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Concert: The Music of Joan Tower

Karel Husa

Ithaca College Symphony Orchestra

Kulmusik Contemporary Chamber Ensemble

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ITHACA COLLEGE

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

The Music of Joan Tower
2008 Karel Husa Visiting Professor of Composition

Ford Auditorium
Tuesday, February 5, 2008
8:15 p.m.

ITHACA

PROGRAM

Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman #1

Members of the Ithaca College Symphony Orchestra
Horn: Lori Roy, principal; Liz Teucke, assistant
Rachel Haselbauer; Ella Nace; Andrea Silvestrini
Trumpet: Omar Williams, principal; Ethan Urtz; Carol Jumper;
Trombone: Alice Rogers, principal; Erin Lindon; Phil Truex, bass
Tuba: Bryan Lewis
Percussion: Andrew Sickmeier, timpani;
Seth Nicoletti, principal; Lee Treat
Jeffery Meyer*, conductor

Ascent

Jean Radice*, organ

Big Sky

Susan Waterbury*, violin
Elizabeth Simkin*, cello
Jennifer Hayghe*, piano

Petroushskates

Members of *Kulmusik*
Lisa Thornton, flute
Adam Butalewicz, clarinet
Susan Waterbury*, violin
Sara Wolfe, cello
Mary Holzhauer, piano

DNA

Colleen Clark, Nate Dominy, Chris Ganey,
Peter Kielar, Kaye Sevier, percussion
Alan Dust, conductor

* Ithaca College faculty

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Joan Tower

Even as she prepares for her 70th birthday in September 2008, Joan Tower is looking forward as much as she is looking back on a career that already spans over five decades.

Hailed as "one of the most successful woman composers of all time" in *The New Yorker* magazine, Joan Tower was the first woman ever to receive the Grawemeyer Award in Composition in 1990. She was inducted in 1998 into the prestigious American Academy of Arts and Letters, and into the Academy of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University in the fall of 2004.

Joan Tower's bold and energetic music, with its striking imagery and novel structural forms, has won large, enthusiastic audiences. From 1969 to 1984, she was pianist and founding member of the Naumburg Award-winning Da Capo Chamber Players, which commissioned and premiered many of her most popular works. Her first orchestral work, *Sequoia*, quickly entered the repertory, with performances by orchestras including St. Louis, New York, San Francisco, Minnesota, Tokyo NHK, Toronto, the National Symphony and London Philharmonia. A choreographed version by The Royal Winnipeg Ballet toured throughout Canada, Europe, and Russia. Tower's tremendously popular five *Fanfares for the Uncommon Woman* have been played by over 500 different ensembles. Her percussion concerto, *Strike Zones*, was performed at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center by Evelyn Glennie with the National Symphony Orchestra under Leonard Slatkin and was featured at Tanglewood in 2007.

In January 2004, Carnegie Hall's Making Music series featured a retrospective of Tower's work. This special event showcased numerous artists who regularly perform her music, including the Tokyo String Quartet, pianists Melvin Chen and Ursula Oppens, violist Paul Neubauer, oboist Richard Woodhams, and the New England Conservatory Percussion Ensemble. Most of these works were then recorded for August 2005 release on the NAXOS recording label.

In March 2004, Tower attended the premiere of *For Daniel*, written for the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio at the Tucson Winter Festival, and the New York premiere at the 92nd Street Y. She performed the piano part with members of the Muir Quartet and the KLR Trio has gone on to performing this work around the world. *Tambor* was performed by the Pittsburgh Symphony at the American Symphony Orchestra League Convention in Pittsburgh in 2004 and recorded on a Grammy-nominated Naxos CD along with *Made in America* and *Concerto for Orchestra* (Leonard Slatkin

conducting the Nashville Symphony). Purple Rhapsody, a new viola concerto for Paul Neubauer, has so far been performed by eight orchestras including the Omaha Symphony, who premiered it. The Orpheus Chamber Orchestra commissioned and premiered Chamber Dance at Carnegie Hall in May of 2006.

Joan Tower is the first composer chosen for the ambitious new "Ford Made in America" commissioning program, a collaboration of the League of American Orchestras (at that time, the American Symphony Orchestra League) and Meet the Composer. In October 2005, the Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra presented the world premiere of Tower's 15-minute orchestral piece Made in America. The work went on for performances by orchestras in every state in the Union during the 2005-07 season. This is the first project of its kind to involve smaller budget orchestras as commissioning agents of a new work by a major composer.

Since 1972, Tower has taught at Bard College, where she is Asher Edelman Professor of Music. She has served as composer-in-residence with the Orchestra of St. Luke's since 1997 and at the Deer Valley Festival in Utah since 1998, a title she also held for eight years at the Yale/Norfolk Chamber Music Festival. Other accolades include the 1998 Delaware Symphony's Alfred I. DuPont Award for Distinguished American Composer, the 2002 Annual Composer's Award from the Lancaster (PA) Symphony, and an Honorary Degree from the New England Conservatory (2006). "Tower has truly earned a place among the most original and forceful voices in modern American music" (The Detroit News).

Joan Tower has been the subject of television documentaries on PBS's WGBH television station in Boston, on the CBS network program, Sunday Morning, and MJW Productions in England. She is published exclusively by Associated Music Publ