

Project Artists & FAQs

Sonya Belaya, piano

Sonya is a Russian-American pianist based in the Ann Arbor/Detroit area. Sonya is an alumnus of University of Michigan, Bang on a Can, and New Music on the Point. Sonya is invested in vulnerable art and the development of strong, personal collaborations. Sonya has performed as a pianist and singer with members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, New Music Detroit, Bang on a Can All-Stars, JACK Quartet, and The Ragbirds. Sonya is an active educator focused on offering music as a means of exploration and self-awareness. She is currently adjunct piano faculty at Metropolitan State University at DIME-Detroit.

Yuri Popowycz, violin

Yuri is a violinist living in the Motor City. He graduated from Oberlin Conservatory with honors, and is active within the Detroit Bureau of Sound, Michigan opera theatre, and serves as assistant concertmaster in the Michigan Philharmonic. Yuri improvises and gigs around town, making electronic music (as whyouarei & Music to Stretch to) as well as visual art with what's left of his time. He is an advocate of contemporary classical music, and has performed concerts around the globe. Yuri hopes to eventually own a large home with all of his friends in the city.

Kellen Degnan, cello

Kellen is a versatile cellist, at home in a variety of musical contexts. He holds a Bachelors Degree in cello performance from the University of Michigan, and he recently completed his Masters Degree in cello performance at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Kellen is an accomplished orchestral musician, having received an outstanding orchestral education as far back as his membership in the Detroit Symphony Civic Youth Orchestra, where he worked regularly with members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. He is currently a section member of the Ashland Symphony Orchestra, and also plays regularly in the Canton and Akron Symphony Orchestras and the Erie Philharmonic. One of Kellen's greatest passions in his musical career is the performance of contemporary music.

Michael Malis, composer/piano

Michael is a pianist and composer based in Detroit, MI. In August 2017, he released an album of duets with saxophonist Marcus Elliot, entitled "Balance." The album was praised by the Detroit Metro Times as "contemporary jazz of the highest order, a benchmark for where the genre can go." He has performed at venues such as the Yokohama Jazz Promenade (Yokohama, Japan), the Kennedy Center, Birdland (NYC), the Detroit Jazz Festival, The Stone (NYC), and the Detroit Institute of Arts. He has been lauded for his scores for film and theater, which have garnered awards, critical acclaim, and have reached international audiences. He is currently as Master's student at Wayne State University, studying composition.

Harriet Steinke, composer

Harriet is a composer and collaborator currently based in Detroit, Michigan. Harriet has collaborated with artists across various disciplines, and her work has been premiered within presentations of dance, visual art, theatre, and poetry. She has recently earned fellowships at the Norfolk New Music Workshop (Norfolk, CT) and Weekend of Chamber Music (Jeffersonville, NY) and was selected as one of the composers in residence at the 2018 American Composers Forum Showcase in Minneapolis. Her choral music has received performances in the U.S. and abroad and has earned publication with Colla Voce Music and Hal Leonard Corporation. Harriet currently works as an operations assistant for Detroit Chamber Winds & Strings and the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival.

FAQs

How are Composers selected?

Composers will be chosen by the performers and composers involved in the project. Our performers are looking for composers with whom they want to collaborate on new works they *want* to perform. Unlike a selection with an external panel, the performers that are premiering the new works will be integral to the process. Our performers span a wide range of styles, interests, and experiences and we hope to choose composers that similarly reflect diverse styles and experiences.

How is this project funded?

The DCP Commission and Showcase project is made possible by the [Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs](#) New Leaders program. The New Leaders grant is awarded to projects or collaborations led by a young person (14-30), focused on the engagement, retention, or mentorship of young people in Michigan through arts and culture.

Can I apply if I'm pre-college or otherwise unconventionally trained?

We don't care! As this project is partially funded by the MCACA New Leaders Program, seeking to support young leaders in Michigan, we are keeping their age limit of 30.

Can I submit a piece I've already written?

No. The award and commission is to write a *new* work that will receive its premiere at the September concert at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

If selected, can I choose the instrumentation for my piece?

In the application we ask you to indicate your preference(s) - considering subsets of our instrumentation. In order to give players enough time to learn all the pieces, we will try and distribute the commission instrumentation evenly among the players.

If selected, can I include electronics?

Not this time.

What if I used to live in Michigan or I'm moving there?

We *really* want applicants to be current residents. If you have a special circumstance or specific questions about this, feel free to reach out to us.

More questions? Ask us: DetroitComposersProject@gmail.com