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UCSB Composer Joel Feigin Receives Major Commission

Joel Feigin, a professor of music at the University of California, Santa Barbara, has received a \$10,000 commission from the prestigious Fromm Music Foundation to compose a concerto for piano and chamber orchestra for Israeli-American pianist Yael Weiss.

Founded by the late Paul Fromm and located at Harvard University, the Fromm Foundation has commissioned over 300 new compositions and their performances, and has sponsored hundreds of new music concerts and concert series. Among them are Tanglewood's Festival of Contemporary Music and the Fromm Concert Series at Harvard University. The foundation also sponsors the Paul Fromm Composer-in-Residence program at the American Academy in Rome and the annual Fromm Concert and Fromm Award for Composition at Tanglewood.

Feigin, who joined the UCSB faculty in 1992, studied with Nadia Boulanger at Fontainebleau and with Roger Sessions at The Juilliard School, where he received his doctor of musical arts degree. His honors and awards include a Senior Fulbright Fellowship at the Moscow Conservatory in Russia and a Guggenheim Fellowship to write his first opera, "Mysteries of Eleusis," which was commissioned for Theatre Cornell. The complete opera was presented again in 1999 at the Moscow Conservatory, which requested a chamber version that it produced in 2000 as part of the Russian-American Festival of Operatic Art. Feigin's opera, "Twelfth Night," based on the play by William Shakespeare, was commissioned and premiered by

Long Leaf Opera in 2005. Scenes from "Twelfth Night" have been presented by the New York City Opera in its VOX Showcase and featured at an Opera America Conference.

Feigin's performances and commissions include works for such groups as the Nijni Novgorod Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra Kremlin, Santa Barbara Symphony, Santa Barbara Youth Symphony, Speculum Musicae, Parnassus, Group for Contemporary Music, Auros Group for New Music, Voices of Change, and pianist Leonard Stein for Piano-Spheres. Feigin's award-winning work "Veränderungen" for violin and piano was most recently featured in the National Gallery of Art's Festival of American Music. Among the highlights of Feigin's career is a two-disc set on North/South Recordings containing a full evening of his chamber and vocal works performed by Musicians Accord at Merkin Concert Hall in New York City. Concerts devoted solely to Feigin's music have also been given in Armenia and Russia. An accomplished pianist and accompanist, Feigin is often called upon to participate in performances of his own works, such as "Veränderungen" with Julliard Quartet violinist Ronald Copes and "Echoes From the Holocaust" with members of the Czech Philharmonic in Prague.

Weiss, for whom Feigin will compose the concerto, who served as a visiting lecturer in the UCSB music in 2004 and 2005. She is currently an associate professor of music at Indiana University. A frequent soloist with major orchestras, including the Seattle Symphony, Prague Chamber Orchestra, and Jerusalem Symphony, she has performed in major venues such as the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and Wigmore Hall in London. In addition, she tours worldwide as a founding member of the piano trio Sequenza, which also includes violinist Mark Kaplan and cellist Clancy Newman.

About UC Santa Barbara

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