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Press Contact: Christina Jensen | Jensen Artists
646.536.7864 x 1 | christina@jensenartists.com

**American Contemporary Music Ensemble (ACME)
Celebrates Milestone Anniversary with *ACME: 15 Years***

Three NYC Concerts in 2020



Friday, January 17 at 8pm: The Music of Gavin Bryars

Friday, March 13 at 8pm: The Music of Clarice Jensen

Friday, May 29 at 8pm: The Music of Eno, Thorvaldsdottir, Sirota, and Young

Tenri Cultural Institute | 43A West 13th Street | NYC

Tickets: \$25 per show or \$60 Series Pass at <http://bit.ly/ACME15years>

“such soul, passion, and excellent command” – *NPR*

ACME: www.acmemusic.org

New York, NY –From January through May 2020, the American Contemporary Music Ensemble (ACME) will present three concerts celebrating the group’s 15th anniversary, in a series called *ACME: 15 Years*, at the Tenri Cultural Institute (43A W. 13th St.) – the location of the ensemble’s inaugural concert season in 2004-2005. Described as “vital,” “brilliant,” and “electrifying,” by *The New York Times*, ACME is a force for new music led by Artistic Director Clarice Jensen and is dedicated to the outstanding performance of masterworks from the 20th and 21st centuries.

ACME: 15 Years:

Friday, January 17, 2020 at 8pm: The Music of Gavin Bryars

Gavin Bryars: *The Sinking of the Titanic*

Gavin Bryars: String Quartet No. 1 ("Between the National and the Bristol")

Tickets: <http://bit.ly/ACMEGavinBryars>

ACME explores music of the English composer Gavin Bryars in celebration of his 77th birthday, which falls on January 16. Of the program, ACME Artistic Director Clarice Jensen says, "*The Sinking of the Titanic* and Bryars' String Quartet No. 1 'Between the National and the Bristol' are unique works of minimalism that are incredibly strange and beautiful, and not often performed." *The Sinking of the Titanic* was inspired by the band on the ship that continued to play as it sank. "The music goes through a number of different states, reflecting an implied slow descent to the ocean bed which give a range of echo and deflection phenomena, allied to considerable high frequency reduction," Bryars writes. Of his String Quartet No. 1, he states, "One night in 1906, unknown to each of them, the three most famous dancers of the period were staying in Vienna. Maud Allan was at the National, Mata Hari was at the Hotel Bristol, and Isadora Duncan, another reference within the quartet, was staying in a hotel 'somewhere between the National and the Bristol.'" The piece was written in 1985 for the Arditti Quartet.

ACME players for this concert include Laura Lutzke and Ravenna Lipchik, violins; Kallie Ciechowski; viola; Clarice Jensen, cello; Chihiro Shibayama, percussion; and Grey McMurray, electric guitar.

Friday, March 13, 2020 at 8pm: The Music of Clarice Jensen

Tickets: <http://bit.ly/ACMEClariceJensen>

For the past several years, ACME Artistic Director Clarice Jensen has been composing contrapuntal and polyphonic music which she performs solo, on her cello with various effects pedals and loopers. She has recorded her music on two acclaimed albums (*For this from that will be filled* in 2018 and *Drone Studies* in 2019) and will release a third solo album in 2020. Jensen says, "For this concert, I am arranging my own solo pieces for ACME – for mixed ensemble – exploring the timbral effects of the ensemble layered with the electronic effects I use to manipulate my cello sound. The program will also explore drones and long tones as a sonic phenomenon and emotional experience."

ACME players for this concert include Laura Lutzke and Ravenna Lipchik, violins; Isabel Hagen, viola; Clarice Jensen, cello; Chihiro Shibayama, percussion; and Grey McMurray, electric guitar.

Friday, May 29, 2020 at 8pm: The Music of Brian Eno, Anna Thorvaldsdottir, Robert Sirota, and Nina C. Young

Robert Sirota: *Triptych*

Nina C. Young: *Meditation*

Anna Thorvaldsdottir: *Reflections*

Brian Eno: *Discreet Music* (arr. by Grey McMurray)

Tickets: <http://bit.ly/ACMEMay29>

This concert comprises music that offers an opportunity for stillness, featuring works that confront the concepts of shadow and light, focus and blur, invoking themes that are both conceptual and programmatic. Robert Sirota's *Triptych* was written in 2002, to commemorate the victims of September 11. *The New York Times* describes the piece as, "proceed[ing] through unease and lamentation to end with a tone of resilience and hope." Composer Nina C. Young's experience in the electronic music studio informs her acoustic work, which takes as its given not melody and harmony, but sound itself, continuously metamorphosing from one state to another. Her *Meditation* for violin and cello was written in

2013. Anna Thorvaldsdottir is an Icelandic composer whose “seemingly boundless textural imagination” (*The New York Times*) sound world has made her “one of the most distinctive voices in contemporary music” (*NPR*). Her trio *Reflections* was written in 2016 for Nordic Affect. Brian Eno’s ambient classic *Discreet Music* from 1975, arranged by Grey McMurray for ACME, completes the program.

ACME players for this concert include Ben Russell and Ravenna Lipchik, violins; Isabel Hagen, viola; Clarice Jensen, cello; and Grey McMurray, electric guitar.

About ACME:

ACME was founded in 2004 by cellist Clarice Jensen, manager and publicist Christina Jensen, and conductor Donato Cabrera, who were at the time all living in the same building in Inwood, New York. Over numerous dinners, the three hatched a plan to start an ensemble dedicated to performing only new music. Recently graduated from Juilliard and motivated by a desire to continue making music with friends, Clarice Jensen curated the first series of concerts at Tenri Cultural Institute from fall 2004 through spring 2005, asking friends and colleagues to perform together. The young ensemble would continue to perform at Tenri for several more years, while building a reputation for insightful programming and incisive performances.

Since then, over the past 15 years, ACME has risen to the highest ranks of American new music through a mix of meticulous musicianship, artistic vision, engaging collaborations, and unwavering standards in every regard. The membership of the amorphous collective includes some of the brightest young stars in the field. *NPR* calls them “contemporary music dynamos,” and *Strings* reports, “ACME’s absorbing playing pulsed with warm energy. . . Shared glances and inhaled triggers transitioned in a flow so seamless it seemed learned in a Jedi temple.” 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.”

The ensemble has performed at leading international venues including Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, BAM, The Kennedy Center, Washington Performing Arts, UCLA's Royce Hall, Stanford Live, Chicago's Millennium Park, Duke Performances, 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, Auckland Arts Festival in New Zealand, Summer Nostos Festival in Greece, Boston Calling, and Big Ears in Knoxville, TN.

World premieres given by ACME include Ingram Marshall's *Psalmbook*, Jóhann Jóhannsson's *Drone Mass* (commissioned by ACME in 2015; recorded for Deutsche Grammophon in 2019), Caroline Shaw's *Ritornello*, Phil Kline's *Out Cold*, William Brittle's *Loving the Chambered Nautilus*, Timo Andres' *Senior and Thrive on Routine*, Caleb Burhans' *Jahrzeit*, and many more. In 2016 at The Kitchen, ACME premiered Clarice Jensen's transcription of Julius Eastman's *The Holy Presence of Joan d'Arc* for ten cellos, the score of which had been lost since the premiere in 1981. Jensen transcribed a recording of the work to recreate the score.

ACME's collaborators have included The Richard Alston Dance Company, Wayne McGregor's Random Dance, Gibney Dance, Satellite Ballet, Meredith Monk, Jóhann Jóhannsson, Max Richter, actress Barbara Sukowa, filmmaker Jim Jarmusch, Blonde Redhead, Grizzly Bear, Low, Matmos, Micachu & The Shapes, Jeff Mangum, A Winged Victory for the Sullen, Roomful of Teeth, Lionheart, and Theo Bleckmann.

In 2017, ACME released its first portrait album on Sono Luminus, featuring music by members Caroline Shaw, Timo Andres, and Caleb Burhans, plus John Luther Adams. The release was featured as Album of the Week on *Q2 Music* and *Gramophone* praised it, reporting, “The ACME players capture the aura of tranquility to hypnotic effect [in the Adams], the repeated patterns in the keyboard instruments contrasted beautifully with the lyrical strings.” *The Strad* raved, “Warmth and care are fully evident in the ensemble’s immaculate, considered performances – the four composers could hardly wish for more committed, convincing accounts of their music.”

ACME's discography also includes Jóhann Jóhannsson's *Orphée* and Max Richter's eight-hour piece, *Sleep* (which the ensemble regularly performs live), both on Deutsche Grammophon; *Fantasias* with thereminist Carolina Eyck on Butterscotch Records; *Joseph Byrd: NYC 1960-63*, the first commercial recording of the music of rediscovered American Fluxus composer Joseph Byrd, on New World Records; William Britton's electro-acoustic chamber work *Loving the Chambered Nautilus*, and Jefferson Friedman's *On In Love* with vocalist Craig Wedren, both on New Amsterdam Records.

For more information, please visit www.acmemusic.org.