

# reenaesmail|composer



*Reena Esmail (b.1983) is a composer of orchestral, choral and chamber music. Trained at The Juilliard School and the Yale School of Music, she spent the 2011-2012 year on a Fulbright-Nehru Scholarship in New Delhi, India, studying and performing Hindustani classical music and collaborating with Indian instrumentalists and vocalists. She is currently the Co-Artistic Director of Shashtra, and a post-residential doctoral candidate at Yale.*

## Education

- **DMA, Composition – Yale School of Music** (2017 expected)
- **MMA, Composition – Yale School of Music** (2014)
  - studies with Aaron Jay Kernis
- **Delhi University, Faculty of Music and the Arts – affiliation through the Fulbright Commission** (2011-2012)
  - advisor: **Anupam Mahajan**, Dean and sitar faculty
- **MM, Composition – Yale School of Music** (2011)
  - studies with **Christopher Theofanidis**, **Aaron Jay Kernis**, and **Martin Bresnick**
- **BM, Composition – Juilliard School** (2001-2005)
  - studies with **Christopher Rouse** and **Samuel Adler**
- private composition studies with **Susan Botti** (2008-2009)
- Hindustani vocal studies with **Saili Oak Kalyanpur** (2014-present – Los Angeles, CA), **Srimati Lakshmi Shankar** (2012-2013 – Los Angeles, CA), **Gaurav Mazumdar** (2011-12 - New Delhi), **Priya Kanungo** (2010 - New Haven), and **Mosami Shah** (2005 - Los Angeles)
- violin studies with **Ella Rutkovsky-Heifets** and **Robert Uchida** (2006-2009)
- piano studies with **Robert Turner** (1996-2001)
- **Los Angeles County High School for the Arts** (1998-2001) – piano major

## Professional Awards and Honors

- **Woods-Chandler Memorial Prize** (2014) from the Yale School of Music, (for best composition in a larger form composed during the 2013-14 academic year)
- **American Academy of Arts and Letters – Walter Hinrichsen Award** (2012) for publication of a work by C.F. Peters.
- **INK Fellowship (in association with TED)** (2011) – chosen to speak on her work in Hindustani and western classical music at **The INK Conference** in Jaipur, India. Other speaking engagements in Delhi at the **AdAsia Conference** and Chennai at an **INK Salon**.
- **Fulbright-Nehru Scholarship (India)** – 2011-2012 Fellow, Hindustani classical music
- **Ezra Laderman Prize** (2011) – for outstanding composition for voice
- **Harriet Fox Gibbs Memorial Prize -- Yale School of Music** (2010)
- **ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards** (2002 and 2007)
- **Milton and Sylvia Babbitt Scholarship for Women Composers – Juilliard School** (2003-2005)

## Recent/Upcoming Commissions (selected)

- **American Composers Orchestra (2016)** – new work for the ACO along with a commissioned video installation, to be premiered at Carnegie Hall (Zankel) on April 1, 2016
- **Imani Winds (2016)** – new work for woodwind quintet, for Imani Winds' 20th Anniversary Season
- **Kronos Quartet (2015)** – arrangements of N. Rajam violin music (dates TBD)

- **SOLI Ensemble (2015)** – a new work to be performed in conjunction with bharatanatyam dance, depicting portions of the Mahabharata
- **Radha (2014)** – original score for a new film by filmmaker Rupeshi Shah juxtaposing ancient and modern incarnations of the classic Radha/Krishna love story
- **Pasadena Master Chorale (2015)** – Composer in Residence with PMC for 2014-2015 Season
- **Mount Holyoke Glee Club (2014)** – new work for SSA chorus, (to be performed at ACDA Convention 2015)
- **Kali Juger Kumbh (2014)** – music for a Bengali-language film by filmmaker Ashish Avikunthak
- **Albany Symphony, Dogs of Desire (2014)** – **Vishwas**, for chamber orchestra and bharatanatyam dancer (commission from a grant from the Mellon Foundation) – (premiered 5/16/14)
- **Pasadena Master Chorale (2014)** – **Curiosity** (premiered 4/22-23/14, Pasadena, CA)
- **River Oaks Chamber Orchestra (2013)** – **Teen Murti** for string orchestra (premiered September 26/27/28 2013 – Houston, TX)
- **Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival (2013)** – new work for string quartet for the **Flux Quartet** (premiered 7/27/13)
- **MuSE (Multicultural Sonic Evolution) (2012)** – **Jhula Jhule** for violin and piano, based on Indian folksong (premiered 4/23/13, Merkin Concert Hall, NYC)
- **Copland House CULTIVATE Program (2012)** – **Tasveer** for clarinet, violin, cello and piano – part of Copland House’s inaugural summer program for young composers (premiered 8/4/12 at Merestead)
- **The HUM Ensemble (2011)** – new work for bansuri, sarangi and tabla – founder of the ensemble is **Sandeep Das**, tabla player in Yo-Yo Ma’s **Silk Road Ensemble**.
- **Kimball Gallagher, pianist (2011)** – **Rang De Basant** for solo piano – for Gallagher’s nine-city tour of India, Malaysia and Singapore in November 2012 – premiered October 2012
- **Chamber Music Conference East -- Silence** for mixed chamber ensemble and voice – premiered August 2011
- **Haverford College Choir (2011)** – **Asterion in the Tropics** for SSAATB Chorus — premiered May 2011
- **Norfolk Chamber Music Festival (2010)** – **Piano Quintet** – premiered August 2010

#### Festivals/Conferences/Speaking Engagements (selected)

- **Dosti Fellow** – February/March 2015
- **College of the Holy Cross (Worcester, MA)** – October 2014 – Guest Lecturer
- **Vassar College (Poughkeepsie, NY)** – November 2013 – Guest Lecturer, World Music Seminar
- **TEDxSkidRow (Los Angeles, CA)** – September 2013 – speaker
- **Azusa Pacific University (Los Angeles, CA)** – March 2013 -- Guest Lecturer, Artist Certificate Seminar: “The Case for New Music”
- **Yale Ethnomusicology Seminar (New Haven, CT)** – February 2013 -- Guest Lecturer: “Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Hindustani Music”
- **Indiaspora (Poughkeepsie, NY)** – September 2011 – inaugural summit of 100 prominent Indian-Americans
- **Copland House CULTIVATE Program** – August 2012
- **The Fulbright Conference (Kerala, India)** – March 2011
- **The INK Conference (Jaipur, India)** – December 2011 – Fellow/speaker (subsequent lectures as part of INK Fellowship also in Chennai and Delhi)
- **Jodhpur RIFF Festival (Jodhpur, India)** – October 2011 – participant
- **Chamber Music Conference East** – Composition Fellow (2011)
- **Norfolk Chamber Music Festival** – Composition Fellow (2010)
- **Festival for Women Composers Inc.** – participant (2010)

#### Writings

- **NewMusicBox.org (2014)** -- guest blogger for the month of October 2014, on the topic of Hindustani musical practices
- **Finding Common Ground: Uniting Practices in works for Hindustani and Western Art Musicians (2014)** an inquiry into the methodology and collaborative challenges in collaborative works by Western composers involving Hindustani and Western Art musicians, and a compilation of best practices currently in use in this nascent genre.
- **reenainindia (2011-2012)** – my extensive fulbright year blog, available at <http://www.reenainindia.wordpress.com>
- **“Observations on the Culture of Hindustani Classical Music” (2011)** – written for newmusicbox.org

## Teaching

- **Yale Department of Music** – Music Theory/History Teaching Fellow (Fall 2012-Spring 2014)
- **The Neemrana Music Foundation** – vocal coach for Mozart opera production in New Delhi (Dec 2011)
- **Yale Department of Music** – Composition Teaching Fellow (Fall 2010)
- **Manhattan School of Music Precollege** – composition, theory and ear training faculty (2006-2009)
- **Private teaching studio** – composition, piano, and various theory/aural tutoring (2002-present)

## Other Work

- **Shastra (2013-present)** – Co-Artistic Director of new non-profit organization that highlights cross-genre work between Indian and Western classical mediums. [www.shastramusic.com](http://www.shastramusic.com).
- **The Neemrana Music Foundation** (New Delhi, India) – vocal coach to soloists, and orchestral librarian -- The Magic Flute, George Mathew, conductor (2012)
- **ASCAP Concert Music Awards Show**, audio/visual presentations (2005-2009)
- Composer for **Circunstancias**, an independent film (screened in NYC, Mexico City, and in South America) (2005)
- **Starling DeLay Symposium on Violin Studies at Juilliard**, Staff (2003 & 2005)
- **International Alliance for Women in Music**, Outreach Coordinator (2002-2004)
- **Classical New Jersey Society**, Concert Reviewer (2005)

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