

Andrew McKenna Lee

Composer and guitarist Andrew McKenna Lee has been commissioned and programmed by some of the world's leading ensembles and organizations, including the Brentano Quartet, eighth blackbird, the American Composers Orchestra, the New Jersey Symphony, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. As a performer, he has given solo concerts featuring his original compositions for guitar in such esteemed venues as Carnegie Hall, Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), and Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles.



An artist who is both adept and comfortable in blending seemingly disparate styles, Lee has also performed with rock legends Billy Idol and former *Sex Pistols* guitarist Steve Jones in his own large ensemble arrangements of songs by David Bowie, Lou Reed and Iggy Pop. This stylistic fluency has found its way into several of his own works, including *Sunrise from the Bottom of the Sea* (an homage to Jimi Hendrix) and his *Scordatura Suite*, which prompted *Soundboard* magazine to comment, "I'm not sure if he was going for the rock/classical synthesis, but if he was, it's the best effort of its kind I have yet heard."

His debut CD release, *Gravity and Air*, was named one of the year's "Top Ten Best Classical Albums" of 2009 in *Time Out Chicago*. Released the same year, his EP *Solar/Electric* also met with critical praise, most notably from composer Steve Reich, who claimed Lee's realization of his work *Electric Counterpoint*, "a magnificent performance beautifully recorded." His most recent project is *The Knells*, an art rock ensemble that combines Renaissance-inspired vocal polyphony with influences from psychedelic, classic, and progressive rock. Their debut album, described as a collection of songs that "sweep ahead, through passages of tolling solo electric guitar, of elegiac vocal melodies and harmonies, of note-bending quasi-Indian strings and guitar, of progressive-rock processions" (*New York Times*), was released on New Amsterdam Records in November 2013, and was cited as one of the year's most notable releases in *The New Republic*, *The Washington Post*, *The Daily Beast*, *Textura*, and many others.

Mr. Lee holds degrees in composition from Carnegie Mellon University (BFA, 1997), the Manhattan School of Music (MM 2000), and Princeton University (Ph.D., 2013). He has received awards and fellowships from ASCAP, the New York Youth Symphony, Princeton University (2003-2008), the South Carolina Arts Council, the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, the Aspen Music Festival, Yaddo, the MacDowell Colony, the Hermitage Artist Retreat, the American Music Center, Meet the Composer, and the Aaron Copland Fund for Music. He currently serves on the Music Industry faculty of The College of Saint Rose in Albany, NY.

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