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New Music USA Unites Talents of Two Incoming Co-Chairs in New Leadership Model

Composer Reena Esmail and Business Executive Joe Walker Assume Co-Chair Roles as New Music USA Embarks on a New Phase of Development



New York, NY (June 16, 2020) – **New Music USA** announces today a new leadership model for its Board of Directors, uniting the talents of composer **Reena Esmail** and business executive **Joe Walker**. The two incoming co-chairs will guide this national organization under a dual leadership model as it embarks on a new phase of development.

Esmail and Walker’s co-chairing partnership will increase New Music USA’s capacity to draw from multiple perspectives as the organization responds to the shifting needs of the new music community. Together they bring direct experience of the challenges faced by independent artists

and the community the organization supports, extensive experience steering organizations through times of financial uncertainty, and the ability to position New Music USA at the heart of a broader-than-ever constituency of partners and supporters.

“As we devise new ways to build a thriving and equitable ecosystem for new music, I look forward to collaborating with both a composer and a financial expert whose shared leadership will inspire us to consider our actions from different perspectives,” says Vanessa Reed, New Music USA President and CEO.

Reena Esmail, incoming Co-Chair, says, “I’m honored to be able to serve this important national organization and to advocate for musicians to find the resources they need so they can continue the deep work of creation. I have seen firsthand how profoundly music changes lives, and connects us to one another—soul to soul, across cultures and communities. I want our field to be a microcosm of the world we want to see.”

“New Music USA has always been a dynamic and evolving organization,” says incoming Co-Chair Joe Walker. “Its strength lies in the unique combination of composers, artists, and businesspeople passionate about music and capable of making a difference. With all we have accomplished there is still much opportunity to grow and broaden our impact. The demand is greater than ever.”

The exceptional contribution of outgoing Chair Frederick Peters, who also served as Chair of Meet the Composer before it merged with the American Music Center to create New Music USA, is being honored through Mr. Peters’ election as Chair Emeritus.

Frederick Peters, Chair Emeritus, says, “I am stepping down from my long-time role as the Board chair of New Music USA, secure in the knowledge that our organization is in great hands. In Vanessa Reed, Reena Esmail, and Joe Walker, the organization has three dedicated and distinguished leaders representing the broad appeal of our work. I remain passionately committed to the organization, will continue to serve on the Board, and I am proud of the evolution which I have been privileged to oversee. There is always more work to do in the chronically underserved new music community, and New Music USA will continue to step up in both historical and newly conceived ways with this brilliant new team.”

ABOUT THE INCOMING CO-CHAIRS

Reena Esmail works between the worlds of Indian and Western classical music, to bring communities together through the creation of equitable musical spaces. Esmail holds degrees from The Juilliard School and the Yale School of Music, and has written for Kronos Quartet, Albany Symphony, and Conspirare. A resident of Los Angeles, Esmail is the 20-23 Swan Family Artist in Residence with Los Angeles Master Chorale, and the 20-21 Composer in Residence with Seattle Symphony. She is the Artistic Director of Shastra, a non-profit organization that promotes cross-cultural music connecting musical traditions of India and the West.

Joe Walker serves on the Boards of Roulette Intermedium (a presenter of new music in Brooklyn) and Implecate (a cell therapy research company); and the Advisory Boards of Columbia University Medical Center and Applied Innovation at UC Irvine. Joe is a retired Vice Chairman of Investment Banking at JPMorgan where he was a strategic advisor to many of the firms most important clients. He lives in Laguna Beach and New York City.

ABOUT NEW MUSIC USA

New Music USA supports the sounds of tomorrow by nurturing the creation, performance, and appreciation of new music for adventurous listeners around the world. We empower and connect US-based music makers, organizations, and audiences by providing funding through our Project Grants; fostering new connections through our programs; deepening knowledge through our online magazine, NewMusicBox; and working as an advocate for the field. New Music USA works in collaboration with its community in response to pressing needs and to amplify the diverse voices of music creators. New Music USA envisions a thriving and equitable ecosystem for new music throughout the United States. New Music USA is the recipient of the 2020 Gold Baton Award from the League of American Orchestras, which has been given annually since 1948 for distinguished service to America's orchestras.