

# JAMES ROMIG, composer

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Western Illinois University School of Music  
Macomb, IL 61455

## EDUCATION

Ph.D. 2000 Rutgers University — Music Composition and Theory  
M.A. 1996 University of Iowa — Percussion Performance  
B.M. 1993 University of Iowa — Percussion Performance

## PRINCIPAL TEACHERS

Charles Wuorinen — composition and theory  
Milton Babbitt — composition and theory  
James Dixon — orchestration and conducting  
Thomas L. Davis — percussion and conducting

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

2002– Western Illinois University — Professor of Music Composition and Theory  
2001–2002 Bucknell University — Visiting Assistant Professor of Theory and Composition  
2000–2001 Pittsburg State University — Visiting Assistant Professor of Theory and Composition  
1996–1998 Rutgers University — Lecturer (1998–2000); Teaching Assistant (1996–1998)  
1994–1996 University of Iowa — Teaching Assistant

## AWARDS, HONORS, AND RESIDENCIES (selected)

2024 Special Guest Composer: Red Note Music Festival at Illinois State University  
2023 Elected Members: National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences  
2023 Featured Composer: Prague Quiet Music Festival  
2023 Faculty Composer: Summer Composition Intensive at St. Mary's College  
2023 Featured Composer: Pellegrini Festival of New Music at Ball State University  
2019 Pulitzer Prize in Music, finalist  
2019 Aaron Copland Award and Copland House Residency  
2019 Artist In Residence: Petrified Forest National Park  
2018 Co-Editor: Perspectives of New Music Volume 56, No. 2 "Charles Wuorinen at 80"  
2017 Artist In Residence: Everglades National Park  
2016 Artist In Residence: Centrum (Port Townsend, WA)  
2016 ISCM World Music Days, finalist  
2013 Artist In Residence: Wupatki National Monument  
2012 Artist In Residence: Grand Canyon National Park  
2011 Aaron Copland Award and Copland House Residency  
2011 American Composers Orchestra Underwood New Music Readings, honorable mention  
2009 Artist In Residence: Petrified Forest National Park  
2002 ASCAP Foundation Rudolf Nissim Award, finalist  
1999 The Pierre Boulez Workshop at Carnegie Hall, participant  
1999 Civic Orchestra of Chicago First Hearing, finalist  
1996 Chicago Symphony Orchestra Young American Composers' Reading Session, finalist

## **FESTIVAL AND CONFERENCE PERFORMANCES (selected)**

2024 Red Note New Music Festival at Illinois State University  
2023 Bowling Green State University New Music Festival (also 2019, 2017, 2016, 2014)  
2022 Ny Musik Festival (Aalborg, Denmark)  
2021 SCI National Conference (also 2014, 2013, 2009)  
2019 National Flute Association Convention  
2019 SCI Regional Conference (also 2016, 2013, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2005)  
2018 Colorado State University Aries Composers Festival  
2018 Darmstadt Musikinstitut  
2017 soundON Festival of Modern Music  
2017 Spontaneous Combustion New Music Festival  
2017 University of Tennessee–Knoxville Contemporary Music Festival  
2015 Mise-En Music Festival  
2015 Mizzou International Composers Festival  
2014 Reykjavik (Iceland) Arts Festival  
2011 New Music Festival at University of Alabama–Huntsville  
2009 Florida State University Festival of New Music  
2009 New Music Forum Festival of Contemporary Music (San Francisco)  
2008 NEC Summer Institute for Contemporary Performance Practice  
2006 Percussive Arts Society International Convention (also 2004)  
2005 Colorado College New Music Symposium  
2003 University of Memphis Imagine Festival  
2003 June in Buffalo  
2000 Alfeo Gigli Festival of Composition (Bologna, Italy)  
2000 Wien Modern

## **AMERICAN PERFORMANCES (selected)**

Cincinnati Conservatory • Eastman School of Music • Interlochen Center for the Arts • The Juilliard School • Mannes Conservatory • New England Conservatory • Oberlin Conservatory • Westminster Choir College • Arizona State University • Baylor University • Black Hills State University • Bowling Green State University • Brandeis University • Brooklyn College • Brown University • Bucknell University • Butler University • California State University–Long Beach • Central Washington University • City University of New York • Columbia University • Connecticut College • DePaul University • Florida State University • Georgia State University • Idaho State University • Illinois State University • Iowa State University • Ithaca College • Kansas State University • Lawrence University • Louisiana State University • Marshall University • Middlebury College • Mississippi State University • New Mexico State University • Northwestern University • Ohio State University • Pacific Lutheran University • Princeton University • Queens College • Rice University • Rutgers University • Stanford University • Stony Brook University • Temple University • University at Buffalo • University of Alabama • University of Alaska–Fairbanks • University of Arizona • University of Arkansas • University of California–Davis • University of Colorado • University of Delaware • University of Georgia • University of Hartford • University of Illinois • University of Iowa • University of Kentucky • University of Louisville • University of Maryland–Baltimore • University of Memphis • University of Miami • University of Michigan • University of Minnesota • University of Missouri–Kansas City • University of Montana • University of Nebraska • University of Nevada–Las Vegas • University of North Carolina • University of North Texas • University of Oregon • University of South Carolina • University of Tennessee • University of Texas–Austin • University of Virginia • University of Wisconsin • Utah State University • Vassar College • Wake Forest University • Washington University–St.

Louis • Western Illinois University • West Virginia University • William Paterson University • Williams College • Clyfford Still Museum • Figge Art Museum • Milwaukee Art Museum • The Stone (NYC)

#### **INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCES (selected)**

American Academy in Rome • Australian National University • Beijing Central Conservatory • Berlin Hochschule • Bilgi University (Turkey) • Bolivar Conservatory (Venezuela) • Janacek Academy (Czech Rep.) • Buenos Aires Conservatory • Calcutta College (India) • Ionian University (Greece) • Ishavskatedral (Tromsø, Norway) • Freiburg Hochschule • Gesualdo Conservatory (Italy) • Hsinchu National University (Taiwan) • Koln Hochschule • Krakow Academy of Music • Leipzig Hochschule • Lunnevads College (Sweden) • Luxembourg Conservatory • Mahidol University (Thailand) • National Museum of Ancient Art (Portugal) • Puerto Rico Conservatory • Queensland Conservatory (Australia) • Reykjavik National Gallery • Rio de Janeiro Federal University • Shenyang Conservatory • Uzbekistan State Conservatory • Talinn Academy of Music (Estonia) • Tel Aviv University • Turin Museum of Modern Art • University of British Columbia • University of Bucharest • University of Leeds • University of Miskolc (Hungary) • University of Strasbourg • University of Toronto • University of Valencia

#### **ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCES (selected)**

Quad City Symphony • University of Iowa Symphony • Waterloo–Cedar Falls Symphony • Black Forest Percussion Group • Cadillac Moon Ensemble • Center for New Music • Collide-O-Scope • Due East • Duo Contour • Duo Harpverk • Ensemble Chronophonie • Helix • Hoffmann/Goldstein Duo • Identity Cubed • Iktus • JACK Quartet • Khasma Piano Duo • Maia Quartet • N.E.O. SOUND • San Diego New Music • The Society for Chromatic Art • Talujon • Vox Novus • Zodiac Trio

#### **SOLO PERFORMANCES (selected)**

Augustus Arnone, piano • Erik Carlson, violin • Alice K. Dade, flute • Louis Goldstein, piano • Stephen Gosling, piano • Craig Hultgren, cello • Taka Kigawa, piano • Helen Kim, violin • Peter Kolkay, bassoon • Tom Kolor, percussion • Ashlee Mack, piano • John McMurtery, flute • Doug Perkins, percussion • Bill Solomon, percussion • Harvey Sollberger, flute

#### **TALKS AND MASTERCLASSES PRESENTED (selected)**

American Academy in Rome • The Aspen Institute • Bowling Green State University • Bucknell University • Butler University • Carleton College • Cincinnati Conservatory • Clyfford Still Museum • Columbia University • Eastman School of Music • Everglades National Park • Grand Canyon National Park • Illinois Wesleyan University • Interlochen Center for the Arts • The Juilliard School • Lawrence University • Northwestern University • Peabody Conservatory • Rutgers University • University at Buffalo • University of California–Los Angeles • University of Colorado–Boulder • University of Denver • University of Illinois • University of Melbourne • University of Miami • University of Minnesota • University of Nebraska–Kearney • University of Tennessee • University of Toronto • University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

## DISCOGRAPHY (selected)

*The Fragility of Time*. Matt Sargent, electric guitar. A Wave Press, 2024.

*Ring*. Two-channel fixed media. Parallax Music Press, 2024

*Spaces*. Tony Oliver, vibraphone. Sawyer Editions, 2023.

*The Complexity of Distance*. Mike Scheidt, elec. guitar. New World Records, 2022. Relapse Records, 2023.

*Loomings*. 2-channel fixed media. Parallax Music Press, 2020.

*Still*. Ashlee Mack, piano. New World Records, 2018.

*Time Seems To Pass*. New Muse Piano Duo. Blue Griffin Records, 2017.

*Leaves from Modern Trees*. Various artists. Parallax Music Press, 2017.

*Time Seems To Pass (extended version)*. Khasma Piano Duo. Parallax Music Press, 2017.

*Dorsia 2a*. Duo Harpverk: "Offshoots." Greenhouse Studios, 2014.

*Out of Frame*. Millikin Percussion Ensemble: "Premieres." First Step Records, 2012.

*Ferocious Alphabets*. Perspectives of New Music Vol. 49/2, 2012.

*Transparencies*. SCI CD Series: "Mosaic." Navona Records, 2010.

## BIOGRAPHY — 67 Words

James Romig endeavors to create intricate musical compositions in which isomorphic designs exert influence on both small-scale iteration and large-scale structure, obscuring boundaries between content and form. Critics have described his work as "rapturous, slow-moving beauty" (San Francisco Chronicle), "developing with the naturalness of breathing" (The New Yorker), and "profoundly meditative... haunting" (The Wire). His *Still*, for solo piano, was a finalist for the 2019 Pulitzer Prize.

## BIOGRAPHY — 180 Words

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## REVIEWS AND TESTIMONIALS

*... hypnotic ... striking harmonic implications and subtly dramatic effects distill music to its barest essences.* — **Citation from the 2019 Pulitzer Prize in Music**

*... rapturous ... sparse, slow-moving beauty. To appreciate its graceful allure takes no more than ears and patience.* — **San Francisco Chronicle**

*... alternating sparseness and density develop with the naturalness of breathing.* — **The New Yorker**

*... profoundly meditative ... haunting.* — **The Wire**

*... whether you approach it on a theory level or as a sonic meditation, the depths welcome you.* — **The Obelisk**

*... other-worldly.* — **BBC Music Magazine**

*... one thinks of a giant mobile, or the constellations of the night sky, their stars glittering in a profoundly dark background ... a vast space, both broad and deep ... lovely and uncompromising, a rare trick to pull off.* — **Fanfare**

*... a mesmerizing trance ... a complex quilt of sound.* — **Moline Dispatch**

*[An] instant departure from the expected ... appealing and thought-provoking ... [a] Zen-like musical state.* — **River Cities Reader (Davenport, Iowa)**

*... massive, distorted, gain-in-the-red riffs ... synapse-frying distorted rumble ... a steamroller driving down a highway paved with skulls.* — **Burning Ambulance**

*... the musical equivalent of fractal geometry ... like a Japanese stone garden.* — **Classical New Jersey**

*... prevailingly gentle and gesturally supple ... complex interaction that yields a sonorous sheen of resulting harmonies.* — **Sequenza 21**

*... overwhelming sounds of triumph, light, and strength.* — **Hand of Doom Radio**

*... a distant place of quiet rapture.* — **The Baltimore Sun**

*... ethereal.* — **American Record Guide**

*... luminous and beguiling... time seems to fold in on itself.* — **Dallas Observer**

*Romig has a flair for creating arresting gestures and musical continuities that both fascinate and please. I regard him as one of the most talented emerging composers at this time.* — **Robert Morris**

*He is a very gifted composer whose work shows continual evolution, and I expect he will continue to make a significant contribution to the world of serious music.* — **Charles Wuorinen**

*Each stage of [the dissertation's] structure, from the analytically derived "premises," to the analytically motivated "speculative" extensions, to the realization, the instantiations in concrete compositions, is thoughtfully and thoroughly realized.... [Romig] has succeeded in conflating ideas and techniques into a coherent construal.... I suspect—and hope—that this exceptional thesis will be in demand within the knowing musical community, for there is no other comparable document which presents understandingly such a range of musical thought, both in and about music, in "theory," application, and extension.*  
— **Milton Babbitt** (review of Ph.D. dissertation.)

## REGISTER OF WORKS (chronological by category)

### LARGE ENSEMBLE

*Replicas* (2019) — piano and orchestra  
*Small Infinities* (2015) — glockenspiel and strings  
*Bridges* (2014) — orchestra  
*Percussion Concerto* (2010) — perc solo and orch  
*Glaciers* (2009) — orchestra  
*Six Pieces* (1996) — string orchestra

### CHAMBER

*Fortna* (2023) — bcl, elec.gtr, vln, db  
*A Circle With Many Centers* (2023) — vibr trio  
*Chasm Reflected* (2022) — two pianos  
*Blue Cubed* (2021) — alto sax, elec.gtr, vibr, pno  
*Moments Like Water* (2020) — harp and str 4tet  
*Petrified Spaces* (2019) — alto sax, vibr  
*Spaces Petrified* (2019) — alto sax, vibr  
*Moving Pictures in Frames* (2018) — perc trio  
*Pynes* (2016) — fl, pno  
*Angles of Response* (2015) — cl, pno  
*The Line Begins to Blur* (2014) — vibr, pno  
*Time Seems to Pass* (2013) — two pianos  
*Dorsia* (2013) — harp, vibr  
*Out Of Frame* (2012) — marimba trio  
*Leaves From Modern Trees* (2011) — fl, pno  
*Recall Coordinator* (2008) — fl, vibr  
*Double 5* (2007) — alto trb, pno  
*Chronophonetic Alphabets* (2007) — sextet  
*Small Worlds* (2006) — fl, cl, vln, vcl, pno  
*Ferocious Alphabets* (2005) — cl, vln  
*Double 4* (2004) — fl, pno  
*The Frame Problem* (2003) — perc trio  
*Islands That Never Were* (2003) — vibr, pno  
*Spin* (1999) — fl, vln, vcl, vibr/mba  
*Variations* (1999) — string quartet  
*Percussion Quartets* (1991–92)

### SOLO

*The Distortion of Memory* (2024) — classical guitar  
*The Fragility of Time* (2022) — elec. guitar  
*Driftless* (2021) — cello  
*Spaces* (2021) — vibraphone  
*The Complexity of Distance* (2020) — elec. guitar  
*Moments Like Water* (2020) — harp  
*A Single Generous Totality* (2018)  
*Palindrogram* (2018) — flute  
*Onomatopieces* (2017) — percussion  
*Still* (2016) — piano  
*Allometric Preludes* (2013) — piano  
*Plastic Structures* (2012) — piano  
*Disposition/Reflection* (2011) — piano  
*Second Piano Sonata* (2007)  
*A Slightly Evil Machine* (2005) — percussion  
*Sonnet 7* (2005) — steel pan  
*Piano Sonata* (2004)  
*Transparencies* (2004) — piano  
*Sonnet 6* (2003) — bassoon  
*Sonnet 5* (2002) — cello  
*Sonnet 4* (2002) — marimba  
*Thread Sketches* (2001) — piano  
*Sonnet 3* (2001) — clarinet  
*Oiseau Miró* (2001) — flute  
*Second Vibraphone Sonata* (1999)  
*Sonnet 2* (1999) — flute  
*Sonnet 1* (1999) — violin  
*Gedanke* (1998) — piano  
*Paper-knife* (1998) — glockenspiel  
*Vibraphone Sonata* (1997)  
*Block* (1996) — percussion  
*Leaning from the Steep Slope* (1995) — marimba

### ELECTROACOUSTIC

*Ring* (2024) — two-channel fixed media  
*The Illusion of Stasis* (2022) — 2-chan. fixed media  
*Loomings* (2003) — two-channel fixed media