

Gregory Mertl

“A talent the ear wants to follow wherever it goes” (Boston Globe), Gregory Mertl has garnered commissions from the Tanglewood Music Center (1999), the Rhode Island Philharmonic (2000), the Tarab Cello Ensemble (2001), the Phoenix Symphony (2001), the Wind Ensembles of the Big Ten Universities (2002), the Ostrava Oboe Festival, Czech Republic (2005, 2009), Kenneth Meyer and the Hanson Institute (2006), the University of Oregon (2013), CSTMA (2013), counter)induction (2016), the University of Niš (2016), Xavier Phillips (2019), Oklahoma State University (2019), and the Barlow Endowment for a piano concerto for pianist Solungga Liu and the University of Minnesota Wind Ensemble, Craig Kirchhoff, conductor, which was premiered in November, 2011 and released by Bridge Records (BRIDGE 9489) in May 2017.

In 2010, Mertl presented work on a concert/lecture tour in Romania and Hungary and as a guest composer at KOFOMI (Komponistenforum Mittersill, Austria) where he had performances by the Austrian contemporary music ensemble "Die Reihe". In Asia, the Tainan Women's College of Arts and Technology hosted a two-day conference featuring Mertl's music in May 2005 and lectures and performances followed at several other Taiwanese universities. In 2007, *Open Gate*, an ensemble he co-founded, performed an entire evening of his chamber music on a tour that culminated at Weill Recital Hall in New York City.

Born in 1969, Mertl has degrees from Yale University (BA 1991) and the Eastman School of Music (Ph.D. in Music Composition 2005). He has been fulltime Visiting Artist of Composition at the Setnor School of Music at Syracuse University (2008-2010) and has been composer-in-residence at Yaddo, Château de La Napoule in France, the Fundación Valparaiso in Spain, the Helen Wurlitzer Foundation in Taos, New Mexico, the Ragdale Foundation, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the I-Park Artists Enclave in East Haddam, CT, and the Chamber Music Festival of the East at Bennington College in Vermont. He has won major awards such as the Chicago Symphony's First Hearing Award and a 1998 Tanglewood Composition Fellowship. At Tanglewood, he had the tremendous privilege of studying with Henri Dutilleux and Mauricio Kagel.

In November 2014, Mertl presented his music at the University of São Paulo and at the University of Campinas in Brazil. In 2015 he was performed in Virginia, North Carolina, and Oklahoma and in two Open Gate showcases at the Tenri Cultural Institute in New York City. During the summer and fall of 2015 he was resident composer at the Oberpfälzer Künstlerhaus in Schwandorf, Germany and he was guest of honor at the Balkan Art Forum 2015 in Niš, Serbia where he gave the keynote address and presented his music. In April and May 2016, he returned to Brazil for performances, lectures and masterclasses at universities in São Paulo, (UNESP and USP), Goiânia (UFG), Porto Alegre (UFRGS), and Pelotas (UFPEL) and once again in 2019 in Rio at UNIRIO and UFRJ, João Pessoa (UFPB) and Natal (UFRN).

Of his Bridge release, the American Record Guide has written, “there’s a wealth of compositional ingenuity and detail, but better yet there’s what I might call attention to the human aspect of music—a concern with drama, passion, and psychological complexity alongside any purely technical achievement. That’s what makes me keep listening to it,” to which Fanfare Magazine added, “his is music that embraces paradoxes—large-scale structural clarity with irregular rhythms and harmonic ephemerality, for instance—formed by a musical vision that seems to value both capriciousness and balance. It is challenging music, in the very best sense, but immediately appealing for the sense of wonder it creates. It is often intensely beautiful, and otherworldly, and impressionistic in its evocation of emotions.”

His most recent works are a four-movement concerto for the French cellist Xavier Phillips and *Pictures Without an Exhibition*, a multi-movement work for pianist Heather Lanners, which was premiered in early 2020. His current project is a work for guitar and string quartet for guitarist Kenneth Meyer.