

Composer Joel Feigin

Joel Feigin (b:New York City,1951) is a composer whose music has been heard across the U.S. and internationally from France and Germany to Taiwan and Korea. His works have been widely praised for their "very strong impact, as logical in musical design as they are charged with emotion and drama." (Opera Magazine)

Feigin's many honors include a Fromm Foundation Commission from the Israeli-American pianist, Yael Weiss, for **Aviv: Concerto for Piano and Chamber Orchestra**, premiered under the direction of David Dzubay in September 2010. He was awarded a Senior Fulbright Fellowship at the Moscow State Conservatory in Russia (1998-1999) and a Guggenheim Fellowship to write his first opera, **Mysteries of Eleusis**, commissioned for Theatre Cornell and produced there in 1986. The complete opera was presented again in 1999 at the Moscow Conservatory, which requested a chamber version that it produced in 2000 as part of the Russian-American Festival of Operatic Art. Feigin's latest opera, **Twelfth Night**, based on the play by William Shakespeare, was chosen by New York City Opera for its VOX 2003 series of readings: **Showcasing American Composers**. A chamber orchestra version of **Twelfth Night**, commissioned by Long Leaf Opera in North Carolina, was premiered by them in October 2005. A scene from **Twelfth Night** can be seen on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lc69AkqMFKk>.

Feigin's chamber and orchestral music has been performed and commissioned by such groups as Parnassus, Currents Ensemble, Voices of Change, the Santa Barbara Youth Symphony, and by pianist Leonard Stein for Piano-Spheres. Speculum Musicae and the Auros Group for New Music have both presented **Veranderungen** for violin and piano as the winner of their 1998 composition competitions. Among other highlights of Feigin's career, a 2-CD set on North/South Recordings followed a full evening of his chamber and vocal works performed by Musicians Accord at Merkin Concert Hall in New York City. Concerts devoted solely to Feigin's music have also been given in Armenia and Russia.

Two of Feigin's orchestral works have been premiered in Russia: **Festive Overture** by the Nijnij Novgorod Symphony Orchestra under Vladimir Ziva, and **Mosaic in Two Panels for String Orchestra** by the Chamber Orchestra Kremlin under Mikhail Rachlevsky. In America, the Santa Barbara Symphony has performed **Elegy for Orchestra, in Memoriam Otto Luening**, under Gisèle Ben-Dor, and the American premiere of **Festive Overture**, under Edwin Outwater.

Joel Feigin studied composition with Nadia Boulanger at Fontainebleau and with Roger Sessions at The Juilliard School, where he received his DMA degree. The recipient of a post-graduate Mellon Fellowship at Cornell University, he also holds an undergraduate degree from Columbia University. Early in his career, as an Aaron Copland-ASCAP fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center, Feigin received the Dimitri Mitropoulos Prize in Composition. Over the years he has been granted residencies at the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo and the Millay Colony.

Pianist Margaret Mills had commissioned and premiered **Variations on Empty Space**, which is included on her Cambria Master Recordings CD (<http://cambriamus.com/>), **Meditations and Overtones**, along with Feigin's **Four Meditations from Dogen. Transience**, a 2-CD set on North/South Recordings (<http://www.northsouthmusic.org/Transience--Music-of-Joel-Feigin>), followed an evening of Feigin's chamber and vocal works performed by Musicians Accord in New York City in 1995

An accomplished pianist and accompanist, Feigin was also a student of Rosina Lhevine, worked with Nico Castel at the Metropolitan Opera and Antonia Lavanne at the Mannes College of Music, and is often called upon to participate in performances of his own works. Among them have been **Veranderungen** with Juilliard Quartet violinist Ronald Copes in Santa Barbara, CA and Echoes of the Holocaust with members of the Czech Philharmonic in Prague.

A student of Zen Buddhism, Feigin is Professor of Composition at University of California, Santa Barbara. His website can be found at <http://www.joelfeigin.com>.

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Composer Joel Feigin Press Questions

The following questions are intended for print and broadcast journalists in connection with interviews with composer Joel Feigin. These topics are designed to facilitate conversation with him and will make for a fascinating interview:

1. When did you first realize you were a composer?
2. Tell me about studying with Nadia Boulanger. How did your study with Roger Sessions complement this – or was it entirely different?
3. Who were some of your early influences? Who are some of your current influences?
4. How has your music evolved over the past few years?
5. What is your favorite type of ensemble to compose for?
6. When you decide on a project like your opera **Twelfth Night**, what draws you to such an idea? Do the literary images suggest the music or vice versa? How important is narrative in your music?
7. Is there a sort of dream project that you would like to be able to create?
8. Tell me about your travels in Russia with the Fulbright program.
9. How does your study of Zen Buddhism affect your music and your creative process?
10. What does the future hold for Joel Feigin?

Joel Feigin's website is at <http://www.joelfeigin.com>. All press inquiries should be directed to Jeffrey James Arts Consulting at 516-586-3433 or jamesarts@att.net.