

Saturday, November 11, 2017

Dear Greg and Friends of the Northern Illinois University School of Music - Thomas as the Brass Ensemble, Eric and the Chamber Choir, The Avalon Quartet, Mathias, Daphne, Elise, and David, the "Selene-team," and every musician who performed on the concert,

Thank you for your wonderful invitation and warm welcome to your magnificent 7th Annual New Music Festival. Immense gratitude to each of you for being such gracious, generous, lovely hosts! I feel blessed for your including me (and so much of my music!) and for providing a deeply meaningful experience for my life. I will never forget it!

It has taken me a week to digest all the many things that each of you did for me and to be able to formulate my thoughts into this letter of gratitude.

Greg, let me start by saying that you are a gem!! You must still be exhausted! Your music making, playing, conducting, composing, teaching is elegant, colorful, bold, vibrant, inspiring and centered. You set just the right, elegant tone for the Festival and made everyone feel welcome. You are a deep thinker and an inspiring, kind, wise, creative, productive person and artist.

Everyone's individual and collective expertise made the Festival day sparkle! I am deeply grateful for your marvelous performances. Your individual and collective music making is graceful, colorful, bold, vibrant, inspiring and centered. The gorgeous Boutell concert hall is amazing and I eagerly await recordings (video and audio) of the evening and thank the tech/audio team for all their hard work.

I felt that all musicians are able to infuse my work with empathy for individual voice and for the precise meanings of the musical materials, nuanced notations, forms, rhythms, and colors. I love the soul, expression and the spirit in your amazing individual and collective sounds.

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Founder and Director,
Chicago Center for
Contemporary Composition
Augusta Read Thomas

Contempo Ensemble Co-directors
Anthony Cheung
Marta Ptaszynska
Sam Pluta
Augusta Read Thomas

CHIME Studio Director
(Chicago Integrated Media Experimental Studio)
Sam Pluta

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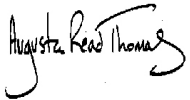
Composers throughout history have needed the strong backing of great musicians, colleague composers, conductors, orchestras, music administrators, music scholars and music lovers, music supporters who are of the depth, soul, excellence, vision, and care as you all are. Without such support, composition is an impossible endeavor at which to improve.

As such, I feel fortunate for your personal investments in my life's work. Our art form at large greatly needs visionary and generous performers and leaders, such as you all, so that all can work together to further music's flexible, diverse capacity and innate power.

It meant so much to me to be with you all, to work together, and to share our love of and passion for music and life.

Here is my complete, heartfelt appreciation!

Warmly and with hugs!!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Augusta Read Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gusty