

CHARLES WUORINEN

Biography (b. 9 June 1938, New York City)

"Charles Wuorinen is one of the world's greatest composers" - John Zorn

In 1970, Wuorinen became the youngest composer at that time to win the Pulitzer Prize (for the electronic work *Time's Encomium*). The Pulitzer and the MacArthur Fellowship are just two among many awards, fellowships and other honors to have come his way.

Wuorinen has written more than 260 compositions to date. His newest works include *Time Regained*, a fantasy for piano and orchestra based on early music (Matteo da Perugia to Orlando Gibbons) for Peter Serkin, James Levine and the MET Opera Orchestra, *Theologoumenon*, an orchestral tone poem commissioned for James Levine's 60th birthday, *Eighth Symphony* and *Fourth Piano Concerto* for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and *It Happens Like This*, a staged setting of poems by James Tate. He has recently completed an opera on Annie Proulx's *Brokeback Mountain* with libretto by Proulx for the Teatro Real in Madrid. Wuorinen's previous opera *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (1997-2001), based on the novel of Salman Rushdie, was premiered by the New York City Opera in fall 2004.

In 1984 Wuorinen was the first composer commissioned by the Cleveland Orchestra under its new Music Director, Christoph von Dohnanyi (*Movers and Shakers*); and likewise in 1996 the first to compose for Michael Tilson Thomas' New World Symphony (*Bamboula Beach*) which the Miami herald described as "An exhilarating, festive, six minute tour-de-force for large orchestra." In 1975 Stravinsky's widow gave Wuorinen the composer's last sketches for use in his homage *A Reliquary for Igor Stravinsky*, premiered by Tilson Thomas in Buffalo and Ojai. The *Reliquary* received its first recording under the baton of Oliver Knussen and the London Sinfonietta on a Deutsche Grammophon CD, and was choreographed by Peter Martins for the NYCB in 1995 (with the composer conducting).

His works have been recorded on nearly a dozen labels including several releases on Naxos, Albany Records (*Charles Wuorinen Series*), John Zorn's *Tzadik* label, and a CD of piano works performed by Alan Feinberg on the German label *Col Legno*.

Wuorinen's works are published exclusively by C.F. Peters Corporation. He is the author of *Simple Composition*, used by composition students throughout the world.

An eloquent writer and speaker, Wuorinen has lectured at universities throughout the United States and abroad, and has served on the faculties of Columbia, Princeton, and Yale Universities, the University of Iowa, University of California (San Diego), Manhattan School of Music, New England Conservatory, State University of New York at Buffalo, and Rutgers University.

Wuorinen has also been active as performer, an excellent pianist and a distinguished conductor of his own works as well as other twentieth century repertoire. In 1962 he co-founded the Group for Contemporary Music, one of America's most prestigious ensembles dedicated to performance of new chamber music. In addition to cultivating a new generation of performers, commissioning and premiering hundreds of new works, the Group has been a model for many similar organizations which have appeared in the United States since its founding.

Wuorinen is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

