

For immediate release 5/8/2020

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**Del Sol Quartet Facilitates Grass-roots Creative Exchange
through Composing-in-Place Workshop**

Registration for second session open through May 29

Workshop runs: May 31-June 14

<https://www.delsolquartet.com/composinginplace>

Del Sol Quartet recently concluded an innovative workshop that provides amateur musicians with new possibilities for musical growth and human interaction. Now they are expanding the model on a national level. “We realized that so many people were missing the musical, social and spiritual satisfaction they usually find making music together,” explains Del Sol cellist Kathryn Bates, “Composing In Place addresses this need in a wildly successful way.”

The program has two main components – a solo composition ‘not-so-secret Santa’ and a collaboratively composed string quartet.

After receiving a ‘composer starter kit,’ participants had one week create original solo pieces. Once the completed pieces were redistributed, the participants learned and performed one-another’s compositions. Del Sol Quartet and guest composer Jonah Gallagher guided the process on Zoom sessions ranging from full group discussions to private lessons. For many participants, hearing their first compositions performed by enthusiastic colleagues was a joyous fulfillment of their desire to create and communicate. One participant, shared afterwards “Chamber music is all about building bridges between musicians, but this workshop showed me a new type of bridge -- between composer and player.”

“For the collaborative composition, we were inspired by a game Lou Harrison, John Cage, and Virgil Thompson used to play,” says Bates. “Someone writes a few measures, folds over the corner so only the end is showing and mails it on to the next composer to continue. The Surrealists called this a *cadavre exquis* - we prefer Lou Harrison’s title, *Party Piece*.” The Composing In Place party piece will be professionally engraved, printed and sent out to participants. Del Sol will make a first recording with the hope that the composers can soon bring the collaborative composition to their first rehearsals of a post-restrictions world, and enjoy sharing their music in person.

In the meantime, the Quartet is launching its second session of the workshop, encouraged by the impact of the first session. As Adam, another participant, describes: “Del Sol saw this awful situation and somehow extracted from it this beautiful opportunity to extend creativity, sensitivity, and community.”

More about Del Sol Quartet

Del Sol began as a thought on the night shift at Fermilab. Charlton Lee loved the cutting edge of physics research – always looking for the next discovery, pushing boundaries. But he missed the way music connected people, building community by communicating in ways physics never would. What if he could bring that scientific passion for exploration to a string quartet?

Twenty-six years later, Del Sol is still sharing music that brings out the endorphins. Music that asks *why not?*

Fascinated by the feedback loop between social change, technology, and artistic innovation, the San Francisco-based ensemble is a leading force in 21st century chamber music - whether introducing Ben Johnston's microtonal Americana at the Library of Congress, taking Aaron Garcia's gun-violence memorial to the streets of the Mission District, exploring Andean soundscapes with Gabriela Lena Frank and traditional musicians, or collaborating with Huang Ruo and the anonymous poets who scratched their words into the walls of the Angel Island Immigration Station during the years of the Chinese Exclusion Act. The current Del Sol lineup, marked by the arrival of violinist Sam Weiser alongside mainstays Kathryn Bates and Ben Kreith, bring a fresh energy, freedom, and precision to the group.

Recognized as a "vigorous champion of living composers", Del Sol has premiered well over 100 works by composers including Terry Riley, Gabriela Lena Frank, Frederic Rzewski, Ben Johnston, Chinari Ung, Mason Bates, Tania León, Erberk Eryilmaz, Theresa Wong, Reza Vali, Mohammed Fairouz and Peter Sculthorpe.

Many of these works are included on Del Sol's nine critically-acclaimed albums. PopMatters praised Del Sol's "unfettered mastery" on Terry Riley's *Dark Queen Mantra* (2017, Sono Luminus). *Scrapyard Exotica* (2015) elicited this rave in the New York Times. "I could be wrong, but I'm guessing it's been a while since you've rocked out to a string quartet recording. See if your foot can stay still once you put on this funky disc of rhythmically infectious (if often warped) music played by the adventurous Del Sol String Quartet."

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