

## *Stellae IV* (2019)

In 2017, I composed *Stele*, for two similar instruments. *Stele* (a memorial column or stone) is an open work that invites its performers to listen carefully and react to each other to create the constantly evolving “pillars” of harmonies suggest by the title. In 2019 I began composing a new series of pieces related to *Stele*, called *stellae* (stars), of which *Stellae IV* is the first. The *stellae* are constellations of harmonies that could be heard in a performance of *Stele*. Although the instrumentation and harmonic content are now specified, timing, choices about timbre and careful listening remain open and crucial to the world of the *stellae*.

The piece is dedicated to Michael Wittgraf and the University of North Dakota New Music Ensemble, who gave the premiere on November 7, 2019.

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*I care if you listen* calls the music of Fredrick Gifford “a world of characters and colors that explode from the stage.” His works explore different kinds of openness to create pieces that are never the same twice. His music has been performed in concerts and radio broadcasts in Europe, Asia and the Americas, performed by groups including International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), Kairos Quartett, Ensemble dal Niente, Quince Contemporary Vocal Ensemble and the Spektral Quartet. Festival appearances include Resonant Bodies, Bludenzer Tage zeitgemäßer Musik, Festival Internacional de Música Contemporánea (Mexico), Darmstadt Ferienkurse, soundSCAPE (Italy), ANODE, Aspen Music Festival, and Ear Taxi.

Commissions, grants and support have come from: Arts Council of Illinois, Art Institute of Chicago, Associação Musical Pro-Organo, Chicago Academy for the Arts, the Harris & Wyatt Funds and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, Chicago. Recent and upcoming projects include the ongoing “mobile” series; *100 Not-songs for JOHN CAGE*, a collaboration with Tony Arnold and Ross Karre; *Difficult Grace*, commissioned for cellist Seth Parker Woods and the Seattle Symphony’s Octave 9 multimedia performance space. Gifford’s music has been recorded on Numérica (2012), by Hasco Duo (2014), Mabel Kwan (2015) and Ben Melsky (2019).