

JAMES ROMIG, composer

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6 Hickory Bow
Macomb, IL 61455

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)

2023 Album (*The Complexity of Distance*, Relapse Records) on Billboard classical crossover chart, #8.
2023 Elected Member: 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

DISCOGRAPHY (selected)

Disposition/Reflection. Jeffrey Jacob, piano. New Ariel Recordings, 2025.
Fortna. Prague Quiet Music Collective. PQMC, 2024.
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.

FESTIVAL AND CONFERENCE PERFORMANCES (selected)

2025 Electronic Music Midwest
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 • Clifford Still Museum • Figue 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 • Lunnevals 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

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

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. He is a two-time Copland House award recipient and has served as artist-in-residence at national parks including Everglades, Grand Canyon, and Petrified Forest. Guest composer presentations include visits to the Eastman School of Music, the Cincinnati Conservatory, SUNY Buffalo, the Clyfford Still Museum, and the American Academy in Rome. His scores are published by Parallax Music Press, and recordings have been released by New World Records, Sawyer Editions, A Wave Press, Relapse Records, and Perspectives of New Music. Romig’s primary teachers were Charles Wuorinen and Milton Babbitt, and he holds degrees from the University of Iowa (BM, MA) and Rutgers University (PhD). He has been on faculty at Western Illinois University since 2002.

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

- Resolve* (2025) — orchestra (2222-4221-1perc-hp-str) [10:00]
Replicas (2019) — piano soloist and orchestra (2alto2eh11-1100-timp+1-2perc-str) [18:00]
Bridges (2014) — orchestra (2222-2221-3perc-str) [10:00]
Percussion Concerto (2010) — percussion soloist and various accompaniments [17:00]
Glaciers (2009) — orchestra (2picc2eh22-222bass1-timp+3perc-hp-str) [14:00]
Six Pieces (1996) — string orchestra [6:00]

CHAMBER

- A Circle With No Circumference* (2025) — three vibraphones [18:00]
Watch the Weather Change (2024) — saxophone quartet or string quartet [10:00]
Fortna (2023) — bass clarinet, electric guitar, violin, and contrabass [19:00]
A Circle With Many Centers (2023) — three vibraphones [18:00]
Chasm Reflected (2022) — two pianos [13:00]
Blue Cubed (2021) — alto saxophone, electric guitar, vibraphone, and piano [9:00]
Petrified Spaces (2019) — alto saxophone and vibraphone [18:00]
Spaces Petrified (2019) — alto saxophone and vibraphone [18:00]
Moving Pictures in Frames (2018) — percussion trio [9:00]
Pynes (2016) — flute and piano [9:00]
Angles of Response (2015) — clarinet and piano [9:00]
The Line Begins to Blur (2014) — vibraphone and piano [9:00]
Time Seems to Pass (2013) — two pianos [32:00, 13:00, or 8:00]
Dorsia (2013) — harp and vibraphone [12:00]
Out Of Frame (2012) — marimba trio [8:00]
Leaves From Modern Trees (2011) — flute and piano [13:00]
Recall Coordinator (2008) — flute and vibraphone [8:00]
Double 5 (2007) — alto trombone and piano [3:00]
Chronophonetic Alphabets (2007) — flute, clarinet, violin, cello, marimba, and piano [6:00]
Small Worlds (2006) — flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano [9:00]
Ferocious Alphabets (2005) — clarinet and violin [6:00]
Double 4 (2004) — flute and piano [3:00]
The Frame Problem (2003) — percussion trio [8:00]
Islands That Never Were (2003) — vibraphone and piano [9:00]
Spin (1999) — flute, violin, cello, one percussionist (vibraphone and marimba) [16:00]
Variations (1999) — string quartet [6:00]
Piano Trio (1997) — violin, cello, and piano [9:00]
Three Percussion Quartets (1991–92) [5:00/5:00/5:00]

SOLO

The Distortion of Memory (2024) — classical guitar [60:00]
The Fragility of Time (2022) — electric guitar [58:00]
Driftless (2021) — cello [10:00]
Spaces (2021) — vibraphone [77:00]
The Complexity of Distance (2020) — electric guitar [58:00]
Moments Like Water (2020) — harp [21:00]
A Single Generous Totality (2018) — piano [2:00]
Palindrogram (2018) — flute [7:00]
Onomatopieces (2017) — percussion [3:00/5:00/3:00/7:00]
Still (2016) — piano [54:00]
Allometric Preludes (2013) — piano [1:00/3:00/16:00]
Plastic Structures (2012) — piano [1:00]
Disposition/Reflection (2011) — piano [9:00]
Second Piano Sonata (2007) — piano [13:00]
A Slightly Evil Machine (2005) — percussion [8:00]
Sonnet 7 (2005) — steel pan [7:00]
Piano Sonata (2004) — piano [12:00]
Transparencies (2004) — piano [3:00]
Sonnet 6 (2003) — bassoon [4:00]
Sonnet 5 (2002) — cello [7:00]
Sonnet 4 (2002) — marimba [5:00]
Thread Sketches (2001) — piano [6:00]
Sonnet 3 (2001) — clarinet [4:00]
Oiseau Miró (2001) — flute [3:00]
Second Vibraphone Sonata (1999) — vibraphone [8:00]
Sonnet 2 (1999) — flute [5:00]
Sonnet 1 (1999) — violin [4:00]
Gedanke (1998) — piano [2:00]
Paper-knife (1998) — glockenspiel [4:00]
Vibraphone Sonata (1997) — vibraphone [9:00]
Block (1996) — percussion [8:00]
Leaning from the Steep Slope (1995) — marimba [2:00]

ELECTROACOUSTIC

Ring (2024) — two-channel fixed media [6 hours]
The Illusion of Stasis (2022) — two-channel fixed media [32 hours]
Loomings (2003) — two-channel fixed media [74:00]