

Meredith Monk

The 2014–2015 Richard and Barbara Debs Composer’s Chair



Peter Ross

Meredith Monk has been appointed to the Richard and Barbara Debs Composer’s Chair at Carnegie Hall for the 2014–2015 season. Throughout the year, piano, orchestral, and vocal works by the visionary composer will be featured in five concerts at Carnegie Hall and a partner event at (Le) Poisson Rouge, performed by ensembles such as the St. Louis Symphony and American Composers Orchestra, and a host of acclaimed artists. The residency culminates with two concerts—the first in March, the second in May—celebrating the composer’s 50th anniversary of creating work in New York City, featuring all-Monk programs performed by collaborators from the jazz, new music, classical, and electronic worlds, including the iconic Meredith Monk and Vocal Ensemble, which the artist founded in 1978.

Ms. Monk’s residency opens with a November concert at the West Village venue (Le) Poisson Rouge, featuring pianists Bruce Brubaker and Ursula Oppens performing an all-piano program of the composer’s works. The following evening in Zankel Hall, members of Meredith Monk and Vocal Ensemble join the American Composers Orchestra for a performance of Monk’s *Night*, a haunting work for vocal ensemble and orchestra composed in 1996 as part of the music theater piece *The Politics of Quiet*. In February, Ensemble ACJW gives the premiere of a new work by Ms. Monk commissioned by Carnegie Hall. In March, the St. Louis Symphony, led by David Robertson, presents the New York premiere of Monk’s *Weave*, a texturally lush piece for two voices, chamber orchestra, and chorus that exemplifies the composer’s penchant for unique vocal setting, featuring Katie Geissinger and Theo Bleckmann as vocal soloists. Shortly thereafter, Ms. Monk kicks off a celebration of her 50th anniversary of creating work in New York City with an all-Monk program that features her Vocal Ensemble and guest performers from a variety of musical genres. The concert spotlights a range of works, including excerpts from her highly acclaimed *Songs of Ascension* (2008) and selections from the opera *ATLAS* (1991), inspired by the life of Alexandra David-Néel, the first Western woman to travel in Tibet. The festivities continue in May when the ensemble performs a second program of the composer’s works, featuring classic compositions from the 1970s and ’80s alongside selections from recent music theater pieces, such as the currently touring *On Behalf of Nature* (2013) and the Grammy Award-nominated *impermanence* (2008).

Acclaimed by audiences and critics as a major creative force in the performing arts over the past five decades, Meredith Monk is a composer, singer, and creator of new opera and music theater works. Known for her groundbreaking and innovative exploration of the voice as an instrument, Ms. Monk creates music that is both mysterious and expressive. Often performed by Meredith Monk and Vocal Ensemble, her work has been presented at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Houston Grand Opera, and London’s Barbican Centre, among other major international venues. Her compositions have been commissioned by Michael Tilson Thomas for the New World and San Francisco symphonies, Kronos Quartet, St. Louis Symphony, and the Los Angeles Master Chorale, among others. She has made more than a dozen recordings, primarily for the ECM New Series label, including the 2008 Grammy Award-nominated *impermanence* and critically acclaimed *Songs of Ascension*. Ms. Monk’s music has also been featured in films by Jean-Luc Godard and the Coen Brothers, among others. In addition to receiving the 2013 Founders Award from New Music USA and the 2012 Composer of the Year from *Musical America*, Ms. Monk has received a MacArthur “genius” grant, two Guggenheim Fellowships, an American Music Center Letter of Distinction, an ASCAP Concert Music Award, and was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2006.

Previous holders of the Richard and Barbara Debs Composer’s Chair at Carnegie Hall are David Lang (2013–2014), Osvaldo Golijov (2012–2013), Kaija Saariaho (2011–2012), Brad Mehldau (2010–2011), Louis Andriessen (2009–2010), Elliott Carter (2008–2009), Thomas Adès (2007–2008), John Adams (2003–2007), Pierre Boulez (1999–2003), and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich (1995–1999).



Meredith Monk and Vocal Ensemble

Friday, November 21 at 7:30 PM | Zankel
American Composers Orchestra

George Manahan, Music Director and Conductor
 Ian Williams, Electronics | Theo Bleckmann, Vocals
 Members of Meredith Monk and Vocal Ensemble

ORCHESTRA UNDERGROUND

MEREDITH MONK *Night*

IAN WILLIAMS *Clear Image* (World Premiere)

A. J. MCCAFFREY *go this way and that way and this way and that way*
 (World Premiere)

LOREN LOIACONO *Stalks, Hounds* (NY Premiere)

THEO BLECKMANN *Upper Crust* (World Premiere, commissioned by
 Carnegie Hall)

Monday, February 16 at 7:30 PM | Weill

Ensemble ACJW

The Academy—a program of Carnegie Hall, The Juilliard School, and the Weill Music Institute in partnership with the New York City Department of Education

Program to include

MEREDITH MONK *New Work* (NY premiere, commissioned by Carnegie Hall)

RAVEL *Piano Trio in A Minor*

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Friday, March 20 at 8 PM | Stern/Perelman
St. Louis Symphony

David Robertson, Music Director and Conductor
 Katie Geissinger, Vocalist | Theo Bleckmann, Vocalist
 St. Louis Symphony Chorus | Amy Kaiser, Director

DEBUSSY *Nocturnes*

MEREDITH MONK *Weave* (NY Premiere)

TCHAIKOVSKY *Symphony No. 4*

Sunday, March 22 at 3 PM | Zankel

Meredith Monk and Friends

Meredith Monk and Vocal Ensemble

Guest artists to include Don Byron | DJ Spooky | Theo Bleckmann and John Hollenbeck | Ha-Yang Kim | Lukas Ligeti | The M6 Missy Mazzoli and Victoire | Jessye Norman | Courtney Orlando Todd Reynolds | Nadia Sirota | Young People's Chorus of New York City | John Zorn

Meredith Monk invites a group of colleagues from the new music, classical, jazz, and DJ worlds to demonstrate her wide-reaching influence and to celebrate her 50th anniversary of creating work in New York. Featuring an all-Monk program with Monk and her acclaimed Vocal Ensemble at the helm, the concert includes music from her opera *ATLAS*, selections from the acclaimed *Songs of Ascension*, and new arrangements and interpretations of existing works.

Saturday, May 2 at 7:30 PM | Zankel

Meredith Monk and Vocal Ensemble

50TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

For the culminating event of her residency, Meredith Monk is joined by the extraordinary vocalists and instrumentalists that make up her ensemble. Selections from several of her most recent works—*On Behalf of Nature*, *impermanence*, and *mercy*—alongside classic works from the 1970s and '80s will be performed, offering an expansive view of Monk's 50 years of making music.