

**For immediate release**

**TWO PIANO TRIOS BY AMERICAN COMPOSER PATRICK ZIMMERLI  
JUST RELEASED ON THE ARABESQUE LABEL**

**Works Written in 2001-2 and 2003 Are Given Their Recording Debut  
in Performances by Scott Yoo, Violin; Michael Mermagen, Cello,  
and John Novacek, Piano**

Two piano trios by American composer Patrick Zimmerli have just been released on the Arabesque label (Arabesque Recordings Z6785): Trio No. 1 for Violin, Cello and Piano, written in 2001-2, and Trio No. 2, written in 2003. The works are given their recording debut in performances by Scott Yoo, violin; Michael Mermagen, cello, and John Novacek, piano. The recording was produced by Mr. Zimmerli; Executive Producer is Marvin M. Reiss.

The Trio No. 1 for Violin, Cello, and Piano was premiered at the Seattle Chamber Music Festival in January, 2003. Trio No. 2, written for Messrs. Yoo, Mermagen and Novacek, was commissioned by the Seattle Chamber Music Festival for their 2004 festival. Both works are in the classical four-movement form – a traditional structure which, in these works, contains a highly original synthesis of traditional, jazz and contemporary styles. The trios are lyrical and expressive, embodying European sensibility and American energy.

While still within the bounds of conservative musical styles, these trios explore some elements found in experimental music, and there are jazz elements as well. Patrick Zimmerli has stated, “This music grows out of my active working experience performing with musicians from each genre -- a knowledge that does not come only from studying music technically, performing or listening to recordings, but to

interacting with these musicians. It is an in-depth knowledge of jazz, classical, and popular music which I hope informs every measure of these works.

“Over the last century, much interesting new music has been written, taking the art form to places that never could have been anticipated. But none of this music has shaken the primacy of the standard chamber music repertoire in listeners’ hearts. My aim in writing these piano trios was to create pieces that were consonant with this repertoire -- that would share very basic features in common with it, but at the same time be recognized as wholly contemporary.”

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **About the Composer**

Patrick Zimmerli graduated from Columbia University, where he received a BA in music composition and literature in 1990 and a DMA in Composition in 2000. He studied composition with Fred Lerdahl, saxophone with Joe Lovano, and contemporary performance with Allen Blustine. In 2003, he was appointed Composer in Residence with the Metamorphosen Chamber Orchestra.

Recent commissions include the Ying Quartet’s LifeMusic project, sponsored in part by the Institute for American Music, which commissions works that explore aspects of the American experience. Other commissioned composers in the series include Chen Yi, Kevin Puts, Paquito D’Rivera, Augusta Read Thomas, Ned Rorem and Bernard Rands.

Patrick Zimmerli’s Piano Trio No. 1 has also been performed in Japan and Colorado. The piece will be performed again in the Seattle Festival’s 2005 season.

Zimmerli was the winner of the 2003 Gil Evans Fellowship Commission, granted by the International Association of Jazz Educators for “Haloes,” a work scored for big band. Zimmerli premiered this work as conductor and featured soloist at the IAJE Annual Convention in Toronto in January, 2003.

In 2000, Zimmerli was commissioned to write an hour-length suite for the Belgian jazz ensemble Octurn (which he performed as featured saxophonist). The commission was augmented by an American Composers’ Forum Composers Commissioning Program grant. Zimmerli joined the group in Belgium in 2000 for a series of eight concerts and three master classes. The piece, entitled *The Book of Hours*, was recorded in Brussels for release on the Songlines label in 2002.

Other recent commissions include *Latin Suite*, written for Laura Frautschi, Kristina Cooper, and John Novacek for performances in Japan; the Piano Concerto No. 2

from the Metamorphosen Chamber Orchestra, premiered in 2001 in Boston with Sonia Rubinsky and Satoshi Takeishi as soloists (his first concerto was premiered by the group in 1999, with Ethan Iverson and Satoshi Takeishi as soloists); and *Waves*, a ten-minute piece for the French jazz ensemble Kartet, which was premiered in Paris and recorded in Finland in 1999.

Zimmerli has performed on four CDs of his own music (as well as on recordings by other composers): *Explosion* and *Expansion* on Songlines, and *Twelve Sacred Dances* for Arabesque. His sixth CD, *Phoenix*, featuring music for string quartet, jazz quartet, and electronics, will be released in February 2005 on Songlines. His work has also been recorded on the Blue Note, Antilles, Jazz City and Naive labels, and has been featured in Downbeat, Jazziz and JazzTimes magazines.

He has performed at the Guggenheim Museum, on National Public Radio's Fresh Sounds Program, at the Jazz Composers' Collective, the New York Jazz Festival, the Playboy Jazz Festival, the Brooklyn Jazz Festival, Edgefest, Birdland, the Knitting Factory, and many other venues.

In 1995, Zimmerli served as artistic director for the Jazz Ambassadors, a quintet formed by the Thelonious Monk Institute, consisting of winners of past competitions. This group toured South and East Africa for six weeks, and performed at the Playboy Jazz Festival. Their album, *The Jazz Ambassadors*, was released in 1995 on the Jazz City label.

As a freelance jazz saxophonist, Zimmerli has worked with such artists as Thelonious Monk, Jr., Blue Note recording artists Kevin Hays and Bill Stewart, and Grammy-winning arranger Don Sickler. As a contemporary classical interpreter, he has performed works by Milton Babbitt, Elliott Carter, Eric Dolphy, and many others for the ISCM concerts and new music concert series at Brandeis and Columbia Universities.

Patrick Zimmerli won the first annual BMI/Thelonious Monk Institute Composers' Competition at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D. C. He was twice voted Best Young Jazz Instrumentalist in North America by Down Beat magazine, and has been honored as well by the Hartford Jazz Society and the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts. He currently works and resides in New York City.

#### About the Performers

The trios are performed on this CD by violinist Scott Yoo, cellist Michael Mermagen, and pianist John Novacek, all distinguished young chamber musicians. Mr. Yoo has made frequent appearances with Bargemusic, Boston Chamber Music Society, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Seattle Chamber Music Festival, and other festivals throughout the U. S. Mr. Mermagen is a faculty member of the Aspen Music Festival and principal cellist of the Aspen Chamber Orchestra, and has been a member of the Arista Piano Trio and the American

**Chamber Players. Mr. Novacek, hailed by the New York Times as a "wise, nimble, sensitive artist," has performed with the likes of Yo-Yo Ma, Joshua Bell, Leila Josefowicz, and Lynn Harrell, and has given numerous world premieres of composers such as John Williams, George Rochberg and Lalo Schifrin.**

**About the Artwork**

**The cover of the piano trios features the work of James Casebere, a New York visual artist who makes small painted models of evocative interiors of his own invention, sometimes flooding them with water and then photographing them, blowing up the photographs to make the models look like huge, cavernous spaces. Zimmerli writes of Casebere's work, "the effect is very haunting and dramatic, and makes for a compelling synthesis of architecture, painting, and photography. His works strike me as at once classical and contemporary, which is the blend I'm striving for in the Piano Trios."**

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**NOT FOR PUBLICATION:**

**For additional information, copies of CDs for review, interview access, or photographs (including high-resolution photos of the CD cover), please contact Nancy Shear Arts Services, Press Representatives, at 212/496-9418.**