

**Kevin James** is a noted composer, performer, educator and writer.

Known for the breadth of his palette and original concepts, his music ranges from the gospel-inflected to the microtonal, from works for young singers to improv orchestras, with and without electronics, from the raucous to the sublime.

Kevin's newest projects include a multi-media work commissioned by Del Sol string quartet that will feature the otherworldly sounds of the howler monkeys of Nicaragua's Ometepe Island. He will also compose a headlining work for the 2015 MakeMusic NY festivities that will feature the members of TILT Brass and Mobius Percussion converging on Tompkins Square Park in a *Guerrilla Fanfare*. His *Revolution #1*, commissioned by a consortium of cellists, will be premiered in cities throughout the US beginning late 2015.

2013 marked the completion of Kevin's *Vanishing Languages Project*, a New York Times "Best of 2013", hailed for works "as haunting as they were riveting". In 2009, Kevin was one of 5 American artists awarded a JAPAN-US Friendship Commission Fellowship, one of America's most sought after artist fellowships, to pursue work on the project. Prep work for the project included extensive travel to gather field recordings of the last remaining speakers of four nearly extinct languages. The result is a series of five long form, electro-acoustic and multi-media works developed on commissions from Elisa Monte Dance (NY), the string quartets ETHEL (NY) and Del Sol (SF), Fulcrum Point New Music Project (Chicago) and Speak Percussion (Australia).

The final works of the *Vanishing Languages Project* were premiered in March and April of 2013 through residencies in New York and San Francisco at Brooklyn College, Roulette and ODC Theater. In May the project was featured on the syndicated Public Radio International program, *The World*. The first of the completed works, *Jawoyn Dreamscape*, was listed among *Chicago Classical's* top ten performances of 2011.

Other recent premieres include a work for American Public Media's *Radio Radiancance* series, premiered at the 92nd St. Y and aired on broadcasts of its popular *Celebrating Our Musical Future* show, *Revolution No. 11*, commissioned by the International Beethoven Festival (September 2013), and the critically acclaimed, *100 Waltzes for John Cage*, premiered at the DiMenna Center in New York (August 2012).

Kevin has received awards and grants from the American Composer's Forum, Jerome Foundation, NEA, Meet the Composer, New York State Council on the Arts, American Music Center and many others.

Kevin's *Horobi No Naka Kara*, commissioned by the Young People's Chorus, was previewed on WNYC radio prior to delivery as a gift from New York City Mayor Bloomberg to Hiroshima Mayor, Tadatashi Akiba and premiered at a Concert for Peace commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombing.

His first art film composing project (*Jocasta*, created and directed by Elise Kermani) has screened at festivals throughout the US and Europe, and a second collaboration with Ms. Kermani (*Poe... and the Museum of Lost Arts*), developed in a residency at 3LD Center for Art and Technology featured collaborations with Rinde Eckert, Theo Bleckmann, and Pamela Z.

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# Kevin James



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Composer - Performer - Educator

His cantata, *Sadako: Prayers for Peace*, commissioned by the Chicago Humanities Festival, was workshopped and performed at University of Indiana prior to being premiered by the Fulcrum Point New Music Project as part of the Music Now Festival at the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art and the Harris Theater.

Kevin's multi-media work *NYC Play Ground*, commissioned by the Young People's Chorus for their Transient Glory Series (premiered at the 92nd St. Y in a live broadcast on WNYC radio), was chosen to represent the US at the World Choral Music Symposium in Kyoto Japan in 2005. *In Complexu Pacis* received honors in the worldwide Waging Peace choral music competition and was a winner of the Essentially Choral competition where it was performed by the renowned *VocalEssence*.

Kevin's selection for the highly competitive Meet The Composer/New Residencies Program in 1999 placed him in residence variously with the Police Athletic League, The Kitchen, the Quintet of the Americas, and the Sirius String Quartet. This 3-year residency partnership included the commission of *The Portraits Project*, a 90-minute multimedia "opera-lingua", for which Mr. James recorded over 700 interviews with homeless New Yorkers. *The Portraits Project* has had several successful runs at The Kitchen and The Public Theater in New York City. Other residencies include the Atlantic Center of the Arts in Florida and the MUSIC-OMI artist colony in upstate New York.

Kevin's music has also been performed on the Brooklyn Philharmonic's *Music Off the Walls* series, The Orchestra of St. Luke's *Second Helpings Series*, the *North River Music Series* at the Greenwich House, the Oregon Bach Festival, and on symposia of the American Composers Forum, Chamber Music America and the Society of Composers Inc. national conferences.

Finally, Kevin is the director of The [kāj] Ensemble (it's pronounced "cage"), a collective of New York's finest and most daring improvising musicians, where he performs on trombone, didjeridoo, harmonica and a variety of other "folk" instruments. He has conducted over sixty guest artist residencies at American Universities such as University of Michigan, Indiana University and University of Minnesota, and has performed for New York audiences everywhere from underground improv spaces to the Broadway pit to Carnegie Hall. In 2011 Kevin was named a "Distinguished Alumnus" of DePauw University.

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"...the enigmatic sounds... filled the space... in performances of the two works that were as haunting as they were riveting."

-Corinna da Fonseca-Wollheim, *New York Times*

"...an extraordinary piece.... great music by Kevin James!"

-John Schaefer, host of WNYC *NewSounds* and *The Listening Room*

"I came away feeling sanguine about the future of new music... Music, song, image and spoken word form a seamless and deeply moving meditation.

-John Von Rhein, *Chicago Tribune*

"Not only does *100 waltzes for John Cage* work, it's a triumph, and a fitting tribute to the man on his centenary."

-Jeremy Shatan, *The Glass Review*

"Kevin James is in the forefront of a new breed of classically trained but socially concerned composers..."

-Barry Cohen, *The New Music Connoisseur*

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For information regarding performances and events visit:

[www.kevinjamescomposer.com](http://www.kevinjamescomposer.com)

For scores contact: Boosey & Hawkes, Wehr's Music or Jesker-Du Publications.