

## Friends of Today's Music Commissions Joan Tower

Ms. Tower will compose a new work for solo piano aimed at advanced level students. Join us at the 2015 MTAC Convention in San Jose for the world premiere of this composition performed by young musicians. Ms. Tower will attend to coach the pianists and engage the audience in discussion. The score will be published by Associated Music Publishers and will be available for purchase at the convention.

Joan Tower is widely regarded as one of the most important American composers living today. During a career spanning more than 50 years, she has made lasting contributions to musical life in the United States as composer, performer, conductor, and educator. Her works have been commissioned by major ensembles, soloists, and orchestras, including the Emerson, Tokyo, and Muir quartets; soloists Evelyn Glennie, Carol Wincenc, David Shifrin, and John Browning; and the orchestras of Chicago, New York, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and Washington DC among others.

In 1990, Tower became the first woman to win the prestigious Grawemeyer Award for her composition *Silver Ladders*. She was the first composer chosen for a Ford Made in America consortium commission of sixty-five orchestras. The Nashville Symphony and conductor Leonard Slatkin recorded that work, *Made in America*, with Tambor and Concerto for Orchestra for the Naxos label. The top-selling recording won three 2008 Grammy awards: Best Classical Contemporary Composition, Best Classical Album, and Best Orchestral Performance.

From 1969 to 1984, she was pianist and founding member of the Naumburg Award-winning Da Capo Chamber Players, which commissioned and premiered many of her most popular works. Her first orchestral work, *Sequoia*, quickly entered the repertory. Tower's tremendously popular five *Fanfares for the Uncommon Woman* have been played by over 500 different ensembles. She is currently Asher Edelman Professor of Music at Bard College, a post she has held since 1972.

Her composer-residencies with orchestras and festivals include a decade with the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra's Composer of the Year for their 2010-2011 season, as well as the St. Louis Symphony, the Deer Valley Music Festival, and the Yale/Norfolk Chamber Music Festival.

Among her recent premieres: *White Water* (2012), commissioned by Chamber Music Monterey Bay and premiered by the Daedalus Quartet; *Stroke* (2011), commissioned by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra; *White Granite* (2009), commissioned by St. Timothy's Summer Music Festival, Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival, and La Jolla Music Society for SummerFest; *Angels* (2008), her fourth string quartet, commissioned by Music for Angel Fire and premiered by the Miami String Quartet; *Dumbarton Quintet* (2008), a piano quintet commissioned by the Dumbarton Oaks Estate (their third commission after Stravinsky and Copland) and premiered by Tower and the Enso String Quartet; *Chamber Dance* (2006), commissioned, premiered, and toured by Orpheus; and *Copperwave* (2006), written for the American Brass Quintet and commissioned by The Juilliard School of Music. *A Gift* (2007), for winds and piano, was commissioned by Chamber Music Northwest and premiered by The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (CMS). Other CMS premieres included *Trio Cavany* (2007) and *Simply Purple* (2008) for viola, performed by Paul Neubauer.

Her compositions cross many genres: *Can I* (2007) for youth chorus and percussionist; *Copperwave* (2006), written for brass quintet; *DNA* (2003), a percussion quintet commissioned for Frank Epstein and the New England Conservatory Percussion Ensemble; *Fascinating Ribbons* (2001), her foray into the world of band music, premiered at the annual conference of College Band Directors; *Vast Antique Cubes/Throbbing Still* (2000), a solo piano piece for John Browning; *Tambor* (1998), for the Pittsburgh Symphony under the baton of Mariss Jansons; and her ballet *Stepping Stones* (1993), commissioned by choreographer Kathryn Posin for the Milwaukee Ballet and revisited by Posin with the Bulgarian Ballet in June 2011.

Joan Tower's music is published by Associated Music Publishers.