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Communications

NEWS RELEASE

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Composer/guitarist Chris Jentsch premieres chamber jazz commission *Topics in American History* with Jentsch Group No Net in Brooklyn on Friday, December 2 second performance on Sunday, January 8

New CD/DVD *Fractured Pop* by Jentsch Group Quartet out January 13, 2017 on the Fleur de Son label

"The interesting thing is that he's using avant-garde techniques, but in a traditional framework." - Will Friedwald, NY Sun

Guitarist/composer **Chris Jentsch** – "...a composer who can convey his ideas on a grand scale, swings with the grace of Duke Ellington and rocks with the nuance of Frank Zappa," (Mark F. Turner, All About Jazz) – premieres his new work ***Topics in American History***, commissioned by the **Chamber Music America/Doris Duke New Jazz Works** program, on **Friday, December 2** at **ShapeShifter Lab**, 18 Whitwell Place, Brooklyn, NY. Tickets are \$10 for the 9:30 p.m. performance. For information visit www.shapesifterlab.com.

Performing is **Jentsch Group No Net**, a nine-piece chamber jazz ensemble conducted by **JC Sanford** with Jentsch on guitar, **Michel Gentile** on flute, **Mike McGinnis** on clarinet, **Jason Rigby** on saxophone, **David Smith** on trumpet, **Brian Drye** on trombone, **Jacob Sacks** on piano, **Jim Whitney** on bass, and **Eric Halvorson** on percussion.

Jentsch Group No Net will perform the work again at 8 p.m. on **Sunday, January 8** at iBeam, 168 7th St., Brooklyn, NY. Tickets are \$10. For information visit www.ibeambrooklyn.com.

Topics in American History is an hour-long work that abstracts Jentsch's impressions of various episodes in American history such as pre-Colombian North America, the Lincoln/Douglas Debates, and Manifest Destiny. Jentsch's small group and chamber jazz music generally invokes contemporary improvisation with an eclectic mix of influences ranging from jazz to rock, world to classical, always striving for a careful balance between lyricism and dissonance, and a deliberate combination of complexity and simplicity.

Jentsch has already earned acclaim for his previous orchestral jazz works, *Brooklyn Suite* and *Cycles Suite*. Reviewing *Brooklyn* DownBeat noted, "Jentsch created a contrasted

and kaleidoscopic patchwork with marvelous melodies, splendid voicings and a skillful use of dynamics." Jazz Improv Magazine commented on the album's "soaring guitar solo work," and Mark F. Turner of AllAboutJazz said Jentsch is "a composer who can convey his ideas on a grand scale, swings with the grace of Duke Ellington and rocks with the nuance of Frank Zappa." Forrest Dylan Bryant of JazzTimes said, "With intimate solo guitar passages, swelling horn themes and sumptuous atmospheres, (*Brooklyn*) is at once grandly orchestral and strikingly personal...the entire band seems to radiate from Jentsch's pensive guitar pulse, blending jazz, classical and rock ideas into a multidimensional reflection of everyday life."

Topics in American History by Christopher Jentsch and Jentsch Group No Net has been made possible with support from Chamber Music America's 2015 New Jazz Works Program funded through the generosity of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

In addition to these concerts, Jentsch will also release ***Fractured Pop***, a double album length CD studio recording accompanied by extras including a DVD of a short live set. The album, Jentsch's fourth, will be out January 13 on the Fleur de Son label.

Fractured Pop features **Jentsch Group Quartet** with longtime compatriots **Jim Whitney** (double bass) and **John Mettam** (drums), and multi-instrumentalist **Matt Renzi**. It's accompanied by a DVD of a short live set recorded at Context Studios in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, and chock full of extras like alternate takes, slide show music videos, a high-resolution FLAC file of the audio CD, PDF lead sheets of the tunes, and four of the composer's own remix/mash ups.

As Bill Milkowski writes in the album's liner notes, in *Fractured Pop* "Jentsch re-examines some of the same tunes that appeared on his large ensemble outings with a lean quartet... The title track, for instance, has a whole web of guitars, from acoustic strumming on the intro to clean electric lines played in unison with Renzi's sax on the intricate head to Jentsch's distortion-laced guitar solo. The moody and atmospheric 'Radio Silence' also makes use of crafty guitar overdubs throughout... 'Are You Bye?', Jentsch's clever contrafact of 'Bye Bye Blackbird,' is underscored by Mettam's supple brushwork and culminates in some fiery call-and-response between sax and guitar at the tag.... 'Route 666,' a hard-hitting groover with angular lines, is fueled by bassist Whitney and sparked by a twisted distorted solo from Jentsch.... Tenor sax and distorted guitar lines weave together near the end of 'Meeting at Surratt's', building to an ecstatic crescendo."

Chris Jentsch is a Brooklyn-based composer, bandleader, and guitarist working primarily in jazz and contemporary improvisational forms. Based in NYC since 1999, his main ensemble is Jentsch Group in its various configurations. As a composer, he has been the recipient of grants, commissions, or fellowships from American Composers Forum (3), New Music USA, Meet the Composer, New York State Council on the Arts (3), Ucross Foundation (2), and most recently, Chamber Music America/Doris Duke New Jazz Works.

As a bandleader and sideman Jentsch has performed in clubs and concert halls throughout the East Coast, and has worked with such diverse musical personalities as George Russell, John Cage, Maria Schneider, and Chris Wood. He appears as a guitarist on the CD John Cage, Volume 11 (Mode Records 41). He is also featured in Scott Yanow's book *The Great Jazz Guitarists* (2013 Hal Leonard). Jentsch has released four CDs as a leader.

Jentsch attended Berklee College of Music and has liberal arts and jazz guitar degrees from Gettysburg College, New England Conservatory, and the Eastman School of Music. He earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Jazz Composition from the University of Miami in 1999 and is published by the University of Northern Colorado Press, Advance Music, and Fleur de Son Records.

2016-17 Chris Jentsch Events

December 2, 2016 – Jentsch Group No Net at ShapeShifter Lab, Brooklyn, NY — premiere of *Topics in American History*.

January 8, 2017 – Jentsch Group No Net at iBeam, Brooklyn NY — follow up performance of *Topics in American History*.

January 13, 2017 – *Fractured Pop* CD/DVD release, Jentsch Group Quartet.

Ongoing This fall was the debut of Jentsch's new YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/JentschChris>. Six hours of content including an entire 2012 set from Jentsch Group No Net (HQ), selections from a 2015 trio date, two jazz orchestra records, modified aleatoric music for two mixed chamber quartets, and more.

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<https://www.youtube.com/user/JentschChris>
ChrisJentsch.com