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Two of America's Top Children's Choirs Join Together April 13 at Alice Tully Hall in New York

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Entertainment Desk


Young People's Chorus of New York City (YPC) and the San Francisco Girls Chorus (SFGC) in its New York Debut Sing a Program Highlighted by the Joint World Premiere of Gabriela Lena Frank's "Two Mountain Songs."

Program also includes World Premieres of Works by Meredith Monk, Nico Muhly, and Toshiko Akiyoshi Sung by YPC and a New York Premiere by Augusta Read Thomas Sung by SFGC.

In 2005 the Young People's Chorus of New York City and the San Francisco Girls Chorus were selected as the only two U.S. choruses to represent America at the Seventh World Symposium on Choral Music in Kyoto, Japan. Now, these two acclaimed and award-winning choruses are coming together in New York on Monday, April 13 at 7:30 p.m. for a concert at Alice Tully Hall. The highlight of the concert, which showcases each chorus separately, is their joint performance of the world premiere of a work commissioned specifically for them by American Composers Forum: Gabriela Lena Frank's "Two Mountain Songs," based on Peruvian Indian folk songs, a part of her multicultural heritage.

The San Francisco Girls Chorus, celebrating its 30th anniversary this season, makes its New York debut under its conductor Susan McMane in several works, highlighted by the New York premiere of its Augusta Read Thomas commission "Two e.e. cummings Songs," which was premiered by the SFGC in October. The chorus will also sing works by Mendelssohn, Purcell, Rachmaninoff, Henry Mollicone, David McIntyre, and the premiere of an arrangement of Irving Berlin's "Blue Skies," the third movement of a work entitled Just Imagine, which the chorus commissioned from Dwight Okamura for its 30th anniversary.

The Young People's Chorus of New York City under its founder and artistic director Francisco J. Núñez will perform three world premieres: Movement No. 5 of Meredith Monk's "Three Heavens and Hells"; Nico Muhly's "I Drink the Air Before Me," commissioned by the Stephen Petronio Company for the YPC; and a choral arrangement by Mr. Núñez of jazz great Toshiko Akiyoshi's solo piano work "Hope," sung in Japanese, with words by Shuntaro Tanigawa, Japan's most famous poet. The YPC will also sing "Kyrie" from Bok's Missa Brevis, "Canticle, In Remembrance" by Mr. Núñez; "Warabe Uta" by Ko Matsushita; and the American spiritual, "Music Down in My Soul."

All tickets are \$25 and are available at the Alice Tully Hall box office, by calling CenterCharge at  212... or through the Lincoln Center Web site at www.lincolncenter.org

With performances on three continents and five World Choir Olympics gold medals, the Young People's Chorus of New York City (YPC), is recognized as one of today's finest and most influential youth choruses. YPC was founded in 1988 by Artistic Director Francisco J. Núñez with a commitment to diversity and musical excellence. Annually, more than 1,100 children of all ethnic, religious, and economic backgrounds participate through the chorus's core after-school program, its Satellite program in New York City schools, and since January 2009, through its first affiliate—the Young People's Chorus of Erie (Pennsylvania). The chorus has been described as "remarkably similar to El Sistema, the orchestral training scheme that has been transforming the lives of children from Venezuela through music for the past 30 years." The chorus, which last season sold out Carnegie Hall and sang for Pope Benedict XVI on his first papal visit to the U.S., has premiered over 50 works it has commissioned from a Who's Who of contemporary composers through its Transient Glory series of concerts, CDs, and publications. It has been recognized with a Chorus America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, Chorus America's Education Outreach Award, and as "a national model of artistic excellence and diversity" by the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. The YPC is in residence at the 92nd Street Y, Frederick P. Rose Hall, home of Jazz at Lincoln Center; and WNYC, New York Public Radio. Upcoming highlights include the YPC's participation in a historic Carnegie Hall performance of Terry Riley's seminal work In C curated by the Kronos Quartet, and their return to Japan for a four-week, 18-city tour of the country in July. For more information, visit www.ypc.org.

The San Francisco Girls Chorus, which most recently sang at the inauguration of Barack Obama, was founded in 1978 by Elizabeth Appling at the request of conductor Kurt Herbert Adler for a girls chorus to perform in San Francisco Opera productions. Since then, the SFGC has appeared frequently with both San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Symphony and has used that rich base of experience to build an international touring career that has taken the ensemble to 12 countries, with appearances before world leaders, three Grammy Award-winning recordings, collaborations with major artists, multiple commissioning projects, and a highly lauded education program. The beauty of the SFGC's sound, the precision, the musicality, the spontaneity for which they are famous, are the product of the leadership of their conductor Susan McMane and the SFGC system of education directed for the past 25 years by Elizabeth Avakian. The SFGC program is composed of four divisions—the

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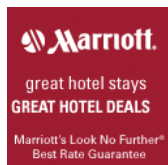
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Preparatory Chorus of 5- to 7-year-olds; the Chorus School for girls and young women from 7 to 18; Chorissima, the 43-member concert and touring ensemble; and the Alumnae Chorus, a community group comprising SFGC graduates. Approximately 250 singers from 160 schools in 47 Bay Area cities participate in the Chorus School's program, which has been called "A model in the country for training girls' voices" by the California Arts Council. Under Ms. McMane, the SFCG became the first youth chorus to win the Margaret Hillis Achievement Award for Choral Excellence and two ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music. For more information, visit www.sfgirlchorus.org and www.kathrynkingmedia.com.



The American Composers Forum is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to the promotion and assistance of American composers and their music. Founded in 1973 as the Minnesota Composers Forum, its mission is "to connect composers with communities and to encourage the making, playing, and enjoyment of new music." American Composers Forum is based in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Composers

Identity has always been at the center of Gabriela Lena Frank's music. Born in

Berkeley, California to a mother of mixed Peruvian/Chinese ancestry and a father of Lithuanian/Jewish descent, Ms. Frank explores her multicultural heritage through her compositions inspired by the works of Bela Bartók and Alberto Ginastera. As a musical anthropologist, she has traveled extensively throughout South America and her pieces reflect and refract her studies of Latin-American folklore, incorporating poetry, mythology, and native musical styles into a western classical framework that is uniquely her own. She is known for writing challenging idiomatic parts for solo instrumentalists, vocalists, chamber ensembles, and orchestras.

Toshiko Akiyoshi, a Japanese American jazz pianist, composer/arranger and bandleader, was discovered by Oscar Peterson and is among the very few successful female jazz instrumentalists of her generation. She is also recognized as a major figure in jazz composition, her works noted for their distinctive textures and Japanese influences. Ms. Akiyoshi has received 14 Grammy nominations and was the first woman to win the Best Arranger and Composer awards in Down Beat magazine's Readers Poll. Her biography, *Life with Jazz* was published in 1996, and in 2007 she was named an NEA Jazz Master by the U.S. National Endowment for the Arts.

Meredith Monk is a composer, singer, director/choreographer and creator of new opera, music theater works, films and installations. A pioneer in what is now called "extended vocal technique" and "interdisciplinary performance," Monk creates works that thrive at the intersection of music and movement, image and object, light and sound in an effort to discover and weave together new modes of perception. Her groundbreaking exploration of the voice as an instrument, as an eloquent language in and of itself, expands the boundaries of musical composition, creating landscapes of sound that unearth feelings, energies, and memories for which we have no words. During a career that spans more than 40 years, the MacArthur "Genius" Award recipient has been acclaimed by audiences and critics as a major creative force in the performing arts.

A contemporary classical composer and conductor, Nico Muhly was born in Vermont in 1981. After graduating from Columbia University and earning a Masters Degree in Music from Juilliard, he worked on various composing and film scoring projects. His abilities to move from genre to genre led to his working with such well known names in the music world as Philip Glass, Björk, Antony (of Antony & the Johnsons), Bonnie "Prince" Billy, and most recently Stephen Petronio. In 2006, his debut recording *Speaks Volumes* was released followed in 2008 by a collection of his collaborations with other artists titled *Ekvilibrium*.

Augusta Read Thomas's deeply personal music is guided by her particular sense of musical form, rhythm, timbre, and harmony. But given this individuality, her music is affected by history—in Thomas' words, "Old music deserves new music and new music needs old music." For Thomas, this means cherishing her place within the musical tradition and giving credit to those who have forged the musical paths she follows and from which she innovates. Thomas was the Mead Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra from May 1997 through June 2006, a residency that encompassed nine world premieres, culminating in the premiere of "Astral Canticle"—one of two finalists for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in Music. She currently devotes her time exclusively to composition.



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