos of different speeds and changing speeds, growling effects of increasing bow pressure, harmonics, and so on. There is vitality in this continuous skid, and perhaps also a touch of humor. And they all end up somewhere quite strange and miraculous. — *Paul Griffiths*



George E. Lewis, Edwin H. Case Professor of American Music at Columbia University, is an American composer, musicologist, computer-installation artist, and trombonist. A member of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, Lewis is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy, and a member of the Akademie der Künste Berlin. Other honors include the Doris Duke Artist Award (2019), a Guggenheim Fellowship (2015) and a MacArthur Fellowship (2002). His music is performed worldwide, and he is widely regarded as a pioneer in the creation of improvising computer programs. He is the author of *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (University of Chicago Press) and co-editor of the two-volume *Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies*. Lewis holds honorary doctorates from the University of Edinburgh, New College of Florida, Harvard University, the University of Pennsylvania, and others.

String Quartet no. 2 “Reigen Zeligier Geister”

Reigen seliger Geister – perception play: tones ‘grasped out of the air,’ ‘air’ grasped out of the tones. Following the adventure in my first string quartet Gran Torso with extraterritorial ways of playing the instrument – now long since developed by others in touristic fashion – here the re-appropriation of interval constellations (‘text’) as ‘facade,’ as ‘pretext,’ so that their realization will enable the natural acoustic edges of the produced tones their timbral articulation, their muting, how they fade, how the vibrating strings are stopped (for example, also altering the noise component by sliding the bow between the bridge and the fingerboard) – to create, through the ‘dead’ tone-structure, a reborn object of experience. Thus, action fields determined by playing techniques are stages, transformed, shifted, abandoned, combined. The pianissimo as space for a manifold fortissimo possibile of the suppressed in-between values: figures that a sliding bow stroke makes vanish or arise within toneless murmuring, the pizzicato mixture that, despite its fugitive fading, can still be prematurely damped in part, ‘filtered.’ – *Helmut Lachenmann*



Helmut Lachenmann (born on November 27, 1935 in Stuttgart) studied piano, theory and counterpoint at the Music Conservatory in Stuttgart from 1955 to 1958 and from 1958 to 1960 composition with Luigi Nono in Venice. The first public performances of his works took place at the Biennale in Venice in 1962 and at the International Summer Courses for New Music in Darmstadt. After his teaching activity at the University in Ludwigsburg Lachenmann taught as professor for composition at the Music Conservatory in Hannover (1976–81) and in Stuttgart (1981–99). Furthermore he managed many seminars, workshops and master classes in Germany and abroad, for example several times at the Summer Courses in Darmstadt between 1978 and 2006. In 2008 Lachenmann taught as Fromm Visiting Professor at the Harvard University, Cambridge/MA. 2010 he became fellow of the Royal College of Music, London. He received

numerous awards for his compositional work, for example the Siemens Musikpreis in 1997, the Royal Philharmonic Society Award London in 2004 and in 2008 the Berliner Kunstpreis as well as the Leone d’oro of the Biennale di Venezia. Lachenmann is honorary doctor at the Music Conservatory Hannover and member of the Academies of the Arts in Berlin, Brussels, Hamburg, Leipzig, Mannheim and Munich. His works are performed at many festivals and concert series in Germany and abroad.

UI STRING QUARTET RESIDENCY PROGRAM

The UI String Quartet Residency Program continues a long tradition of fostering the highest level of string quartet playing and chamber music instruction at the University of Iowa. Each season, UISQRP brings internationally-recognized ensembles to the School of Music for extended residences. During their stays on campus, guest artists work closely with SOM students and give a range of performances and presentations. In celebration of its 10th season, UISQRP is delighted to bring back UISQRP alumni and also artists from its first season. JACK Quartet was UISQRP's inaugural quartet in Fall 2012 and the Quartet has been a guest of UISQRP and the Center for New Music ever since. Many thanks to JACK Quartet for a wonderful 10 years!

THE CENTER FOR NEW MUSIC

The Center for New Music, a performance organization devoted to the late 20th and early 21st century repertoire, is the focus of contemporary composition and performance at the University of Iowa. The Center, like the internationally renowned Writers Workshop, embodies the institution's commitment to the vital role of the creative arts at the frontiers of human experience.

The Center functions as a laboratory and performance extension of the School's composition area, and as a repertory ensemble for the creation and presentation of contemporary music in general. The core ensemble consists of violin, viola, cello, and piano supported by Research Assistantships assigned by those studios. The remaining members that complete the sinfonietta ensemble are assigned by the individual studio faculty, typically for the academic year. The Center also serves as host for guest composers and artists.

The Center remains an advocate of contemporary music performance. Its programming reflects the range of current compositional styles as well as what is considered standard repertoire from the mid-20th century into early 21st. The high quality of performance results from working with a core ensemble, solidly grounded in the repertoire, over an extended period of time. New and more diverse audiences are carefully cultivated through outreach concerts, and the Center's professional reputation is steadily being established through CD recordings as well as through the collaboration of nationally-known guest composers and performers.

UPCOMING EVENTS




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All events are FREE unless otherwise indicated .

Performances that are being livestreamed are marked with a .

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NOVEMBER 2022

10	7:30pm	Guest Ensemble: U.S. Army "Jazz Ambassadors" Big Band	Concert Hall
11	7:30pm	Guest Chamber Recital: Empire Wild Trio	Recital Hall
12	3:00pm	Faculty Recital: Christine Rutledge, <i>viola</i>	Concert Hall
13	3:00pm	Key Change: Piano Revolutionaries Series, Concert #3 	Concert Hall
14	5:30pm	Guest Lecture Series: Music Momentum Mondays 	Recital Hall
16	6:00pm	Reimagining Criminal Justice Systems Through Eyes that Have Cried	Old Capitol Museum
16	7:30pm	UI Symphony Band 	Concert Hall

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