

## **American Composers Orchestra Announces Composers Selected for Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra EarShot Readings**

**May 9-10, 2023: Atlanta Symphony Orchestra**

**Free Public Performance – Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 1:30pm**

**Featured Artists:** Ahmed Alabaca, Alyssa Regent, Fred Onovwerosuoke, Sofia Rocha

**Mentor Composers:** Valerie Coleman, Curtis Stewart, Carlos Simon

**October 3-4, 2023: Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra**

**Public Performance – Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at 7:30pm**

**Featured Artists:** Martin Hebel, Leyou Wang, Joseph Sowa, Giuseppe Gallo-Balma

**Mentor Composers:** Melinda Wagner, Curtis Stewart, Texu Kim



**“The orchestra that has done the most for new American  
music in the United States.” – ASCAP**

**[www.americancomposers.org](http://www.americancomposers.org)**

**New York, NY (April 4, 2023) – American Composers Orchestra (ACO) announces eight composers selected from a competitive nationwide call for scores, who will participate in 2023 EarShot Readings with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (May 9-10, 2023) and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra (October 3-4, 2023).**

EarShot is the first ongoing, systematic program for developing relationships between composers and orchestras on the national level, developed by the American Composers Orchestra to ensure the vibrant future of new American orchestral music. Over the last 25 years, these readings have provided more than 350 composers with vital artistic and technical resources, as well as career-accelerating public exposure. Alumni of EarShot have won every composition award, including the Pulitzer, GRAMMY, Grawemeyer, American Academy of Arts & Letters, and Rome Prizes, to name a few. Composer-orchestra relationships extend beyond the EarShot Readings, and since 2009, 28 works have been commissioned by partner orchestras from

EarShot participants and more than half of selected EarShot composers report receiving a commission directly resulting from their participation.

On **May 9 and 10, 2023**, **American Composers Orchestra** and the **Atlanta Symphony Orchestra** present open rehearsals and live workshopping of new music by four of today's most promising emerging composers: **Alyssa Regent**, **Fred Onovwerosuoke**, **Ahmed Alabaca**, and **Sofía Rocha**. The composers engage with the **ASO** in private readings and feedback sessions with principal players and artistic directors, working under the guidance of mentor composers **Valerie Coleman**, a winner of a 2023 Grammy Award; violinist and composer, as well as Artistic Director of ACO, **Curtis Stewart**; and current Composer-in-Residence for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, **Carlos Simon**.

The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, led by **Jerry Hou**, performs the four works in a recorded, free public concert at **Atlanta Symphony Hall** on **Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 1:30pm**. This collaboration with ACO – specifically seeking works by Black and Latinx composers – is a part of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra's aim to challenge the stereotypical image of a composer in the Western art music tradition. In addition to offering recordings of the selected works, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra EarShot Readings will be framed with recorded interviews of participants and mentors as part of the orchestra's *Behind the Curtain* film series.

The **Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra** hosts EarShot Readings from **October 3-4, 2023** at **Cincinnati Music Hall**, discovering new works by composers **Leyou Wang**, **Martin Hebel**, **Giuseppe Gallo-Balma**, and **Joseph Sowa**. The four composers will be mentored by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer and ACO board member **Melinda Wagner**; **Curtis Stewart**; the prolific **Texu Kim**; and CSO Music Director **Louis Langrée** in feedback sessions and discussions on aesthetics and compositional issues. The composers will also have the opportunity to engage with CSO musicians, assistant conductors, and section principals in private sessions.

The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, led by CSO Assistant Conductors **Samuel Lee** and **Daniel Wiley**, will perform the new works in a public concert at **Cincinnati Music Hall** on **Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at 7:30pm**, preceded by a pre-performance Q&A with the featured artists and composers.

Additional EarShot Readings take place this spring at the **Naples Philharmonic (May 15-16, 2023)** and **Dallas Symphony Orchestra (June 21, 2023)**, and as part of the American Composers Orchestra's New York City-wide **SONiC Festival** on **June 1-2, 2023** at **The New School** and an ***EarShot: The Next Festival of Emerging Artists Choreography Workshop*** from **June 5-9, 2023** at the **Mannes School of Music**.

Previous EarShot partner orchestras include the New York Philharmonic, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, Nashville Symphony Orchestra, Colorado Symphony Orchestra, San Diego Symphony, Houston Symphony, Oregon Symphony, Tucson Symphony, and Aguascalientes Symphony Orchestra (Mexico). EarShot operates in partnership with American Composers Forum, New Music USA, and the League of American Orchestras.

### **Program Details**

#### ***EarShot Readings at the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (May 9-10, 2023)***

**Featured Artists:** Alyssa Regent, Fred Onovwerosuoke, Ahmed Alabaca, Sofía Rocha

**Mentor Composers:** Valerie Coleman, Curtis Stewart, Carlos Simon

#### **Concert – Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 1:30pm**

**Atlanta Symphony Hall | Atlanta, GA**

**Tickets:** Reserved tickets are required for this free event.

**Link:**[www.aso.org/events/detail/aso-earshot-live-video-recording](http://www.aso.org/events/detail/aso-earshot-live-video-recording)

#### **Program:**

Alyssa Regent – *Where Even Shadows Are Light*

Fred Onovwerosuoke – *The Gathering - An Overture for Orchestra*

Ahmed Alabaca – *Ode to Liberty*

Sofía Rocha – *Collage d'hommages*

Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Jerry Hou, conductor

**EarShot Readings at the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra (October 3-4, 2023)**

**Featured Artists:** Martin Hebel, Leyou Wang, Joseph Sowa, Giuseppe Gallo-Balma

**Mentor Composers:** Melinda Wagner, Curtis Stewart, Texu Kim

**Concert – Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at 7:30pm**

**Music Hall | Cincinnati, OH**

**Tickets:** Tickets will go on sale in the summer.

**Link:** [www.cincinnati-symphony-orchestra.org/tickets-and-events/buy-tickets/cso/2324-cso-season/earshot-readings-at-the-cincinnati-symphony-orchestra/](http://www.cincinnati-symphony-orchestra.org/tickets-and-events/buy-tickets/cso/2324-cso-season/earshot-readings-at-the-cincinnati-symphony-orchestra/)

**Program:**

Leyou Wang – *Impressions from Tianqian*

Martin Hebel – *Radiant Pillars*

Giuseppe Gallo-Balma – *Los Huesos de Yyael*

Joseph Sowa – *Summer Has Ten Thousand Stars*

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra

Samuel Lee, conductor

Daniel Wiley, conductor

**About the Composers**

**Alyssa Regent** draws musical inspiration from folklore and the broader realm of art (including visual art, written and spoken word, film, movement and sound art), exploring the unique power within music to capture human experience and tint the spectrum of human emotions. Alyssa trained as a conductor while earning her bachelor's degree at Hunter College in New York City. In 2021, she took part in the 77th Composers' Conference in Boston. In 2022, she earned her Master of Arts in composition. Her music has been performed by several New York-based ensembles and soloists. She is currently a DMA candidate at Columbia University. Her EarShot Reading composition is titled *Where Even Shadows Are Light*.

**Fred Onowwersuoke** ("FredO") has composed works featured in audio recordings, films, documentaries and radio, including Robert De Niro's film *The Good Shepherd*. His numerous honors include multiple ASCAP Awards, an American Music Center Award, a Meet-The-Composer Award, and a Brannen-Cooper Brothers Award. His collection *Songs of Africa*, published by Oxford University Press, has become a favorite among choral directors. Two other books – *Twenty-four Studies in African Rhythms for Piano* (AM Publishers) and *Twelve African Songs for Solo Voice & Piano* – have become valued resources as well. Fred's recently commissioned work for orchestra and chorus, *A Triptych of American Voices*, continues to generate new conversations about classical music programming and social justice. His EarShot Reading composition is titled *The Gathering - An Overture for Orchestra*.

**Ahmed Alabaca** (they/them) is an African American composer, conductor, songwriter, pianist, and community facilitator. Driven to create power and possibility for diverse communities, Ahmed has a vision for a "a new renaissance" for underrepresented composers, centering the works of people of color while creating opportunities to perform, record, and archive their work. Along with artistic collaborators Lily Raabe-Lily and Brandon Estrella, Ahmed created and produced the Hilo, Hawaii-based Live Aloha Art Festival, combining theater, music, and film in collaboration with local organizations and schools to provide a festival "for the people, by the people." Educated at Hunter College, Juilliard, and UCLA Extension, Ahmed current serves as music director of South Loop Symphony, a community orchestra in Chicago. Their EarShot Reading composition is titled *Ode to Liberty*.

**Sofía Rocha** writes music of uncompromising emotional intensity while exploring cognition, randomness, rhythm, and counterpoint within post-tonal frameworks. Winner of a 2022 Copland House Residency Award and 2022 Hermitage Prize at the Aspen Music Festival, she has composed new works for the International Contemporary Ensemble in collaboration with the New World Symphony, the Emory University Symphony Orchestra and the New York Youth Symphony. She's received honors from the New England Philharmonic, Fresh Inc Festival, and ASCAP. Sofía will be starting a PhD in Music and Multimedia Composition at Brown University in fall 2023. She received her master's degree in composition from the University of

Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory. Sofia is also an avid trombonist and conductor. Her EarShot Reading composition is titled *Collage d'hommages*.

**Leyou Wang** is known for compositions including *The Battle of Shantsuguan* – winner of the 2015 Winter Kompolize Award for composition – along with multiple other pieces being performed by leading orchestras. Born in China, Wang moved in 2009 to Stuttgart, Germany, where he studied music theory at HMDK Stuttgart. He earned his master's degree in music theory at the University of Music Freiburg, graduating in 2018. Multiple orchestral pieces composed by Wang have been performed by prestigious German orchestras including the Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra, Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Württembergische Philharmonie Reutlingen and Junge Philharmonie Baden-Württemberg. He's received honors from the Joseph Dorfman memorial competition for composers and Lei Cine Film Scoring Competition (2021, Beijing China), among others. His EarShot Reading composition is titled *Impressions from Tianqian*.

**Martin Hebel** is a six-time American Prize winner and 2020 recipient of the Presser Foundation's Graduate Music Award. Working at the intersection of music, advocacy, and interdisciplinary collaboration, he's a creator of socially conscious compositions conceived to spark positive change. Martin's current project, *Uplifting Unheard Voices*, amplifies the voices of migrants and refugees: With support from the Presser Foundation, he interviewed refugees in Rome and the U.S., later setting their words to music. Martin's portfolio includes orchestral and wind ensemble works, instrumental and vocal chamber music, and multi-media compositions involving video projection and electronics. He's released several recordings, and collaborated with ensembles including the Columbus Symphony in Ohio, Riverside Symphony in NYC, and Filharmonie Brno in the Czech Republic. His EarShot Reading composition is titled *Radiant Pillars*.

**Giuseppe Gallo-Balma** is a Kansas City-based composer. As the son of Haitian and Italian immigrants raised in the Dominican Republic, Giuseppe seeks an amalgamation of these three distinct cultures in his music, with special interest in Indigenous and Afro-Caribbean influences. His works have been commissioned by the CSU Philharmonic, hornist Lucas Testin, the CSU Flute Choir and Percussion Ensemble, and bassoonist Traian Sturza. His music has been performed by numerous ensembles, and featured on the radio show *Sound Currents* (KCUR/NPR). In 2018, Giuseppe's woodwind quartet piece *Cuarteto* received honors in the MTNA Composition Competition. He's also served as principal flute for the Juan Pablo Duarte Youth Orchestra and piccolo player for the National Symphony Orchestra of Santo Domingo. His EarShot Reading composition is titled *Los Huesos de Yayael*.

**Joseph Sowa** draws on diverse influences – from linguistics, to plainchant, to American football – to create music focused on detailed textures and vivid colors. His works have been performed by such groups as Hub New Music, Collage New Music, Ensemble Dal Niente, the Genesis Chamber Singers, the Ludovico Ensemble, and the PRISM Quartet, along with middle and high schools across North America. The founder of the Wizarding School for Composers, Joseph has received awards from ASCAP, the American Prize, and the Barlow Endowment. He holds a PhD in Music Composition and Theory from Brandeis University. His EarShot Reading composition is titled *Summer Has Ten Thousand Stars*.

### **About American Composers Orchestra**

Founded in 1977, **American Composers Orchestra (ACO)** is dedicated to the creation, celebration, performance, and promotion of orchestral music by American composers. With commitment to diversity, disruption, and discovery, ACO produces concerts, middle school through college composer education programs, and composer advancement programs to foster a community of creators, audience, performers, collaborators, and funders. ACO identifies and develops talent, performs established composers, champions those who are lesser-known, and increases regional, national, and international awareness of the infinite variety of American orchestral music, reflecting gender, racial, ethnic, geographic, stylistic, and age diversity. To date, ACO has performed music by 800 American composers, including over 350 world premieres and newly commissioned works.

Now encompassing all of ACO's composer advancement initiatives, EarShot is the first ongoing, systematic program for developing relationships between composers and orchestras on the national level. Through orchestral readings, CoLABoratory fellowships, consortium commissions, and professional development, EarShot ensures a vibrant musical future by investing in creativity today. Serving over 350 composers since inception, ACO Readings in NYC began in 1991, and since 2008, national Readings have been offered in partnership with orchestras across the country in collaboration with the League of American Orchestras, New Music USA, and American Composers Forum. Readings composers have gone on to win every major

composition award, including the Pulitzer, Grammy, Grawemeyer, American Academy of Arts and Letters, and Rome Prizes.

ACO has received numerous awards for its work, including those from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and from BMI recognizing the orchestra's outstanding contribution to American music. ASCAP has awarded ACO its annual prize for adventurous programming 35 times, singling out ACO as "the orchestra that has done the most for new American music in the United States." ACO received the inaugural MetLife Award for Excellence in Audience Engagement, and a proclamation from the New York City Council. Learn more at [www.americancomposers.org](http://www.americancomposers.org).

\*Photo Credits. Pictured (L-R): Top Row – Ahmed Alabaca, Alyssa Regent, Fred Onovwerosuoke, Sofia Rocha  
Bottom Row – Martin Hebel, Leyou Wang, Joseph Sowa, Giuseppe Gallo-Balma

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