



composer

Peter Dickson Lopez

Artistic Identity & Stylistic Arc

Peter's artistic life traces a continuous arc of devotion, transformation, and self-directed exploration. Early recognition and performances established his voice, but it was through a long period of private creative evolution — outside academia and beyond institutional career paths — that his hybrid musical language took shape. During these years, he deepened a lifelong dialogue between the expressive Romantic lineage that first formed him and the exploratory electroacoustic and textural worlds that later expanded his imagination. His recent return to the public sphere marks not a restart, but a powerful emergence: the moment when decades of inner work crystallized into the luminous, cinematic, metaphysical sound world that now defines his music.

Early Career Highlights

Peter's early career was marked by significant international recognition, major performances, and a series of exploratory works that laid the foundation for his later hybrid voice. His compositions from this period — including *The Ship of Death* (1977), *IFASIA* (1979), and *Fantasy (CHominge)* (1981) — reflect his deep engagement with experimental, electroacoustic, and textural techniques, even as an expressive Romantic impulse continued to shape his musical imagination. He received several prestigious honors, among them the George Ladd Paris Prize, the University of California Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellowship, and the Lili Boulanger Memorial Prize. His music was featured at international festivals and competitions such as Gaudeamus (Netherlands), the Henryk Wieniawski Competition (Poland), and the East & West Artists International Composers Competition, where he received First Prize. **In 1979, he was awarded the Avery Claflin Memorial Fellowship to attend the Tanglewood Music Festival as a Fellowship Composer at the Berkshire Music Center — a pivotal recognition that placed him among the leading emerging composers of his generation.** Major performances and collaborations during this period included work with conductor Ernest Bour, tenor John Duykers, and the Dutch Radio Chamber Orchestra; with conductor Robert Hughes, tenor Tom Buckner, and the Arch Ensemble for Experimental Music; and with conductor Jean-Louis Le Roux and the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. His early work *The Ship of Death* was recorded on Arch Records in 1982, further establishing his presence in the contemporary music landscape.

Recent Work & Late-Career Renaissance

In recent years, Peter has experienced a vibrant artistic renaissance marked by international performances, acclaimed recordings, and the emergence of his mature hybrid voice — a luminous synthesis of orchestral lyricism, electroacoustic imagination, and contemplative spiritual depth. His music has been featured at global festivals and conferences, including the Sydney Contemporary Orchestra International Composers Concerts (Australia), ATM Korea's Arts

Incubator (Seoul), the São Paulo Contemporary Composers Festival (Brazil), the International Composition Competition “Musica per archi” (Ukraine), and the International Computer Music Conference (Boston) 2025. His work has garnered multiple honors, among them The American Prize in Chamber Composition, The American Prize in Orchestral Composition, and The American Prize in Virtual Performance (all in 2023), as well as several Global Music Awards recognizing his orchestral, chamber, and electroacoustic writing.

Peter’s recent catalog reflects the full flowering of his integrated musical language. Works such as *Visions des reflets et nocturnes* (2017–2018), *MISE-EN Series I* (2018), *Adagio, Elegy, and Serenade* (2019–2022) from *Song of Thirteen Moons*, *MISE-EN Series II* (2023), and *Seeking Serenity* (2024) from *Pieces of Love and Remembrance* reveal a composer drawing together Romantic expressivity, modernist clarity, and immersive electroacoustic textures. His partnership with PARMA Recordings has resulted in a growing discography on the Navona label, including releases on *Relive* (2021), *Playing on the Edge 3* (2023), the dedicated single-album release *Pieces From a Distant Land* (2024), *Symphonic Chronicles Vols. III and IV* (2024–2025), *Journey to Serenity* (2025), and another dedicated single-album release *Song of Thirteen Moons* (2025). An additional recording of *MISE-EN Series II* appears on the Cicerone Music and Arts CIMA album *Lehner Quartet Modern Classics, Vol. 1*.

This period of renewed creative energy culminates in two major premieres in 2026. *Magnificat, Part I* for soprano, double chamber choir, and symphony orchestra will receive its world premiere at Lviv Organ Hall (Ukraine) in May 2026, performed by soprano Maryana Mazur, the Lviv Lyric Choir, and the KLK Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Roman Kreslenko, presented by KLKNewMusic as part of the SACRARIUM International Composers’ Competition. Later that year, *MISE-EN Series IV* for French horn, piano, acousmatic sound, and electroacoustic devices will be premiered in Prague, featuring world-renowned horn soloist Radek Baborák and pianist Miroslav Sekera, following a dedicated recording session at Studio Martínek and a forthcoming release on PARMA’s Navona label. Additionally, *MISE-EN Series I* will be released on a forthcoming album by PARMA Recordings as one of the featured works at the ICMC (Boston) 2025 “Listening Rooms”.

Together, these works embody the full emergence of Peter’s mature hybrid voice — a sound world where orchestral radiance, choral luminosity, and electroacoustic resonance converge — and signal a period of profound artistic momentum that continues to unfold.

Artistic Voice & Signature Themes

Peter’s music inhabits a luminous, contemplative sound world where orchestral radiance, choral resonance, and electroacoustic textures converge in a language that is both deeply expressive and quietly visionary. His work often explores themes of spirituality, metaphysics, and inner transformation, inviting listeners into spaces of reflection, stillness, and renewal. Rooted in a Romantic sensibility yet shaped by modernist clarity and electroacoustic imagination, his mature voice balances lyricism with atmosphere, structure with intuition, and intimacy with vastness.

At the heart of his artistic mission is a desire to reach listeners on a profoundly human level — to touch, to awaken, to challenge, and at times to gently jolt them toward self-examination and self-renewal. **He views each composition as part of a living creative cycle, one that remains incomplete until the music is performed, heard, and experienced.** The responses that return to him — whether of resonance, questioning, or discovery — become part of his own artistic evolution, forming a quiet but essential feedback loop that deepens his work and affirms his belief in music as a transformative, communal act. Across orchestral, choral, chamber, and electroacoustic settings, his music seeks to reveal the unseen — the subtle currents of longing, light, memory, and transcendence that move beneath the surface of experience — and to leave the world, in some small way, more illuminated.

Catalogue (2017 -)

ORCHESTRA

<i>Visions des reflets et nocturnes (I-VIII)</i>	Piano and String Orchestra	15'	2018
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<i>Song of Thirteen Moons, I-III</i>	Orchestra	25'	2018 - 2023
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<i>I. Adagio</i>		7'	
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<i>II. Elegy</i>		7'	
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<i>III. Serenade</i>		10'	
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<i>Pieces of Love and Remembrance: Seeking Serenity, Part 1</i>	Piano and Orchestra	5'	2024 -
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<i>Aujourd'hui</i>	Double String Orchestra	6'	2022
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<i>Magnificat, Part I</i>	Soprano, Chamber Choir, and Symphony Orchestra	9'	2024 -
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<i>Chanson lointaine quatre</i>	Orchestra	8'	2022
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CHAMBER AND ELECTROACOUSTIC

<i>The Ship of Death</i>	Male Voice, Chamber Orchestra, and Electroacoustic Devices	40'	1977/2021
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<i>MISE-EN Series I</i>	Flute, Clarinet, Violin, Cello, Piano, Percussion, Live Electronics, and Acousmatic Sound	11'	2018
<i>MISE-EN Series II, Episode 1</i>	Amplified String Quartet and Electroacoustic Devices	6'	2021
<i>MISE-EN Series IV, Episode 1</i>	Horn, Piano, Acousmatic Sound, and Electroacoustic Devices	7'	2025

PIANO

<i>Pieces From A Distant Land, Series I</i>			1988 -
<i>No. 1</i>		5'	1988/2022
<i>No. 4</i>		7'	1988/2022
<i>No. 5</i>		5'	1988/2015
<i>No. 10</i>		10'	1988/2020
<i>Emmanuel Variations</i>			2024 -
<i>Prelude</i>		8'	2024

The fourth volume of [Symphonic Chronicles](#) (Navona Records) features selections by six celebrated composers, and it is an aural-cinematic masterpiece. Its 13 tracks could be incidental music to a film score, as opposed to an assemblage of memorable, hummable, John Williams-esque tunes.

(...)

The collection concludes with Peter Dickson Lopez's *Song of Thirteen Moons: I. Adagio* performed by Peter Dickson Lopez [sic] with Šnajdr and the Moravian Philharmonic. The arrangement is ethereal yet measured. Highly impressionistic, the piece advances through the propulsion of lengthy phrases, insinuating the interstellar while radiating enigmas. The arrival of golden supplications inaugurates a segment of more pronounced brass-based elucidation. That structural move encourages the listener to meditate on its themes, only to interrupt the interlude with dramatic turns that come to a finale with lingering chimes.

Source: <https://artsfuse.org/309401/classical-music-album-review-symphonic-chronicles-volume-iv-a-treasure-trove-of-the-new/>

April 24, 2025

Talking about the relationship between serenity and music, (...), is to enter a deeply emotional and aesthetic territory, where the art of sound becomes a path to inner balance. (...)

Journey to Serenity, published by Navona Records, is a collection of music by nine contemporary composers with works that have as their axis the path to tranquility, as the title of the album reflects. (...)

Peter Dickson Lopez, (...), composes *Pieces of Love and Remembrance (POLAR): Seeking Serenity*, a work in which musical themes arise that evoke deep feelings after the loss of his wife.

Source: <https://takeeffectreviews.com/february-2021-1/2021/2/8/various-artists>

August 29, 2025

The fourth part of the Symphonic Chronicles series was released this year by Navona Records. (...)

The finale of the program features the first part of **Peter Dickson Lopez's Song of Thirteen Moons (I. Adagio)**. The Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra is again playing with conductor **Pavel Šnajdr**. Lopez studied postgraduate studies at the University of California at Berkeley, stayed at Tanglewood (USA) as a scholarship holder and received the George Ladd Prix de Paris. He is considered an eclectic. From his composition, which is interpreted as an intimate reflection on family and memory, the first part – Adagio – is recorded in this set. The slightly introduced beginning of the composition immediately thickens in sound, changes in tempo and is



characterized in expression as a warning restlessness. The movement of the sound is modeled into penetrating waves, here most likely the cloudy covering of the moons. At the end of the composition, Šnajdr leads the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra into steep dynamics with funereal bell strikes. And he lets the sound fade away in a logical attenuation.

Source: <https://www.klasikaplus.cz/symfonicke-kroniky-iv-dil-americkeho-cyklu/>

December 23, 2025

This captivating series of albums celebrates the dynamic intersection of classical music's timeless artistry and the bold creativity of contemporary composers. Featuring performances by some of today's most accomplished classical musicians, each album presents an exquisite blend of masterful interpretation and fresh, innovative compositions. From intimate string quartets to grand orchestral works and concertos, these albums provide a unique platform for emerging voices in classical composition, offering listeners a journey through both familiar traditions and unexplored musical landscapes.

Source: <https://www.soundespressivocompetition.com/albums/modern-classics-vol.-1>

2025 Sound Espressivo and Virtual Concert Halls

RELIVE, from Navona Live features live performances of the music of three composers from around the world. This latest edition of the Navona Live series is inspired by an eclectic blend of world topics, literature, landscapes, and seascapes. (...) The Ship of Death by Peter Dickson Lopez is a dramatic work for male voice and chamber orchestra based on the eponymous poem by D.H. Lawrence. (...) Navona Live offers concertgoers the chance to enjoy the works of these world-class composers from anywhere.

Source: <https://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6334/>

February 5, 2021 - Navona Records



Peter Dickson Lopez's SONG OF THIRTEEN MOONS reflects the phases of the composer's own family life, chronicling his time as a father and husband. Through these reflections, Lopez's saga documents the happiness and joy of raising a son, the challenges of chronic illness, and the sorrowful grief of losing a lifelong partner.

Source: <https://www.navonarecords.com/news/inside-story-peter-dickson-lopez-song-of-thirteen-moons/>

January 22, 2026 - Navona Records

Peter Dickson Lopez returns to Navona Records with his first solo release; PIECES FROM A DISTANT LAND, a touching solo piano memorial to his late mother, who had once requested piano pieces for herself to play at church. A touching and emotionally prolific piece given a loving performance by Anna Kislitsyna, Lopez — an ever-experimental composer — channels the “Distant Land” of tonal music familiar to his childhood self and compositional roots, while still honoring the special and often haunting sound so intimate to his musical oeuvre.

Source: <https://www.navonarecords.com/news/inside-story-peter-dickson-lopez-pieces-from-a-distant-land/>

February 22, 2024 - Navona Records

Navona Records have recently released a live album of works for orchestra and large ensemble by Peter Dickson Lopez, Corrina Bonshek and Jane O'Leary. Mark Fitzgerald reviews.

(...)

Dickinson's [sic] The Ship of Death was composed in 1976–7 and sets the lengthy eponymous poem by D.H. Lawrence. Navona's online notes state that the work is structured with 'specific givens but not fixing their macrocosmic relationships in such a way as to provide endless variation while allowing for sufficient overall formal control to successfully effect a "coming into port" at the close'. Quite what this means is a little hard to figure out without a score or further detail (Navona refers listeners to the composer's website for further information, but I was unable to find any there). The full work sets all of Lawrence's text sequentially, while the cut performance on Navona omits section four, most of section five, sections eight and nine and most of the final section of the poem. At the heart of the performance is the highly committed performance of singer [Thomas Buckner](#) who has to contend with a veritable maelstrom of sound from the percussion-heavy



ensemble. Listening several times to the piece I felt that the relentlessly angular ‘new-music’ vocal line (complete with forays into falsetto, speech-song and with emphasis on the sounds of less important syllables) was quite wearing on the ear. Perhaps for this reason the somewhat more lyrical passages, such as the sixth section in which the voice is electronically modified and layered with itself and other voices, stood out as the most striking moments. The concluding instrumental section, rather than balancing the opening minutes of the piece seemed somewhat unconnected to the preceding passages while also perhaps hinting at a more lyrical composer trying to get out. Elsewhere lyrical lines tended to splinter and fragment rapidly. I also found it hard to get any sense of large-scale landmarks in the piece. However, having listened to the complete work, which is available on the composer’s soundcloud performance, I found myself wondering if some of these issues are in fact caused by the cuts. There is a greater variety of mood in the complete piece. The slow passages (such as the cut portion of the final section) make the ending seem more integrated and passages of the fourth and ninth sections reinforce my initial impression of the concluding passage’s hidden romanticism. In many ways, the piece seems to be rooted strongly in the 1970s when it was composed, dramatizing the conflict between contending with the legacy of the post-war avant-garde on the one hand and the emergence of neo-romanticism on the other.

Source: <https://journalofmusic.com/reviews/diverse-responses-earth-and-sea>

March 19, 2021



Composer's Website

Composer Primary Website	https://peterdicksonlopez.com/
Composer Secondary Website	https://peterdicksonlopez.org/
Composer Portfolio	https://peterdicksonlopez.com/dossier/

Online Composer Bios

Primary Composer Website - About	https://peterdicksonlopez.com/about/
Navona Records Artist Page	https://www.navonarecords.com/artists/peter-dickson-lopez/
Sydney Contemporary Orchestra Artist Page	https://www.sydneycontemporaryorchestra.org.au/peter-dickson-lopez-usa/

Recordings

The Ship of Death (Relive extract)	https://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6334/
MISE-EN Series II, Episode 1	https://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6520/
Pieces From A Distant Land, Series I, No. 1	https://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6594/
The Ship of Death	https://www.discogs.com/release/3230203-Peter-Dickson-Lopez-The-Ship-Of-Death
Serenade from Song of Thirteen Moons	https://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6624/
Adagio from Song of Thirteen Moons	https://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6713/
Pieces of Love and Remembrance, Seeking Serenity, Part I	https://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6752/
Adagio, Elegy, and Serenade (Parts I-III) from Song of Thirteen Moons	https://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6805/









