

PRJ Grant Recipient Hotel Elephant Reflects On “speakOUT” Concert



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June 8, 2015

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[Hotel Elephant's](#) “speakOUT” spring 2015 concert by was hosted by the downtown New York venue SubCulture on International Women’s Day, representing female artists who utilize music to reflect on issues both personal and political. The generous funding from the [Paul R. Judy Center for Applied Research](#) helped present cutting-edge works by women, with works specifically written for the ensemble by composers on the roster, and presented an in-concert interview selected from the evening’s featured composer Paola Prestini to discuss her music. Hotel Elephant’s 2015 spring season featured the music of Lainie Fefferman; Jenny Olivia Johnson and Alex Temple; Paola Prestini; and Leaha Maria Villarreal.

In addition to the live performance and in-concert interview with Hotel Elephant’s featured artist, each composer and selected performers was interviewed about the creative process surrounding the “speakOUT” season. Four interviews created especially for this concert garnered hundreds of views on the ensemble’s [YouTube channel](#), forging new and engaging ways of connecting with audiences.



Named a “composer-impresario” by The New Yorker and a “Visionary-in-Chief” by Time-Out New York, PAOLA PRESTINI’s compositions have been deemed “radiant” [and] amorously evocative” by The New York Times. In 1999 she co-founded VisionIntoArt, an interdisciplinary production company that has created over 100 multimedia productions worldwide. Hotel Elephant was proud to feature Paola Prestini as its spring 2015 featured composer. The ensemble presented two works

of Prestini’s that highlight her focus on strong female roles entitled [Inngertuit](#) and [Yoani](#), complete with an in-concert interview to educate listeners on her music and her entrepreneurial vision. The evening’s performance included a world premiere of Prestini’s Still Have Our Bones, augmenting the Yoani song cycle with a new work commissioned by The ASCAP Foundation Charles Kingsford Fund.



Hotel Elephant commissioned LAINIE FEFFERMAN for its 2015 spring season, who responded with a piano trio for voice and sound reinforcement entitled [Impostor Syndrome](#). The work was inspired by a groundbreaking article that appeared in the journal Psychotherapy Theory, Research, and Practice (Volume 15, #3, Fall 1978 1) called “The Impostor Phenomenon in High Achieving Women: Dynamics and Therapeutic Intervention” by Dr. Pauline Rose Clance and Dr. Suzanne Imes. Fefferman explained, “The Impostor

Phenomenon (often colloquially called ‘Impostor Syndrome’) has, in retrospect, played a huge role in the choices and emotions I have made and experienced in my life as a composer, as a teacher, and as a woman.”

JENNY OLIVIA JOHNSON and ALEX TEMPLE created It’s hard even to say it for a collection of collaborations between Chicago and non-Chicago artists released by experimental cassette label Parlour Tapes+ in 2013. “The two of us have spent years talking about the unreliability of memory,” Temple recounted, “and for this piece, we each repeatedly recorded ourselves describing something from the past that we weren’t sure about...and then sent each other the results to be chopped up and reassembled.”



Composer LEAHA MARIA VILLARREAL’s world premiere of [This Is How We Love](#) was written for Hotel Elefant. Meditating on the effects of abusive or negative relationships this work for voice and mixed ensemble with live processing focuses on the fact that more than 12 million women and men in the United States have been physically abused by an intimate partner over the course of a year. “There are some pretty shocking statistics out there,” stated Villarreal, “that I wanted to give a voice to.”



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