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***Brickyard Broadcast* by Lisa Bielawa, Composer & Producer**

A spatialized work for hundreds of musicians that will have its world premiere in a Virtual Reality (VR) environment

Commissioned and presented by North Carolina State University Department of Music, with additional support from the Raleigh Civic Symphony Association and the Concert Singers of Cary



NC State Brickyard

Live Premiere Event: November 12, 2020 at 6pm ET

Free and open to the public

Information: go.ncsu.edu/brickyardbroadcast

Lisa Bielawa: www.lisabelawa.net/brickyard-broadcast

New York, NY & Raleigh, NC – The **North Carolina State University Department of Music**, with additional support from the **Raleigh Civic Symphony Association** and the **Concert Singers of Cary**, has commissioned acclaimed composer **Lisa Bielawa** to create ***Brickyard Broadcast***, a spatialized work for hundreds of musicians that will have its world premiere in a Virtual Reality (VR) environment designed by the digital media teams at the **NC State University Libraries**.

The NC State Department of Music will present a live online premiere event and panel discussion on **Thursday, November 12 at 6pm ET** with composer Lisa Bielawa; Department of Music faculty **Dr. Peter Askim**, director of orchestral studies; and **Dr. Nathan Leaf**, director of choral activities for NC State and artistic director of Concert Singers of Cary. The link to join the event will be posted at go.ncsu.edu/brickyardbroadcast. After the discussion, viewers will enter the VR Brickyard environment built by the NC State University Libraries to experience the world premiere of ***Brickyard Broadcast***, performed by the NC State orchestras (Raleigh Civic Symphony and Raleigh Civic Chamber Orchestra), the NC State choirs (State Chorale, Vox Accalia and Singing Statesmen), and the Concert Singers of Cary. Following the VR experience of the performance, audience members can join Askim, Leaf and Bielawa again for a question and answer session.

Brickyard Broadcast uses technology and interactivity to reinterpret the North Carolina State University Brickyard, the university's beloved and iconic gathering area outside of D.H. Hill Jr. Library, as a virtual space in which the musical performance will unfold. Hundreds of audio recordings are being integrated into the work, created over the course of the fall 2020 semester by individual student and community musicians playing and singing in isolation. **Jason Evans Groth**, Digital Media Librarian; **Colin Keenan**, University Libraries Specialist; and **Kyle Langdon**, University Library Specialist and Audio Engineer; along with **Ian Boyd**, NC State University Library Specialist and **Sarah Hassan**, NC State University Libraries Pentair Fellow, have created the VR environment.

Brickyard Broadcast represents an energizing and participatory artistic process designed to help address the challenges faced by orchestras and choirs during this prolonged period of social distancing. Rather than staging a synchronous performance via remote platforms, *Brickyard Broadcast* allows musicians to create sonic-visual avatars of themselves that can come together virtually in a playful, interactive common space which mirrors their own campus common space, opening up the gathering to anyone in the world who wishes to join them there.

The piece will be a 20-minute work that viewers can experience either from start to finish in a curated sound experience or in a self-guided modular way. Nine separate musical groups will animate the various areas of the virtual Brickyard, creating an immersive sound experience for anyone who visits the site, accessible either with VR interface or, in a 3-D stereo version, via any personal web device.

While *Brickyard Broadcast* is being developed for VR premiere, because it will have been designed expressly for the landscape of the Brickyard at NC State, it has the potential to be mounted as a physical performance with groups performing at varying distances from each other on the Brickyard itself. In either case, whether online or in person, every audience member's experience will be completely unique, depending on how they choose to move among the sounds they hear.

Organic to this sound experience will be the texts that the choirs are singing – fragments taken from the writings of various thinkers from a broad historical range who mused on the phenomenon of people gathering in common space, and the indomitability of song: Gertrude Stein (“A refusal to sing is one thing, to go on with a song is not wrong.”); H.G. Wells (“It takes a multitude to make such a stillness”); Wallace Stegner (“There it was, there it is, the place where during the best time of our lives friendship had its home and happiness its headquarters”); plus Anne Bradstreet, Phyllis Wheatley, Frank Lloyd Wright, Charles Ives, and Walt Whitman.

***Brickyard Broadcast* Creative Team:**

Lisa Bielawa, Composer and Producer

Dr. Peter Askim, Director of Orchestral Studies, NC State University Department of Music

Dr. Nathan Leaf, Director of Choral Activities, NC State University Department of Music

Jason Evans Groth, Digital Media Librarian, NC State University Libraries

Colin Keenan, University Libraries Specialist, NC State University Libraries

Kyle Langdon, University Library Specialist and Audio Engineer, NC State University Libraries

Colin Moore, Operations Coordinator, NC State University Department of Music

Ian Boyd, NC State University Library Specialist

Sarah Hassan, NC State University Libraries Pentair Fellow

Lisa Bielawa's *Broadcast* Projects: *Brickyard Broadcast* follows Bielawa's other large-scale participatory works, *Voters' Broadcast* and *Broadcast from Home*. *Voters' Broadcast*'s mission is to stimulate voter engagement, political awareness, and community participation in challenging lockdown conditions, through the act of giving voice to the concerns of fellow citizens, during the lead-up to the 2020 Presidential election. Described by the *Washington Post* as “spellbinding,” *Broadcast from Home* has been realized online throughout the period of the coronavirus lockdown, featuring submitted written and recorded vocal testimonies from over 250 participants from five continents. Lisa Bielawa's earlier works for performance in public spaces include *Airfield Broadcasts* (spatialized works for hundreds of musicians on the field of former airfields), and *Mauer Broadcast* (a participatory work for public performance, for the 30th anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 2019).

About Lisa Bielawa: Lisa Bielawa is a Rome Prize winner in Musical Composition and takes inspiration for her work from literary sources and close artistic collaborations. Her music has been described as “ruminative, pointillistic and harmonically slightly tart,” by *The New York Times*. She is the recipient of the 2017 Music Award from the American Academy of Arts & Letters and was named a William Randolph Hearst Visiting Artist Fellow at the American Antiquarian Society for 2018. In 2020, Bielawa was awarded a Discovery Grant from OPERA America's Grants for Female Composers for her opera in progress, *Centuries in the Hours*. In 1997 Bielawa co-founded the MATA Festival, which celebrates the work of young composers, and for five years she was the artistic director of the San Francisco Girls Chorus.

She received a 2018 Los Angeles Area Emmy nomination for her unprecedented, made-for-TV-and-online opera *Vireo: The Spiritual Biography of a Witch's Accuser*, created with librettist Erik Ehn and director Charles Otte. *Vireo* was filmed in twelve parts in locations across the country and features over 350 musicians. *The Los Angeles Times* called *Vireo* an opera, “unlike any you have seen before, in content and in form.” *Vireo* was produced as part of Bielawa's artist residency at Grand Central Art Center in Santa Ana, California and in partnership with KCETLink and Single Cel. In February 2019, *Vireo* was released as a two CD + DVD box set on Orange Mountain Music and it is coming to the stage in 2021 as *VIREO LIVE*, a hybrid film-opera 90-minute experience.

Her work has been premiered at the NY PHIL BIENNIAL, Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, SHIFT Festival, Town Hall Seattle, and Naumburg Orchestral Concerts Summer Series, among others. Orchestras that have championed her music include the The Knights, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, American Composers Orchestra, the Orlando Philharmonic, and ROCO (River Oaks Chamber Orchestra). Premieres of her work have been commissioned and presented by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Brooklyn Rider, Seattle Chamber Music Society, American Guild of Organists, the ASCAP Foundation Charles Kingsford Fund, and more. She is recorded on the Tzadik, TROY, Innova, BMOP/ sound, Supertrain Records, Cedille, Orange Mountain Music and Sono Luminus labels.

About the North Carolina State University Department of Music: The Department of Music at NC State University provides educational and performance opportunities for student and community participants through a variety of musical experiences and academic courses. Offering two academic minors in music and arts entrepreneurship, and more than two dozen ensembles and student organizations, the department provides a responsive and innovative music education available to all NC State students as an essential expression of the human experience. The department also serves as a cultural resource for the university and the greater community through performances and presentations offered by its students, student/community groups and faculty. Learn more at music.arts.ncsu.edu.

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