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For Immediate Release
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**Americans in Rome: Music by Fellows of the American Academy in Rome
Historic 4-CD Release Issued by Bridge Records
Premiere Recordings of Works by Sessions, Moravec, Lang, Hartke, Wyner, more**

The American Academy in Rome (AAR) has announced the October 2008 release of a 4-CD set - Americans in Rome / Music by Fellows of the American Academy in Rome - on Bridge Records (BRIDGE 9271). The package is comprised of new recordings of works by 37 composers who have won the Academy's prestigious Rome Prize over a period of more than eight decades. Included in the set are works by such composers as Samuel Barber, Elliott Carter, Paul Moravec, Stephen Hartke, Roger Sessions, Leo Sowerby, Derek Bermel, Yehudi Wyner, Howard Hanson, David Lang and 27 more**. "We are thrilled that the rich tradition of creativity and accomplishment on the part of the many American innovators who have won the Rome Prize in musical composition is on display in Bridge Records' superb 4-CD recording, available at long last for all to hear and enjoy," said Adele Chatfield-Taylor, President of the American Academy in Rome. Ms. Chatfield-Taylor went on to say "There are many key individuals and organizations to thank for the existence of this historic set of recordings, but special recognition must be given to Donald Berman, Artistic Director of Americans in Rome, who first envisioned this project."

In 1997, pianist Donald Berman was invited to the American Academy's 11-acre property atop Rome's highest hill to perform in AAR's annual spring concert of works by Rome Prize Fellows. As he explored the grounds and buildings of the Academy, he was drawn to the library, where he discovered a priceless archive of music scores, many among them written by composers who have won the Rome Prize in the years since the early 20th century - countless scores that had not seen the light of day in decades. "It became clear that the American Academy in Rome had been a locus of compositional activity from the inception of its music program in 1921 to the present," he reports in the impressive 64-page booklet included in the Americans in Rome package. "I felt there was an under-examined American musical core to be unearthed," he continues. "In letters, scores, and detritus of the composers who had received the distinction of Fellow of the AAR, this archive told the tale of a music program that has been arguably the single most significant incubator for the creation of American music."

(more)

Upon returning to the United States Mr. Berman proposed a series of concerts to bring many of these scores to light. The AAR formed a committee of Academy Trustees and Fellows who, together with Mr. Berman, chose the scores and curated a series of four concerts held at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in the fall of 2002. As Mr. Berman reports, "I found it gratifying to work with a music committee comprised of great composers: Robert Beaser, John Harbison, Paul Moravec and Kathryn Alexander. Together we considered works that had been composed at the Academy in Rome, works that were receiving their premieres, newly discovered works alongside established works like Samuel Barber's String Quartet, one of the seminal American masterpieces composed in Rome."

The project to produce four CDs grew out of the success of the 2002 concert series. The Americans in Rome CD package features the work of 37 of the 124 composers who have won the Rome Prize since 1921. The earliest composition in the collection is *The Forest of the Dead Trees* (1920), a song by Leo Sowerby, one of the first composers to win the Prize; the most recent is *Passacaglia* (2005), a piano trio by Paul Moravec. Nineteen of the 37 compositions in the CD compilation were performed on the original series of four concerts produced by Donald Berman in 2002. The remaining eighteen compositions in the CD compilation are for the most part other works by the composers represented in the concert series. Mr. Berman continued: "As we were planning the CD package, we realized that it would make a lot of sense to choose pieces by the concert's composers that had not been recorded recently or in some cases at all, rather than to stick rigidly to the pieces on the 2002 concert programs. The Barber String Quartet, for example, which had been performed on the opening concert of the 2002 series, doesn't lack for recorded versions, so we thought it a much better idea to choose another piece - perhaps not as well represented on record - by the same composer for inclusion in the Americans in Rome CD compilation. In Barber's case, we chose a set of four compelling songs he composed at the Academy between 1935 and 1937 when he was just finding his voice as a young composer abroad. In this way we feel we have provided maximum exposure to the composers on the original concert series."

The repertoire on the Americans in Rome CD compilation is divided according to genre: one of the four discs is devoted to vocal music, one to music for strings and piano, one to pieces for solo piano, and one to music for winds and piano. Amazingly, in addition to curating the original concert series and producing the 4-CD Americans in Rome recording, Donald Berman also plays the great majority of piano parts on the recording. Mr. Berman is joined on the four CDs by a stellar assemblage of the country's finest interpreters of new music - artists like Fred Sherry (cello), Daniel Druckman (percussion), Charles Neidich and Richard Stoltzman (clarinet), Tara Helen O'Connor (flute), Susan Narucki and Hila Plitmann (soprano) Chris Pedro Trakas (baritone), plus eleven more players and five ensembles (complete personnel on p.3). Overall, Americans in Rome, both the original concert series and Bridge Records' stunning 4-CD compilation, give eloquent voice to the impact the American Academy in Rome has had on the American compositional landscape. Composer John Harbison expressed it well: "The American Academy in Rome has long played an essential but semi-secret role in our nation's concert music. These recordings promise to make that role less secret."

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For more information about Americans in Rome / Music by Fellows of the American Academy in Rome, visit www.bridgerecords.com and contact Kathryn King Media / 831-620-1332 / info@kathrynkingmedia.com

Bridge Records' Americans in Rome features:

- First recordings of works by four recent winners of the Pulitzer Prize in Music: David Lang (2008), Yehudi Wyner (2006), Paul Moravec (2004), and Aaron Jay Kernis (1998)
- Music of two recent winners of the Charles Ives Living Award: Stephen Hartke and Martin Bresnick
- Rare excerpt from the legendary and never-before-recorded opera Montezuma by Roger Sessions
- Other premiere recordings by Robert Beaser, Vittorio Giannini, Walter Helfer, Ezra Laderman, Bun-Ching Lam, John Anthony Lennon, James Mobberley, David Rakowski, Loren Rush, Harold Shapero, Alexander Lang Steinert, Randall Thompson, and Mark Wingate

**Composers Featured in Americans in Rome and/or Mentioned in Press Release

FAAR = Fellow of the American Academy in Rome; RAAR = Resident of the American Academy in Rome

Kathryn Alexander (FAAR '89)	Bun-Ching Lam (FAAR '92)
Samuel Barber (FAAR '37, RAAR '47)	David Lang (FAAR '91)
Robert Beaser (FAAR '78; Trustee of AAR)	Billy Jim Layton (FAAR '57)
Jack Beeson (FAAR '50 RAAR '66, Trustee Emeritus)	John Anthony Lennon (FAAR '81)
Derek Bermel (FAAR '02)	Arthur Levering (FAAR '97)
Martin Bresnick (FAAR '76, RAAR '00)	Scott Lindroth (FAAR '86)
Elliott Carter (FAAR '54, RAAR '63, '69, '80; Trustee Emeritus)	James Mobberley (FAAR '90)
Tamar Diesendruck (FAAR '84)	Paul Moravec (FAAR '85)
Lukas Foss (FAAR '52, RAAR '78)	Charles Naginski (FAAR '40)
Vittorio Giannini (FAAR '36)	David Rakowski (FAAR '96)
Howard Hanson (FAAR '24)	George Rochberg (FAAR '51)
John Harbison (RAAR '81; Trustee Emeritus)	Loren Rush (FAAR '71)
Stephen Hartke (FAAR '92)	Roger Sessions (FAAR '31)
Walter Helfer (FAAR '28)	Harold Shapero (FAAR '51, RAAR '71)
Lee Hyla (FAAR '91, RAAR '05)	Leo Sowerby (FAAR '24)
Andrew Imbrie (FAAR '49, RAAR '68)	Alexander Lang Steinert (FAAR '30)
Kamran Ince (FAAR '88)	Randall Thompson (FAAR '25, RAAR '52)
Hunter Johnson (FAAR '35)	Richard Trythall (FAAR '67, RAAR '71)
Aaron Jay Kernis (FAAR '85)	Mark Wingate (FAAR '99)
Ezra Laderman (FAAR '64, RAAR '83)	Yehudi Wyner (FAAR '56, RAAR '91)

Singers, Instrumentalists and Ensembles Featured on Americans in Rome (Bridge 9271)

Donald Berman, Artistic Director & Pianist

Laura Ahlbeck, oboe	Jeffrey Milarsky, conductor
Ole Akahoshi, cello	Patti Monson, flute
Tony Arnold, soprano	Susan Narucki, soprano
Jonathan Bagg, viola	Charles Neidich, clarinet
James Baker, percussion	Tara Helen O'Connor, flute
Collage New Music Ensemble	Opus One
Colorado College Music Festival	Hila Plitmann, soprano
The Curiously Strong Wind Quintet	Fred Sherry, cello
Daniel Druckman, percussion	Tim Smith, alto sax & bass clarinet
John Leisenring, trombone	Richard Stoltzman, clarinet
Sunghae Anna Lim, violin	Chris Pedro Trakas, baritone
Curtis Macomber, violin	Trio Solisti

Overview of the Academy

The American Academy in Rome is one of the leading American overseas centers for independent study and advanced research in the arts and humanities. Each year through a national juried competition, the Academy offers up to 30 Rome Prize fellowships in architecture, design, historic preservation and conservation, landscape architecture, literature, musical composition, visual arts, and in humanistic approaches to ancient studies, medieval studies, Renaissance and early modern studies, and modern Italian studies. These Fellows are joined by a select group of senior scholars and artists-in-residence invited by the Academy and international affiliate program members.

In addition to its residential programs, the Academy maintains a research library of over 135,000 volumes in the fields of classical studies and the history of art and architecture, a photographic archive, and an archaeological study collection. It also sponsors exhibitions, concerts, lectures, symposia and other events, as well as a number of summer programs, and publishes scholarly works and exhibition catalogs.

Founded in 1894, the American Academy in Rome was chartered as a private institution by an act of Congress in 1905. On the occasion of the Academy's centennial, the president of the United States signed a joint resolution of Congress in recognition of the Academy's contributions to America's intellectual and cultural life.

The Academy remains a private institution supported by gifts, grants, and membership fees of individuals, foundations, corporations and the country's leading colleges, universities and other organizations concerned with the arts and humanities, including the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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