

Friends of Today's Music was established in 1986. With a firm commitment to the music of our time, and indeed to the future of classical music, FOTM has sponsored the creation and publication of a wide variety of significant works, written especially for students by many of today's leading, internationally renowned composers. The impressive roster of commissioned composers confirms the support of the project and offers young musicians an outstanding opportunity to learn a new piece and work with the composer.



Friends of Today's
Music
Commissions Composer
Paul Chihara

Mr. Chihara will compose a trio for flute (violin), cello and piano. Scores will be published by C.F. Peters and available for purchase during the 2008 MTAC convention. Students interested in performing the premiere of this new composition and working with Mr. Chihara should contact FTM Chair, Catherine O'Connor at (510) 581-6457 or email: cathoc@aol.com

PAUL SEIKO CHIHARA was born in Seattle, Washington in 1938. He received his doctorate degree (D.M.A.) from Cornell University in 1965 as a student of Robert Palmer. Mr. Chihara also studied with the renowned pedagogue Nadia Boulanger in Paris, Ernst Pepping in Berlin, and with Gunther Schuller at Tanglewood. With Toru Takemitsu, Chihara was composer-in-residence at the Marlboro Music Festival in 1971, and also the first composer-in-residence of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Neville Marriner, Conductor. More recently, he has served as the composer-in-residence with the Mancini Institute in Los Angeles.

Mr. Chihara's prize-winning concert works have been performed in most major cities and arts centers in the U.S. and Europe. His numerous commissions and awards include those from The Lili Boulanger Memorial Award, the Naumberg Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Fulbright Fellowship, the Aaron Copland Fund, and National Endowment for the Arts, as well as from the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the New Japan Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, the New Juilliard Ensemble, and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. His commissioned orchestral tone poem CLOUDS was premiered by the American Composers Orchestra in their Millennium Concert at Carnegie Hall in 2001. His AMATSU KAZE (for soprano and five instruments) was premiered by the New Juilliard Ensemble at the Why Note Festival in Dijon, France. In February 2002, a concert of his choral music was presented by the Westminster Choir College at Princeton, New Jersey. "An Afternoon on the Perfume River" received its world premiere by the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra at Carnegie Hall in February of 2004. Sir Neville Marriner and the world-renowned guitar virtuoso Pepe Romero recently recorded his Guitar Concerto with the London Symphony Orchestra.

Active in the ballet world, Mr. Chihara was composer-in-residence at the San Francisco Ballet from 1973-1986. While there, he wrote many trailblazing works, including “Shin-ju” (based on the "lovers' suicide" plays by the great Japanese dramatist Chikamatsu), as well as the first full-length American ballet, “The Tempest”.

In addition to his many concert works, Mr. Chihara has composed scores for over 90 motion pictures and television series. He has worked with such luminaries as directors Sidney Lumet, Louis Malle, Michael Ritchie, and Arthur Penn. His movie credits include Prince of the City, The Morning After, Crossing Delancey, and John Turturro’s Romance and Cigarettes. His works for television include China Beach, Noble House, Brave New World, and 100 Centre Street. Mr. Chihara also served as music supervisor at Buena Vista Pictures (Walt Disney Co.). Also active in the New York musical theatre world, Mr. Chihara served as musical consultant and arranger for Duke Ellington’s Sophisticated Ladies, and was the composer for James Clavell’s Shogun, the Musical.

Mr. Chihara’s works have been widely recorded. His compositions appear on many labels including BMG Records, Reference Recordings, CRI, Music and Art, Vox Candide, New World Records, The Louisville Orchestra First Editions Records, and Albany Records. Mr. Chihara is a Professor of Music at UCLA.

“It is almost easier to think of Paul Chihara as several different composers. There is the Chihara whose sensitivity to exquisite instrumental color has made him a favorite with such performers as conductor Seiji Ozawa and the Sequoia String Quartet. There is, however, a strong theatrical side to Chihara which expresses itself in works for dance, musical theater and film. And there is Chihara’s love for American popular music of the ‘30s and ‘40s.”

The Los Angeles Times, Mark Swed