



The Progression Ensemble consists of Accordionist Rocco Anthony Jerry, Guitarist Eric Despard and Cellist Michael Gilbert Ronstadt. The group specializes in contemporary classical music and is focused on presenting to the public the newest music by leading composers.

Composer/guitarist/rapper/Di.J. Gene Pritsker has written over six hundred compositions, including chamber operas, orchestral and chamber works, electro-acoustic music and songs for hip-hop and rock ensembles. All of his compositions employ an eclectic spectrum of styles and are influenced by his studies of various musical cultures.

He is the founder and leader of Sound Liberation; an eclectic hip hop-chamber-jazz-rock-etc. ensemble who have released cd's on Col-legno, Composers Concordance and Innova Records. He is also the co-director of Composers' Concordance, a new music presenting organization with a 30 year history of producing concert in NYC. Other organization he is associate with include the Grammy nominated Absolute Ensemble, which he co founded in 1993 with Kristjan Jarvi and has been a composer in residence and guitarist with ever since.

Gene's music has been performed all over the world at various festivals and by many ensembles and performers, including the The Adelaide Symphony, MDR Symphony, The Athens Camerata, China Philharmonic Orchestra, Brooklyn, Shanghai and Berlin Philharmonics, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, St. Lukes Chamber Orchestra, Sinfonietta Riga, Orchester des Pfalztheaters, Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra, Anhaltische Philharmonie as well as such soloists as Anne Akiko Meyers, Lara St. John, Sarah Chang, Kathleen Supové, Martin Kuuskmann and Simone Dinnerstein. He worked closely with jazz fusion legend Joe Zawinul and has orchestrated major Hollywood movies, including 'Cloud Atlas', for which he wrote additional music and composed his "Cloud Atlas Symphony".

The New York Times described him as "...audacious...multitalented." Joseph Pehrson, writing in The Music Connoisseur, described Pritsker as "dissolving the artificial boundaries between high brow, low brow, classical, popular musics and elevates the idea that if it's done well it is great music, regardless of the style or genre". Evan Burke writes in ICareIf YouListen: "Pritsker seems to look at all music as one genre, in which all other possible styles, sounds and traditions are meant to be used as building blocks and palette colors, combined in various configurations to create a boundless whole. This result is almost always more interesting, and representative of how most new music will be born in the 21st century, as genres and barriers begin to vanish, and as styles begin cross-fertilizing in previously unimagined ways."

Organizations he is associated with include: Co-director of Composers Concordance & Composers Concordance Records, co-founder/guitarist of Absolute Ensemble and artist-in residence at the Austrian Outreach Festival. Gene Pritsker's music is published by: Falls House Press, Gold Branch Music, Periferia Sheet Music & Calabrese Brothers music. Recorded on: Col Legno, Enja, Eutreppe, Wergo, Innova , Composers' Concordance Records, SONY Classical, and Capstone record labels.

Dan Cooper's music has been noted in The Associated Press, American Record Guide, Berkshire Eagle, Boston Globe, CurtainUp, Fanfare, Greenwich Times, Metroland Albany, NMC, The New York Times, Strings Magazine, Times Union, and Time Out New York, among others - "contemporary impressionism," "invigoratingly eclectic to the max," "inventive," "creative," "vibrant," "drawing on vernacular styles," "especially fascinating," "full of instrumental virtuosity and sly humor," "utterly charming," "incorporates blues..into a contemporary context," "whimsical," "carefree," "acute," "daring," "well-plotted," "hauntingly beautiful," and with a "spirit of originality, verve, and humor, now being passed on to a new generation."

Cooper was born and raised in Manhattan, and educated at Horace Mann, Columbia, NEC, and Princeton University. He also completed studies at the Conservatoire de Nice and Fontainebleau. Principal teachers include John Heiss, Steve Mackey, and Paul Lansky. Cooper has also studied with Barbara White, Betsy Jolas, Chen Yi, John Harbison, Kenneth Koch, Lee Hyla, Michael Gandolfi, Mindy Kaufman, Osvaldo Golijov, Perry Cook, Philip Glass, Philippe Manoury, Robert Ceely, and Toni Morrison, among others.

For several years, Cooper worked as an assistant to electronic music pioneer Otto Luening, who mentored him in composition, orchestration, and musical life in general. The recipient of an Aaron Copland composition fellowship to Tanglewood, Cooper worked as an assistant to Louis Andriessen, and composed and produced incidental music for several acclaimed Shakespeare & Company productions directed by Tina Packer and Daniela Varon: 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' 'Coriolanus,' 'King Lear,' and 'The Winter's Tale.' In addition, Cooper's music was premiered at Tanglewood's Ozawa Hall, at a gala event featuring Mike Wallace, Jane Fonda, David Strathairn, and Marisa Tomei. As a multi instrumentalist specializing in 7-string bass guitar and also flute with electronics, Cooper has performed all over the world, as a member of singer Ute Lemper's trio, as well as the groups Barbaric Yawp, Erbium, Free Radicals, Nine Live, Sound Liberation, Tilted Axes, Vision Into Art, and The Yorkvillians, among others. Venues include Anadolu Auditorium Istanbul, Austrian Cultural Forum, Berlin Philharmonic Hall, Bohemian National Hall, Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition, Bunkamura Orchard Hall Tokyo, Casino de Paris, CBGB's, Chicago Theater, Davies Hall, Dom Omladine Beograda, Drom NYC, Galapagos Art Space, Gallery MC, Grande Auditório do Centro Cultural de Belém Lisbon, Hong Kong City Hall, IndieScreen, Intar Theater, Irving Plaza, Joe's Pub, Jordan Hall, Konserthuset Stockholm, Koseinenkin Hall Osaka, Le Poisson Rouge, Lisner Auditorium, Mäntyniemi Helsinki, Massey Hall, Mercury Lounge, Munich Philharmonic Hall, National Opera Center, 92Y, Nublu, Palau de la Música Catalana, Piccolo Teatro di Milano, Pori Jazz Festival, Rockefeller Center, Rockwood Music Hall, Royal Albert Hall, Royal

Festival Hall, Royce Hall UCLA, Shapeshifter Lab, Shrine NYC, Spectrum NYC, Staatsoper Berlin, Sydney Opera House, Taplin Auditorium, Teatre Municipal de Girona, Teatro Albeniz Madrid, Teatro Cultura Artística São Paulo, Teatro Grand Rex Buenos Aires, Tenri Cultural Center, The American Airlines (Selwyn) Theatre, The American Museum of Natural History, The Blue Note, The Cell Theatre, The Cutting Room, and many more.

Cooper's music has been recognized with various awards, commissions, premieres, readings, recordings, showcases, and residencies from Absolute Ensemble, Albany Symphony, Albany Records, ASCAP, Artists International, Avaloch Music Institute, B3+, Cary Trust, Circadia, Electro-Music, ESYO, Engine 27, Femmes Four, Fontainebleau, Goddard-Riverside, Harlem Chamber Players, Imani Winds, ISC, June in Buffalo, Lumina String Quartet, Majestic Brass, Meet the Composer, NARAS, NEA, NEC, NJSO, NYNME, NYYS, National Flute Association, North River Music, Norwalk Youth Symphony, Palisades Virtuosi, Scotia Festival, ACO / Sonic Festival, Sweet Plantain String Quartet, Talujon, Tenth Intervention, Two Sides Sounding, Vox Novus 60x60, Walter W. Naumburg Fund, Willets Road School, and Zentripetal Duo, among others. In 2002, he was appointed to the faculty of the State University of New York / FIT, where he has created new SUNY General Education Requirement courses in American Music, European-Classical Music, and Latin-American and Caribbean Music. In addition, Cooper teaches composition at 92Y School of Music, and music and Shakespeare classes at Greenwich House Senior Center. Cooper helped create the community arts program at Goddard Riverside, where he is currently composer-in-residence. He is a co-director of the 501(c)(3) chamber music series and record label Composers Concordance, distributed by Naxos. email: dcooper@alumni.princeton.edu

Christopher Cook received the Doctor of Music degree from Indiana University where he served as assistant director of the Center for Electronic and Computer Music. He is a recent recipient of a Fromm Music Foundation commission from Harvard University and has received awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, ASCAP, MTNA, and the National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies. He has served as Composer-in-Residence at James Madison University, Amherst College, the University of Evansville, the Monroe County Community Schools Corporation (Indiana) and for the city of Somerset, Pennsylvania. He is Assistant Professor of Music at Chowan University.

His works have been presented at conferences and festivals including the International Computer Music Conference, the Society for Electro-acoustic Music in the United States, the New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, the Florida Electro-acoustic Music Festival, and Electronic Music Midwest.

Bjørn Bolstad Skjelbred (b.1970 - Norway) has a varied and broadly spectered musical background. He is active as a composer, arranger, improviser and teacher, with experience from several genres and musical environments. Skjelbred's list of works contains more than 70 titles, where music for other arts and music for young musicians are largely present. Skjelbreds music has been performed in several european countries, USA and Canada in addition to the nordic countries. Collaborations with musicians, ensembles and artists are very important to Skjelbred, and many of his works are results from these collaborations.

Among his collaborators are Norwegian percussionist Eirik Raude, The Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Swedish ensemble The Pearls before Swine Experience, The London Schubert Players, accordionist Rocco Jerry (US), the renowned Norwegian vocal group Nordic Voices and the Danish flutist Marianne Leth. Collaborations with Norwegian groups of actors like "The chosen Ones", "FaktaMorgana" and "Fabula Rasa" have resulted in several productions for the stage, which have been shown in several of the scandinavian countries. The latest production "Istialia", was

shown for a month at the National Theatre in Oslo, autumn 2011. He is also involved in the jazz/pop/rock music scene as an arranger, songwriter and musician, and released the CD 'urban songs' with the quartet Urban Visions in 2005. Skjelbred teaches composition, theory and improvisation, and has been a teacher at The Norwegian Academy of Music and Oslo Community School of Music and Culture.

Skjelbred finished his Diploma (Masters degree) in Composition at the Norwegian State Academy of Music in 2006, with composers Asbjørn Schaathun and Bjørn H Kruse as his tutors. He has also taken private lessons with the Italian composer Luca Francesconi. Skjelbred was vice president of the board of the Norwegian Composers Society between 2013 and 2016.

Michael Dilthey received his Doctorate in Composition at Northwestern University. He also holds Master of Music degrees in composition and conducting. He has composed two operas, three musicals, orchestral and choral music as well as theatrical incidental music. Recently his musical Greetings from Fitzwalkerstan had a successful run in Madison, WI. Another musical, My Way of Life workshopped in New York City and he had a composition for string orchestra premiere at Carnegie Hall and in Sweden. His areas of teaching are music theory, history and composition. Michael lives in North Adams with his wife, Ellen.

Education D.Mus., Northwestern University M.M., Northwestern University M.M., University of Missouri, Conservatory of Music B.M., Southern Illinois University

Shawn Lawson is an experiential media artist creating the computational sublime. As Obi-Wan Codenobi, he live-codes, real-time computer graphics with his open source software, The Force & The Dark Side. He has performed or exhibited in England, Scotland, Spain, Denmark, Germany, Russia, Italy, Korea, Portugal, Brazil, Turkey, Malaysia, Iran, Australia, Canada, Mexico, and the USA. He received grants from NYSCA and the Experimental Television Center, and he has been in residence at CultureHub and Signal Culture. Lawson studied at CMU and Eñ NSBA. He received his MFA in Art and Technology Studies from SAIC. He is a Professor and Graduate Program Director in the Department of Art at RPI.

Guitarist Eric Despard is Affiliate Artist at Middlebury College and Assistant Professor at Southern Vermont College. He performs throughout North America as a soloist and with chamber ensembles. Eric holds a bachelor's from The Hartt School of Music and a master's from Yale School of Music.

Accordionist Rocco Anthony Jerry specializes in contemporary classical music. He has premiered works by Daniel Goode, Conrad Kehn, Peter Machajdik, Arthur B. Rubinstein, Max Simoncic, Bjorn Bolstad Skjelbred and Christian Wolff. He studied with Paul Bertolozzi, Carmen Carrozza, and Carmelo Pino, and has taken masterclasses with William Schimmel. Cincinnati-based cellist Michael Gilbert Ronstadt gives over 300 performances a year. He has appeared on over 50 albums and is a core member of Ronstadt Generations. Dan Buckley writing for The Tucson Citizen noted his "amazing command of the typical and exotic sounds of the cello, a true virtuoso and a man of instinctive musicality." Michael holds a Master and Bachelor of Music in Cello Performance.