**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**50 YEARS OF BOLD NEW MUSIC:**

CONTEMPO CELEBRATES ITS 50TH SEASON

SCALING MUSICAL HEIGHTS IN THE PRESENT TENSE

AND JOINS LUMINARY UCHICAGO ARTS PARTNERS

IN CELEBRATING ANNIVERSARY MILESTONES

Artist bios, photos, music, and interviews are all available upon request

CHICAGO, September 15, 2014 [rev. 12/29/14] — **Contempo**, the University of Chicago’s renowned contemporary music series, announces its 50th season and a program schedule that will celebrate internationally acclaimed composers, UChicago’s brightest composition students, and contemporary music performers of the highest caliber. Says Shulamit Ran, Artistic Director, “Bracing, stimulating, uplifting, haunting, spiritual, disturbing, absorbing... and beautiful, too! These are just a few words that spring to mind as I try to describe the best in today’s new music. It is the Contempo vision!”

In 1964, composer and conductor Ralph Shapey founded the Contemporary Chamber Players (CCP), which later became Contempo under Ran’s tenure. It is known as one of the most successful new music initiatives in the U.S. Shapey conducted the group until he retired in 1993. The hallmarks of Contempo’s programming continue to be highly anticipated world premieres, contemporary classics, and innovative works by new composers. Ran continues, “At 50years, ours is a stunning record of longevity and commitment to scaling musical heights in the present tense. This season we will both honor the founding Contemporary Chamber Players in a retrospective and share important new voices, too.”

The 2015 season opens with programs on January 24 and March 1 featuring “Contempo at 50: Now and Then,” parts I and II, respectively, with significant works ranging from three commissions and world premieres by John Eaton, Gunther Schuller, and Sofia Gubaidulina, to the celebration of memorable Contempo/CCP performances, including a performance of Earl Kim’s “*Now and Then*.” Additionally, Contempo will be honoring the late Lee Hyla (1952-2014) posthumously by performing the world premiere of his work, *Wave*, written for eighth blackbird*.* On April 23, the acclaimed Pacifica Quartet and eighth blackbird will perform a resident ensemble showcase highlighting repertoire by past and present UChicago doctoral composition students. To further engage the audience, composers – Eaton, Gubaidulina and Schuller – will come together with UChicago music faculty for roundtable talks before the concerts. One of these discussions will feature Gubaidulina who in 2011 became the first composer ever to be awarded an honorary Ph.D from the University of Chicago.

As a notable cap for the 2015 season, Contempo joins a campus-wide celebration of five University of Chicago Arts-affiliated organizations with milestone anniversaries adding up to 300 years: Bells of Summer (50 years), Contempo (50 years), Court Theatre (60 years), Renaissance Society (100 years) and the Smart Museum (40 years). Each professional organization underlines the University’s dedication to excellence in the arts and benefits from its deep connection to the intellectual life of the university, such as Shulamit Ran, Andrew MacLeish Distinguished Service Professor of Music and Artistic Director, Contempo.

**CONTEMPO’S FULL CONCERT SCHEDULE 2015**

**Contempo at 50: Now and Then I**

SAT | January 24, 2015 | 7:30 PM

Logan Center: Performance Hall

Lee Hyla: *Wave* (world premiere, in memoriam: 1952-2014)

 [for flute, clarinet, percussion, piano, violin, cello]

Shulamit Ran: *Perfect Storm*

[for solo viola]

Ralph Shapey: *Concertante No. 1 for Trumpet and Ten Instruments*

[for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, percussion, violin, viola, cello, double bass]

Huck Hodge: *then*

I. like glass (November 2003)

 II. agitated, rough (October 2014) (world premiere)

 [for piano and string quartet]

 [for piano and string quartet]

John Eaton: *The End of It* (world premiere)

[for soprano, mixed sextet, string quartet, harp]

**David Fulmer,** conductor

**eighth blackbird**

**Pacifica Quartet**

**Stephen Burns,** trumpet

**Anthony Cheung**, piano

**Sharon Harms**, soprano

**Masumi Per Rostad**, viola

Ensemble guests

**Alison Attar**, harp; **Julia Filson,** horn; **Andrew Nogal,** oboe, English horn; **Karl Rzasa,** bassoon; **David Scholl,** double bass; **Minghuan Xu,** violin

*6:30 pm Contempo Commissions: Roundtable Conversation with John Eaton and Shulamit Ran, followed by a short documentary film about Contempo,* “Inside New Music,” *by director I. Michael Toth*

The 50th season opens with *Now and Then I*, celebrating the best in contemporary music, from older works (1984) to world premieres (2014). The program features Shapey's *Concertante No. 1* *for Trumpet and Ten Instruments* (1984) as well as a world premiere by John Eaton, recipient of the MacArthur “genius” award. Contempo’s eighth blackbird will offer the world premiere of Lee Hyla’s *Wave,* recent Fromm Music Foundation commission.

**Contempo at 50: Now and Then II**

Sunday | March 1, 2015 | 3:00 PM

Logan Center: Performance Hall

Helen Grime: *Entwined Channels*

 [for two pianos]

Howard Sandroff: *Chants des Femmes*

 [for flute and electronics]

Gunther Schuller: *Four Chromatic Adventures* (world premiere)

 [for flute, clarinet, percussion, harp, two violins, viola, cello]

Earl Kim: *Now and Then*

 [for soprano, flute, harp, viola]

Sofia Gubaidulina: *Pilgrims* (world premiere)

 [for violin, piano, double bass, two percussion]

**Cliff Colnot,** conductor

**eighth blackbird**

**Pacifica Quartet**

**Michelle Areyzaga,** soprano

**Alison Attar,** harp

**Matthew Duvall**, percussion

**Doug Perkins**, percussion

**Lisa Kaplan**, piano

**Daniel Schlosberg,** piano

**Mary Stolper,** flute

**Ben Sutherland,** electronics

**Collins Trier,** bass

2:00 pm: *Contempo Commissions: Roundtable Conversation with composers Gunther Schuller and Sofia Gubaidulina, and Department of Music faculty Berthold Hoeckner and Steven Rings*

Contempo at 50 continues with works across its generations. Two commissions anchor this program, one by Gunther Schuller, an iconic figure on the American music scene, and another by Russian composer Sofia Gubaidulina, whose music is described as combining the "spiritual and dramatic, with daring and transparently original colors." *Pilgrims* was written on a commission by the Koussevitzy Foundation for Contempo.

**UChicago Resident Ensembles Showcase**

Thursday | April 23, 2015 | 7:30 PM

Logan Center: Performance Hall

Eric Brinkmann: *Sublimation*

[for bass clarinet and string quartet]

Francisco Castillo Trigueros: *Nealika*

 [for flute, percussion, piano, cello]

Michael LaCroix: *Twelve Faces of the Emerald*

[for mezzo-soprano, flute, clarinet, percussion, piano, violin, cello]

David Gordon: *Speaking in Tongues*

[for water phone, violin, viola, cello]

Yuan-Chen Li: *Wandering Viewpoint*

[for cello solo and ensemble]

**Cliff Colnot,** conductor

**eighth blackbird**

**Pacifica Quartet**

**Julia Bentley,** mezzo-soprano

**Nicholas Photinos**, cello

and ensemble guests

Contempo's resident ensembles and guests showcase highlights of the repertoire created by UChicago doctoral composition students past and present. Emerging composers’ active engagement with the University’s faculty and performers define Contempo’s dedication to the living art of composition.

**Tomorrow’s Music Today I**

Wednesday | May 6, 2015 | 7:30 pm

Logan Center: Performance Hall

Works by Pierce Gradone, Tim Page, and Jae-Goo Lee

In the first of two annual events, Contempo cultivates prodigious talent with an eye toward music’s future, including compositions by doctoral candidates at the University of Chicago.

**Cliff Colnot,** conductor

**eighth blackbird**

**Pacifica Quartet**

Free and open to the public, no reservations required

**Tomorrow’s Music Today II**

Friday | May 15, 2015 | 7:30 PM

Ganz Hall, Roosevelt University

Works by Kate Pukinskis, Philip Taylor, and Iddo Aharony

In the second of two annual events, Contempo cultivates prodigious talent with an eye toward music’s future, including a dissertation composition by doctoral candidates at the University of Chicago.

**eighth blackbird**

**Pacifica Quartet**

**Cliff Colnot,** conductor

**Nina Dante**, soprano

**Amanda DeBoer**, soprano

**Elisa Sutherland**, mezzo-soprano

**Robert Dillon**, percussion

Free and open to the public, no reservations required

Reception to follow

**LOCATIONS**

Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts

915 East 60th Street, Chicago, IL 60608

Ganz Hall, Roosevelt University

430 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60605

**TICKETS**

Tickets $25/$5 students – *Subscriptions for the five-concert series are only $49, with Tomorrow’s Music Today I and II free and open to the public.*

Subscriptions and single tickets are available at UChicago Arts Box Office, Reva & David Logan Center for the Arts, 915 E. 60th Street. Call 773.702.ARTS or visit ticketsweb.uchicago.edu.

**BOX OFFICE HOURS**

Regular hours are Tuesday – Saturday, 12pm – 6pm and through concert intermission; 1-4 pm on concert Sundays.

Go to contempo.uchicago.edu to learn more about Contempo events and history.

*We are grateful to all of our supporters and partners, including:*

*Illinois Arts Council*

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**MEDIA IMAGES**

<http://bit.ly/VTz2vz>

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