

MONMOUTH AGO READING SESSION - FEBRUARY 10, 2013

Composer Bios

Daniel Gilliam

Daniel Gilliam is a composer of art songs, choral, orchestra, and chamber music. Current commissions include a song cycle for soprano and wind ensemble commissioned by the University of Minnesota. Gilliam was composer-in-residence of Christ Church Cathedral in Louisville, Kentucky, from 2008-2010, and has been a composer fellow at The Seasons Music Festival (2010 & 2011). He has been commissioned and performed by Center City Opera Theater, Arsenal Trio, The Phoenix Concerts, Seasons Music Festival, Louisville Youth Choir, Turin Philharmonic Orchestra and Central Presbyterian Church (Louisville). Gilliam is the Program Director of WUOL, in Louisville; in addition, he spent most of his childhood in Chile.

Joseph Gregorio

A native of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, Joseph Gregorio (b. 1979) has studied composition with Steven Stucky, David Conte, and Richard Brodhead. Gregorio's music has been broadcast on American Public Media's Performance Today and WQXR's Choral Mix, has garnered prizes in several competitions, and has been performed in the United States and abroad by numerous and renowned soloists and ensembles. Gregorio was named the 2011-2012 composer-in-residence of New York City ensemble Choral Chameleon, and the 2005-2006 composer-in-residence of the Sonoma County Chamber Singers. His music is published by Areté Music Imprints, E. C. Schirmer Music Company, the National Collegiate Choral Organization, and Treble Clef Music Press, and has been recorded by the choirs of the St. Olaf Christmas Festival, Concerto Della Donna, the Washington Men's Camerata, the Philadelphia Gay Men's Chorus, the Rutgers University Glee Club, and the Cornell University Glee Club.

Also active as a conductor, Gregorio is the founding director of chamber choir Ensemble Companio, which won the 2012 American Prize in choral performance. He has co-conducted the Yale Recital Chorus and the Yale Repertory Chorus, and has guest-conducted the Cornell University Glee Club. He served from 2004-2006 as the assistant conductor of the San Francisco Conservatory Chorus, and was assistant conductor of the San Francisco Bach Choir from 2005-2007.

Gregorio holds a M.M. in composition with departmental honors from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and a B.A. magna cum laude in music from Cornell University. He also holds a M.M. in choral conducting from Yale University, where he studied with Marguerite Brooks and Simon Carrington. While at Cornell, Gregorio was the recipient of the Ellen Gussman Adelson scholarship in music and the Thomas Sokol award; while at Yale, he received the Richard French and Hugh Giles prizes in choral conducting. He has participated in the Oregon Bach Festival's Composers' Symposium, Alice Parker's Composers' Workshop, and the summer program of the European American Musical Alliance. Gregorio was a professor of music theory and musicianship at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music from 2008-2009. He also taught music theory at Temple University from 2011-2012, where is presently a candidate for the D.M.A. in composition and the recipient of a Presidential Fellowship.

Robinson McClellan

Robinson McClellan (b.1976) is a composer, teacher, scholar, and concert presenter. Audiences have heard his music via commissioners, performers and venues including the Albany, Ft. Worth, and Knox-Galesburg Symphonies, the Museum of Biblical Art (NYC), Amsterdam's Gaudeamus Competition, the

Monteverdi Kamerkoor Utrecht, Nektarios Antoniou's Greek Byzantine Choir, Yale Schola Cantorum, the Hudson Opera House, Moira Smiley and VOCO, Trio Eos, and many others. He has received residencies and awards from the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, ASCAP, and Vassar College. His choral music is published in NCCO's choral music series, Music by Heart, a hymnal, and Feniarco's Choraliter, an Italian choral anthology.

As a composer and scholar Robin has spent the past nine years immersed in piobaireachd ('peeb-rock'), a rarely heard bagpiping tradition rooted in 17th-century Gaelic Scotland. His compositions often borrow musical ideas from piobaireachd, and his research into its unique rhythmic idiom was published in a 2009 scholarly anthology in Ashgate's Popular and Folk Music Series, and has also been cited in the scholarly journal Ethnomusicology. He has written on pipe music as a reviewer for The Voice, and is a beginner Highland bagpipe player.

Robin is founder and director of El Salto, a unique forum for contemporary music heard in a context of broad-minded religious/humanist inquiry, hosted by the New York Society for Ethical Culture. His article about El Salto appeared in the journal Liturgy in 2008. He is also Composer in Residence for ActorCor, a NYC-based choir dedicated to bridging religious divides.

Robin has taught composition at Hunter College and is on the music faculty at Rutgers University, Manhattan College, Wagner College, St. Francis College, and the Lucy Moses School; between them he teaches composition, music theory, music history, and world music to fifth graders, teenagers, college students, and adults. He is directing the composition program at the new SMS High School, and spearheading ComposerCraft, a new composition intensive for young composers at the Kaufman Center.

He earned his doctorate in composition (DMA) at the Yale School of Music and the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. He previously studied music at Vassar College, and his teachers have been Ingram Marshall, Ezra Laderman, Annea Lockwood, Richard Wilson, Martin Bresnick, and Aaron Jay Kernis. Robin does freelance work for Noteflight, an online music notation program, and he worked on the team that created the Morgan Library's Music Manuscripts Online. He is music librarian at the Kaufman Center, and he has worked for the S.E.M. Ensemble, G. Schirmer/AMP, and has sung in a variety of professional choral ensembles. He has done music copying work for several major publishers and created the music examples for two scholarly books. He is also a compulsive amateur photographer and has had photos published twice in magazines.

Sheena Phillips

Sheena Phillips is a composer and arranger, chiefly of choral and chamber music, currently based in New Jersey. She is also an experienced choral director and song-leader.

A native of Britain, Sheena grew up in the London area and studied mathematics at Cambridge University, England, where she gained a first class Honours degree. She worked for 10 years in a variety of non-governmental organizations, including the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Friends of the Earth (Scotland), but gradually developed an alternative career in music, starting with the award-winning Rudsambee Company of Singers in Edinburgh, Scotland. In 2000, Sheena moved to Columbus, Ohio with her family, where she worked as Artistic Director of the Magpie Consort, Artistic Co-Director of the Columbus Women's Chorus, Director of the Women's Chorale at Otterbein University, and Director of Music at Summit on 16th United Methodist Church in the OSU campus area. She served as the Repertoire & Standards Chair for Community Choirs in the Ohio Choral Directors Association from 2007 - 2011. In the summer of 2011, she moved with her husband to the Princeton area of New Jersey.

As a composer, Sheena has been commissioned and performed by many groups including the National Youth Choir of Scotland, Columbus Public Art (Ohio), the Choral Project (San Jose, California), Chicago A Cappella, the Lancaster Chorale (Ohio), Zephyr (California), Seattle Pro Musica, Calliope Women's Chorus (Minnesota), the University of Alabama (Birmingham) Concert Choir, Cappella Nova (Scotland), the Dunedin Consort (Scotland), Hope College Chapel Choir (Michigan), First Congregational Church (Columbus, Ohio), the American Guild of Organists, the Columbus Women's Chorus, the Columbus Children's Choir, Civic Theater (Columbus, Ohio), the Magpie Consort, and many others. She is essentially self-taught but studied as a Composing Fellow with Alice Parker in October 2003, and with Steven Sametz and Steve Stucky in the 2012 Summer Choral Composers Forum at Lehigh University. She is a member of the American Composers Forum and of PRS for Music.

Many of her shorter compositions and folk song arrangements are published by Canasg Music Publishing (of which she is a partner). She is also published by Santa Barbara Music Press, Earthsongs, Lorenz, and by the National Youth Choir of Scotland. PDF perusal copies of any of her unpublished compositions are available on request by email to sheenaphillips[at]gmail.com

Sheena is a winner of the 2012 Welcome Christmas Carol Contest run by VocalEssence (Minneapolis) and the American Composers Forum. She has been shortlisted for the 2012 Hazel Renshaw Composition Prize awarded by The Music Makers of London, and adjudicated by Judith Weir and Patrick Russill.

Dean Rishel

Dean Rishel, a noted conductor, composer, interpretive coach and teacher in the Philadelphia area, holds degrees from the Westminster Choir College and College of New Jersey. As a member of the Westminster Choir, he sang under such well-known conductors as Sir Malcolm Sargeant, William Steinberg, Leopold Stokowski and Leonard Bernstein. He has studied conducting with George Lynn, Joseph Flummerfelt and Frauke Hassemann.

Mr. Rishel has been a prolific composer since the premiere of his first work, Psalm Cycle, in 1985. Rishel's major work, Requiem for the Children, was written in memory of the children who perished in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing and was premiered by the Greater South Jersey Chorus and the Gloucester City Children's Choir in May 1996 at the Blockbuster/Sony Music Entertainment Center in Camden, New Jersey. The Requiem was presented in two major performances by the Greeley (Colorado) Chorale, as well as a major performance in Oklahoma City in 1998. The Requiem has also been performed in Pensacola (Florida) and Ocean City (New Jersey). Many of his compositions have been premiered locally, including Three Holy Sonnets, Magnificat, Some Say, Moving Still, Take, O Take These Lips Away. Other commissions include Music, which was commissioned and premiered by the Merchantville Elementary School Choir, How Can I Keep from Singing and Der Abend, commissioned and premiered by the Rancocas Valley High School Concert Choir, and Twilight at Sea, commissioned by ChildrenSong of NJ. Recent commissions include Personent Hodie and The Pillar of Peace for ChildrenSong, and Candlefire for Lauda! Chamber Singers. Many of his works are published by Shawnee Press, Mark Foster Music and Carl Fischer Music.

Rishel has served for over nine seasons as Artistic Director of the Greater South Jersey Chorus and brought that organization to regional prominence. He has also been a frequent conductor with the Princeton Opera, having conducted productions of The Magic Flute, Hansel and Gretel, Don Giovanni and The Mikado. He has also served as adjunct professor and director of the Choral Union chorus of Rowan University and as adjunct professor at LaSalle University, where he taught and directed the LaSalle Singers.

Mr. Rishel has sung professionally for some years, most notably with the Opera Company of Philadelphia Chorus. Rishel is also an interpretive coach and choral festival conductor. He has served on the Board of Directors of both the South Jersey Cultural Society and the Princeton Opera and has served on the Educational Outreach Committee of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

A teacher for the Florence Township Board of Education for 34 years, Mr. Rishel was twice selected to receive the Governor's Teacher Recognition Award and was a past participant in the New Jersey Department of Education's Star Schools and Best Practices program. He also taught at Greenwoods Charter School in Philadelphia. Other awards include the Distinguished Graduate award from Plymouth-Whitemarsh High School and the Applause award from the Markeim Center for the Arts in South Jersey. Rishel is a native of Whitemarsh, Pennsylvania and lives in Philadelphia, PA.

Dennis Tobenski

Dennis Tobenski is a composer of acoustic new music whose work has been described by Anthony Tommasini of The New York Times as "distinctive and engaging".

Dennis's current commissions include *Only Air*, a 20-minute work for high voice and orchestra memorializing the gay teenagers who have taken their own lives in recent years, commissioned by the Illinois State University Symphony Orchestra, which will be premiered in April 2013; *Faltering Mortal* and *Relish Entanglement* for solo piano, commissioned by Marc Peloquin; an a cappella choral work titled "Voices" for the Illinois State University Madrigal Singers, to be premiered Spring 2013; and "They Lie at Rest" for the East Ridge High School Concert Choir (Claremont, FL), to be premiered Spring 2013 at the American Holocaust Museum.

Dennis recently completed recording an EP of his a cappella choral works with the ISU Madrigal Singers, which will be released in early 2013 by the Tobenski Music Press.

Called a "dynamic vocalist" by Mr. Tommasini, Dennis's focus as a vocalist is primarily on the works of the 21st and late 20th centuries. He has premiered works by David Del Tredici, Chester Biscardi, Ricky Ian Gordon, Darien Shulman, and Hadar Noiberg.

In 2010, Dennis founded NewMusicShelf.com, an online digital distribution service for self-published composers, as well as for performers looking for works outside of the traditional music publishing system. The service currently represents 20 composers and over 300 of their works. From 2006 to 2010, Dennis co-directed the Tobenski-Algera Concert Series with composer Jeff Algera. The Series premiered over two dozen works, and was dedicated to presenting and promoting works by young and emerging composers.

Dennis also writes *The Composer's Guide to Doing Business*, a blog series that takes a look at the practical and financial aspects of the concert music business from a composer's point of view.

Dennis received his B.Mus. in Vocal Performance and Music Theory & Composition in 2004 from Illinois State University, and his M.A. in Music Composition from The City College of New York in 2009. His principal teachers have included David Del Tredici, Daron Hagen, and Chester Biscardi. He has received fellowships from the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the Prairie Center of the Arts, the Ucross Foundation, and the Staunton Music Festival.

Dennis lives in New York City with his partner Darien Scott Shulman and their cats Midget and Pistachio.