



ACME
Thrive on Routine

Caleb Burhans

- 1 ***Jahrzeit*** for string quartet [10:10]
(2009, commissioned and premiered by ACME)
Yuki Numata Resnick and Ben Russell, violins;
Caleb Burhans, viola; Clarice Jensen, cello

Caroline Shaw

- 2 ***in manus tuas*** for solo cello [8:57]
(2009)
Clarice Jensen, cello

Caroline Shaw

- 3 ***Gustave Le Gray*** for solo piano [10:09]
(2012)
Timo Andres, piano

Timo Andres

- Thrive on Routine*** for string quartet
(2010, commissioned and premiered by ACME)
- 4 Morning [4:53]
5 Potatoes [3:13]
6 Passacaglia [3:25]
7 Coda [2:13]
Yuki Numata Resnick and Ben Russell, violins; Caleb Burhans, viola;
Clarice Jensen, cello

John Luther Adams

- 8 ***In a Treeless Place, Only Snow*** [17:27]
(1999)
Yuki Numata Resnick and Ben Russell, violins; Caleb Burhans, viola;
Clarice Jensen, cello; Timo Andres, piano; Peter Dugan, celesta; Chris
Thompson and Chihiro Shibayama, vibraphones

Total time: 60:21

Thrive on Routine
American Contemporary Music Ensemble
Clarice Jensen, Artistic Director

In many ways, this album represents the debut recording of ACME, American Contemporary Music Ensemble. The collection of pieces here was chosen for very pure and simple reasons; each work is a piece we love and to which we feel quite intimately connected. The performance of this music is an expression of affection and closeness, not just to each other as performers, but also to the composer who wrote it. Three of the four composers featured are also performers in ACME. It is music that feels very close.

The privilege of performing this music for others has shaped each of us individually and as an ensemble, and these pieces occupy a good part of the music ACME has performed as concert music.

Yuki Numata Resnick violin
Ben Russell violin
Caleb Burhans viola
Clarice Jensen cello
Timo Andres piano
Peter Dugan celesta
Chris Thompson vibraphone
Chihiro Shibayama vibraphone

It was also chosen for this album, to exist on recorded media, because it is work that should exist in other scenarios beyond the concert experience: a long, slow walk; a frenetic commute; a late evening at home...

This curated selection of pieces comes from different but rhyming sonic worlds and is some of the music we have grown to love the most in this varied and fast-changing world.

—Clarice Jensen, ACME Cellist & Artistic Director

Caleb Burhans

Jahrzeit for string quartet

(2009, commissioned and premiered by ACME)

The jahrzeit is a time of remembering the dead by reciting the Kaddish, lighting a 24-hour candle, and remembering the person who has died. Caleb Burhans' **Jahrzeit** was written around the anniversary of the death of the composer's father, Ronald Burhans.

Caroline Shaw

in manus tuas for solo cello (2009)

Gustave Le Gray for solo piano (2012)

In manus tuas is based on a 16th century motet by Thomas Tallis. While there are only a few slices of the piece that reflect exact harmonic changes in Tallis' setting, the motion (or lack of) is intended to capture the sensation of a single moment of hearing the motet in the particular and remarkable space of Christ Church in New Haven, Connecticut. **In manus tuas** was written in 2009 for cellist Hannah Collins, for a secular solo cello compline service held in the dark, candlelit nave.

Chopin's *Op. 17 A minor Mazurka* is one of the most exquisite, perfect pieces of music ever made. The opening alone contains a potent poetic balance between the viscosity and density of the

descending harmonic progression and the floating onion skin of the loose, chromatic melody above. Or, in fewer words – it's very prosciutto and mint. When someone asks me, "So what is your music like?" – I'll sometimes answer (depending on who's asking), "Kind of like sashimi?" That is, it's often made of chords and sequences presented in their raw, naked, preciously unadorned state – vividly fresh and new, yet utterly familiar. Chopin is a different type of chef. He covers much more harmonic real estate than I do, and his sequences are more varied and inventive. He weaves a textured narrative through his harmony that takes you through different characters and landscapes, whereas I'd sometimes be happy listening to a single well-framed, perfectly voiced triad. But the frame is the hard part – designing the perfectly attuned and legible internal system of logic and memory that is strong but subtle enough to support an authentic emotional experience of return. (Not to get all Proustian or anything.) In some way that I can't really understand or articulate yet, photographs can do this with a remarkable economy of means. Translating that elusive syntax into music is an interesting challenge. Then again, sometimes music is just music. **Gustave Le Gray** is a multi-layered portrait of *Op. 17 No. 4* using some of Chopin's ingredients overlaid and hinged together with my own. It was written expressly for pianist Amy Yang, who is one of the truest artists I've ever met.

—Caroline Shaw

Timo Andres

Thrive on Routine for string quartet

(2010, commissioned and premiered by ACME)

I remember reading a description of Charles Ives's morning routine in Jan Swafford's biography; it involved waking up very early, at four or five, digging in his potato patch (if it happened to be that time of year), and playing through some of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* – a kind of transcendental calisthenics program. ***Thrive on Routine*** is structured in four continuous parts: Morning, Potatoes, Passacaglia, and Coda.

—Timo Andres

John Luther Adams

In a Treeless Place, Only Snow (1999)

John Luther Adams' ***In a Treeless Place, Only Snow*** succinctly yet sensuously depicts the landscape described in the title. On landscape, the composer writes in "Winter Music: A Composer's Journal," as published in *Reflections on American Music: The Twentieth Century and the New Millennium* (Pendragon Press, 2000):

"In art and music, landscape is usually portrayed as an objective presence, a setting within which subjective human emotions are experienced and expressed. But can we find other ways of listening in which the landscape itself - rather than our feelings about it - becomes the subject? Better yet: can the listener and the landscape become one?"

If in the past the more melodic elements of my music have somehow spoken of the subjective presence, the human figure in the landscape, in the new piece there's no one present... only slowly changing light and color on a timeless white field.

I remember the Gwich'in name for a place in the Brooks Range: "In A Treeless Place, Only Snow."



American Contemporary Music Ensemble

The **American Contemporary Music Ensemble (ACME)** is dedicated to the outstanding performance of masterworks from the 20th and 21st centuries, primarily the work of American composers. The ensemble presents music by living composers alongside the classics of the contemporary. ACME's dedication to new music extends across genres, and has earned them a reputation among both classical and rock crowds. *NPR* calls them "contemporary music dynamos," and *The New York Times* describes ACME's performances as "vital," "brilliant," and "electrifying." *Time Out New York* reports, "[Artistic Director Clarice] Jensen has earned a sterling reputation for her fresh, inclusive mix of minimalists, maximalists, eclectics and newcomers." ACME was honored by ASCAP during its 10th anniversary season in 2015 for the "virtuosity, passion, and commitment with which it performs and champions American composers."

ACME's instrumentation is flexible, and includes some of New York's most sought-after, engaging musicians. World premieres given by ACME include Ingram Marshall's *Psalm-book*, Jóhann Jóhannsson's *Drone Mass*, Caroline Shaw's *Ritornello*, Phil Kline's *Out Cold*, William Britton's *Loving the Chambered Nautilus*, Jefferson Friedman's *On in Love*, Timo Andres' *Senior and Thrive on Routine*, Caleb Burhans' *Jahrzeit*, and many more.

ACME has recorded with Max Richter (*Sleep*, 2015) and Jóhann Jóhannsson (*Orphée*, 2016) for Deutsche Grammophon, as well as for Butterscotch Records (*Fantasias for String Quartet and Theremin*, 2016), New World Records (*Joseph Byrd: NYC 1960-1963*, 2013), and New Amsterdam Records (*On in Love*, 2014 and *Loving the Chambered Nautilus*, 2012).

The ensemble's many collaborators have included The Richard Alston Dance Company, Wayne McGregor's *Random Dance*, Gibney Dance, Satellite Ballet, actress Barbara Sukowa, filmmaker

Jim Jarmusch, Blonde Redhead, Grizzly Bear, Low, Matmos, Jeff Mangum, A Winged Victory for the Sullen, Roomful of Teeth, Lionheart, and Theo Bleckmann.

ACME has performed at leading international venues including Carnegie Hall, BAM, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Kitchen, (Le) Poisson Rouge, National Sawdust, Columbia University's Miller Theatre, St. Ann's Warehouse, Montclair's Peak Performances, Washington Performing Arts, UCLA's Royce Hall, Stanford Live, Chicago's Millennium Park, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, Harvard's Sanders Theatre, The Library of Congress, Duke Performances, Dartmouth's Hopkins Center, The Satellite in Los Angeles, Triple Door in Seattle, Melbourne Recital Hall and Sydney Opera House in Australia, and at festivals including the Sacrum Profanum Festival in Poland, All Tomorrow's Parties in England, and Big Ears in Knoxville, TN.

For more information, visit www.acmemusic.org.





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American Contemporary Music Ensemble

Thrive on Routine
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