

# ASTA/NJ Chamber Music Institute at Kean University



## Information concerning the composition major ASTA/NJ CMI 2011

- The following information is intended for those who intend to pursue composition studies as their major course of study at CMI 2011.
  
- For those NOT intending upon composition as their major course of study at CMI 2011 but who wish to study composition nonetheless, beginning and intermediate composition is available as a free elective course or may be arranged on a private basis with Mr. Somers for an additional fee of \$70 per hour; sign up at registration.

### Composition Program at ASTA/NJ CMI 2011

- ✓ **Instructor:** Paul Mack Somers (biography for Mr. Somers is at the bottom of this document. Please scroll down to view).
  
- ✓ **Description:** *Music for strings will be composed in a concentrated study program that encompasses private composition instruction, group seminar, score study and guided observation of coaching sessions*
  - Student's compositions will be intended for read-through and/or performance by the string students attending ASTA/CMI 2011.
  - Registration for both sessions of ASTA/NJ CMI is encouraged but not mandatory.
  - In the past Mr. Somers has been available earlier in the summer to give lessons in order to help prepare the student for study at ASTA/NJ CMI. *This is not mandatory but is recommended* as a means of preparing students of disparate backgrounds to be highly productive during ASTA/NJ CMI. These lessons are at an additional fee of \$70 per hour payable to Mr. Somers at the time of service. This can be arranged by reaching him at 856-506-0580 or [somerspaulm@gmail.com](mailto:somerspaulm@gmail.com).
  
- ✓ **Schedule:** Generally, composition majors follow the same schedule as string players at ASTA/NJ CMI. The Daily Schedule is available under the *Learn*

*More* column of the CMI program page at [www.astanj.com/chambermusic.php](http://www.astanj.com/chambermusic.php). There are some differences in activities for composers; these are noted here:

- Daily Group Seminar will occur daily 9:00 — 10:15 AM.
    - Provides forum for score study, analysis and an opportunity to ‘workshop’ new compositions with Mr. Somers and other composition students.
  - Daily Private Lessons.
    - Lessons are arranged between student and Mr. Somers during an organizational meeting that will take place during dinner on registration day.
  - Readings of Student Compositions will be arranged as the compositions progress.
  - Scheduled Observation of Coaching Sessions. Students will have the opportunity to observe coaching sessions to learn about new repertoire, rehearsal techniques and to gain insight into the technique of performing string instruments.
  - Attendance at all Guest Artist performances at Special Presentations
  - COMPOSE, COMPOSE, COMPOSE!!!
    - Getting down to brass tacks, students are expected to compose!
    - Mr. Somers is available to help as needed. Just ask for assistance any time you see him!
- ✓ **Technology** - Optional, though encouraged:
- Bring a computer with Sibelius or Finale, if you have either, and a printer.
  - If you don’t have that, Mr. Somers has Sibelius 5 and Finale 2004 (he himself uses Sibelius) and will make his Mac G4 with OS X version 10.5.6 available as often as possible to composition students who need it.

## BIOGRAPHY OF PAUL MACK SOMERS

Paul Somers (1942- ) studied composition with Warren Benson and George Andrix at Ithaca College Conservatory and participated in master classes with Norman Dello Joio under a Ford Foundation Grant. Somers’ theatrical works include the film score to the American International release *Without Getting*, incidental music to a New Jersey Shakespeare Festival production of *Macbeth*, and a full-length ballet *A Pine Barrens Legend*. The Summit Chorale commissioned several choral works from him including *Noe*, *Pastores*, a piece for three antiphonal choirs. Somers’ *A Modal Mass* was commissioned by and premiered at the First United Methodist Church in Westfield, New Jersey. *Antiphonien für zwei Bläserquartette* was commissioned and premiered by the C. S. Bläserchor in Frankfurt a. M., Germany.

Somers’ *Meditations on a Theme of Eric Routley* was chosen for performance by the Halcyon Trio (clarinet, viola, and piano) as part of the *Ars Vitalis* new music concert at Kean University in New Jersey during the spring of 2003. The 2005 season saw not only the premiere and recording of *An Arch of Miniatures* commissioned by the Palisades Virtuosi (flute, clarinet, piano), but the premieres of *Evolving Chaconne* commissioned by the Colonial Symphony of Morristown and *New Jersey Camp Meeting: a Bloomfield Sabbath* for flute and piano. In the spring of 2006 *Ondine Visions*, a work commissioned by the Palisades Virtuosi, was premiered by them in Bruno Walter Auditorium at Lincoln Center, New York City. February

2007 saw the premiere of *Eight Epigrams* for viola and guitar, premiered by the Duo Fresco — violist Brett Dubner and guitarist Christopher Kenniff — at Maurice River Music. Somers' recent six movement suite for solo piano, *Maurice River Pictures*, was premiered by pianist Ron Levy in October of 2008, and Somers' *Cello Sonata* received its premiere in June of 2010 with E. Zoe Hassman as soloist. The premiere of his *Violin Concerto* for Jorge Ávila will take place on March 25 and 27 of 2011, with the Bay-Atlantic Symphony, Jed Gaylin conductor. Somers has lectured at Lincoln Center in New York City on “*Les Six and the Modern Esthetic.*” As Director of Adult Education for the Bay-Atlantic Symphony, his monthly lectures on various musical topics take place in Gloucester County’s Monroe Township Library in Williamstown, Cumberland County’s Millville Public Library, Atlantic County’s Margate Public Library, and Cape May County’s Library in Cape May Court House.

As a performer, Somers was continuo harpsichordist for the Virtuoso Strings of New York and with the Lafayette Trio for many years. He also conducted for the New Jersey Ballet and the Garden State Opera.