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# *Journal*

of the  
**iawm**  
international alliance for women in music



Eline Cote

In this issue:

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- Becoming a Piano Woman
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**The International Alliance for Women in Music (IAWM)** is a global network of women and men working to increase and enhance musical activities and opportunities and to promote all aspects of the music of women. The IAWM builds awareness of women's contributions to musical life through publications, website, free listserv, international competitions for researchers and composers, conferences, and congresses, concerts, the entrepreneurial efforts of its members, and advocacy work. IAWM activities ensure that the progress women have made in every aspect of musical life will continue to flourish and multiply.

## IAWM MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

IAWM membership includes a subscription to the *Journal of the IAWM* (issued twice a year), participation in the optional IAWM e-mail list, eligibility to participate in IAWM competitions, and eligibility to apply for participation in the IAWM congress and annual concert. For information on joining, please see the IAWM website at [iawm.org](http://iawm.org) or contact the membership chair at [membership@iawm.org](mailto:membership@iawm.org)

## JOURNAL: BACK ISSUES

For information on purchasing back issues, contact Kelly Vaneman at [membership@iawm.org](mailto:membership@iawm.org).

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Before submitting an article, please send an abstract (two or three paragraphs), the approximate number of words in the article, and a brief biography to the editor in chief, Dr. Eve R. Meyer, by e-mail at [evemeyer45@gmail.com](mailto:evemeyer45@gmail.com). Most articles range between 1,500 and 5,000 words. The subject matter should relate to women in all fields of music, either contemporary or historical. If the proposal is approved, the editor will send detailed information concerning the format, illustrations, and musical examples. Musical examples and photos should be in high resolution (300 dpi minimum) and must be sent in separate attachments. For questions of style, refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Authors are responsible for obtaining and providing copyright permission, if necessary.

### Reviews

Compact discs and books for review should be submitted to Kimberly Greene, Review Editor. Scores will be considered for review if accompanied by a recording.

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### Members' News

Please send your news items to the Members' News Editor, Anita Hanawalt, at [anita@hanawalthaus.net](mailto:anita@hanawalthaus.net). Submissions are always welcome concerning honors and awards, appointments, commissions, premieres, performances, publications, recordings, and other news items, except for radio broadcasts. We recommend that you begin with the most significant news first—an award, a major commission or publication, a new position—and follow that with an organized presentation of the other information. Please note that Anita does not monitor the listserv for members' activities.

### Reports and Announcements

Reports on women-in-music activities from our sister organizations and IAWM committees as well as reports on music festivals and other special events should be sent to the editor in chief, Dr. Eve R. Meyer, by e-mail: [evemeyer45@gmail.com](mailto:evemeyer45@gmail.com). Announcements of future events and of recently released CDs and publications should also be sent to the editor in chief.

### Deadlines

Reviews: March 1 and September 1  
Articles: March 15 and September 15  
Members' news, reports, advertisements: March 30 and September 30.

### IAWM WEBSITE

Please visit the IAWM Website at [www.iawm.org](http://www.iawm.org).

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# Message from IAWM's President

CHRISTINA RUSNAK

## Strategic Plan

First, I want to thank EVERYONE who participated in the IAWM survey. Many of you *far exceeded* the ten-minute time estimate to answer the questions! Over 160 of you provided insight into both our strengths and shortcomings. Your insight and wish lists for IAWM's future development and growth sparked ideas and action steps for our first Strategic Plan. In the center of this journal, you will find a four-page summary of the Strategic Plan. Our basic mission, *The International Alliance for Women in Music fosters and encourages the activities of women in music*, has not changed. Your input helped the board to formulate a more detailed vision for IAWM. Listed are the Goals and Strategies for the next three years.

## Virus

Earlier this year, as you were reading the spring issue of the *IAWM Journal*, world-wide optimism regarding Covid-19 was up. We thought that surely by fall live performances would return with filled concert halls. In the midst of this adversity, you have shown courage and revealed amazing creativity and perseverance. We have learned to teach online, to Zoom, to live-stream performances, to record in our bedrooms; our dining rooms have become offices. Most wonderfully, our audiences are both our neighbors and people around the world whom we have never met! I spent my summer working with Creative Repertoire Initiative and Leading Tones Music creating reduced, adaptable arrangements of my works for the new reality of instrumental music classes this fall.

## Inclusion

In May, I wrote in this column, *As president, I want to work with the board and the membership to actively address Equity and Inclusion in all fields of music by seeking out and recognizing the countless women in music who have been historically excluded as well as those who continue to be marginalized across the continents*. Two years ago, the IAWM created the following Statement of Equity and Inclusion:

IAWM is committed to equitable diversity and inclusion of the musical community. A diversity of ideas, approaches, disciplines and musical styles are essen-

tial to inclusion and equity, and contribute to greater understanding, knowledge and creativity. For IAWM, achieving diversity means affirming the inclusion and involvement of a broad representation of our musical community across race, color, nationality, ethnicity and cultural background, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, disabilities, education, global geography, and religion. The IAWM Board of Directors embraces the understanding that the definition of diversity is constantly evolving, and achieving it is an ongoing process. The IAWM therefore pledges to:

- Promote cultural and professional musical diversity and inclusion within our board and membership.
- Ensure that IAWM's communications are welcoming to all members and potential members.

It's a process – the goal for our membership and board is to better reflect women in music worldwide. Collectively, the current and future members of the IAWM have the power to make positive change. Not overnight, but certainly over time.

## Concert and SNM

IAWM's 2020 Concert, postponed from November 2020 due to Covid-19, has been rescheduled for April 1, 2021 at Howard University in Washington, D.C. Congratulations to the composers selected. Optimistically, our fall 2021 concert will be presented overseas. The Search for New Music added a Choral and Vocal Ensemble category this year, and IAWM is looking for other member opportunities for the future.

## Partnerships

As the board continues to fine tune the details of the Strategic Plan, we are looking at pathways to connect and partner with relevant organizations. We are eval-

uating new ways to advocate for women in all fields of the wide and diverse world of music. A Global Perspectives Committee is being established to develop awareness, visibility, engagement, and outreach globally. In addition to our Facebook page, a new IAWM community Instagram page has been set up (<https://www.instagram.com/iawmcommunity/?hl=en>). How else can we help you to connect and network?

## Website

In 2021, the IAWM will be updating the website to become easier to navigate, more engaging and more informative. Also in 2021, be on the lookout for an ONLINE newsletter bimonthly in addition to the journal.

## How Can You Get Involved?

Contact us (<https://iawm.org/contact-us>) to provide feedback and suggestions. Actively increase diversity by asking your friends and colleagues to join. As we expand our calls and opportunities, we need sponsors to support those opportunities. Current open sponsorships include the Choral SNM award, the Pauline Alderman Awards, the new Programming Award and the Education Grant.

Locally and regionally, you can be advocates for women in music everywhere. In 2021, we will provide high resolution graphics to print out, post, or distribute. If you can, PLEASE donate. Your donations enable us to offer you opportunities and benefits. IAWM operates exclusively with volunteers who generously give of their time and effort. New board members have been selected for 2021, but if there is an area in which you would like to get involved and can contribute a few hours a month, committee members are always welcome. The board has additional ideas and is eager to hear from you, our members. Thank you!

## How to Subscribe to the IAWM's Electronic List

Subscribers to the IAWM listserv receive the Radio Request notice and the weekly e-newsletter, *Broadcast Update*, in addition to learning about opportunities, events, and issues. Subscribers need not be members of the IAWM. Here is how to subscribe to the listserv: Go to <http://lists.unt.edu/mailman/listinfo/iawmlist>. If you have a problem, send an email to [iawmlist-request@lists.unt.edu](mailto:iawmlist-request@lists.unt.edu) with "help" in the body or subject of the email. You can reach the person managing the list at [iawmlist-owner@lists.unt.edu](mailto:iawmlist-owner@lists.unt.edu). If you experience any issues with posting or receiving listserv messages, please try unsubscribing and re-subscribing using the above instructions.

## IN MEMORIAM

# Marga Richter (1926-2020): An American Composer

SHARON MIRCHANDANI

American composer and pianist Marga Richter died peacefully at her new home in Barnegat, NJ on June 25, 2020. She had lived on Long Island, NY for many years prior. I first became aware of Marga Richter's music in 2003 when I was preparing to teach a course on women in music. I found her music to be quite engaging, attractive to the ear, challenging to the performer, and well crafted. I was particularly impressed as there were few women composers of large-scale orchestral music from her generation who were as successful as she was, and I wanted to write about her life and works. We spoke on the phone hundreds of times, and I visited her regularly at her Long Island homes. Over the years we discussed music, composition, women's roles, raising children, life, relationships, and religion. Being a composer was her main identity, and she remained an active composer and musician until she died. I consider her a true friend and a wonderful composer with a great sense of humor. I am grateful to have known her. The following is based on my earlier writings about her.

Marga Richter's music is in the style and genres of Western art music and often draws inspiration from American, Irish/English, or Asian sources. Nearly all her music, including her orchestral works, has received performances and mostly favorable reviews. Her life as a female composer may serve as an inspiration and her music as an absorbing body of works.

Florence Marga Richter was born in Reedsburg, Wisconsin on October 21, 1926, and grew up in Robbinsdale, Minnesota.<sup>1</sup> She was most strongly influenced by her mother, Inez Chandler Richter, an American soprano whose operatic career was in Germany around the time of World War I. (Richter's father, Paul, was a captain in the German army during World War I.) Richter heard her mother teach and perform, most notably as soloist in an all-Wagner program with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra and Eugene Ormandy in 1934.

Richter started piano lessons at age four, and by age 12, she was composing small works for favorite teachers and her lifelong friend, the pianist Lenore Engdahl, who performed many of her works.

At age 14, Richter publicly performed her own composition *Jabberwocky*, with her mother singing the text by Lewis Carroll. Though *Jabberwocky* is an early work, it contains elements that she used consistently throughout her life: much chromaticism, free use of dissonance, rhythmic motives, ostinato-based forms, loose tonal centers, playfulness, and dramatic pacing.

Richter's entire family was so supportive of her that they moved to New York City in 1943 so that she could attend Juilliard, where she earned bachelor's and master's degrees in composition.<sup>2</sup> Her family eventually moved back to Minnesota, and she had a brief marriage to the physicist Vernon Hughes (1948-1950).

Richter had an important early success when she was invited to have four of her Juilliard works performed at the Composers Forum in 1951 at Columbia University. The *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* shows her frequent use of rhythmic motives as important structural elements. Contrasting articulations, "extra" rests, call-and-response, cross-hands chords, and alternation of chords from the outer limits to the inner registers create a dramatic physical performance. (See Example 1.)

The concerts received positive reviews from both the *New York Herald Tri-*

*bune* and *The New York Times*, which was extremely encouraging to the young composer. That spring Richter graduated from Juilliard with a master's degree in composition, the first female to do so!

After graduation, Richter lived in Manhattan, and to make a living, she began composing modern dance scores for a group of choreographers called The Dance Associates. This work gave her valuable experience and strengthened her professional identity. Richter married a second time, and she and her husband, Alan Skelly, had two children: son Michael in 1955, and daughter Maureen in 1957. In 1958 the family moved to a home on Long Island, where the children grew up. Alan had a career teaching philosophy, eventually becoming the chair of the Philosophy Department at C.W. Post College. He was a great appreciator of music and always strongly supported Richter's career.

Edward Cole, director of classical music for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, was also very supportive of Richter's music. He commissioned a series of major compositions that were recorded and produced by MGM: her *Sonata for Piano*; *Concerto for Piano and Violas, Cellos and Basses*; *Lament* for string orchestra;<sup>3</sup> and *Aria and Toccata* for viola and string orchestra. MGM

Example 1. Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, mm. 1-8.

also recorded an album that included *Transmutation* and *Two Chinese Songs*, three albums of her four-piano arrangements, and two albums of piano pieces for children with Richter as pianist. Pianist Menahem Pressler's recording of her Piano Sonata received critical praise and led to more recordings by pianists including Peter Basquin and Richard Zimdars. The Sonata is highly chromatic but still shows remnants of classical form. No key signatures are given, but through assertion and ostinatos, the three movements have loose tonal centers. Constant metric changes generate much energy, all three pedals are used, and the texture expands to four staves in some places.

Richter's *Concerto for Piano and Violas, Cellos and Basses* was premiered by pianist William Masselos and the San Francisco Little Symphony in 1957 to favorable and extensive reviews commenting on her scoring mastery, sense of adventure, crackling energy, and more. Some reviewers referred to her gender: "...like many a lady composer she attacks the problem of music (at times) in an almost masculine way. The finest moments, and there are some truly beautiful ones, are those of a more gentle nature..." "[Her music is] pungent and virile," and "Women composers are rare birds, to be sure, but one with as dissonant and biting a style as Marga Richter's is decidedly a shock. No Chaminade she, believe me; her masculine severity brings Honegger to mind." At the time, she was flattered by such reviews, pleased to think "I'm as good as a guy."

During the 1960s, while many American composers gravitated toward total serialism, electronic music, or chance music, Richter never found these styles appealing, held 12-tone in disdain, and did not adopt them. She did, however, begin to compose shorter, more fragmented works that had little development and were not as expansive as her earlier works. She attributed this, in part, to her experiences at the 1960 Bennington Composers Conference in Vermont (where her *String Quartet No. 2* was premiered by the Max Pollicoff Quartet). Richter was largely ambivalent about these kinds of composer retreats, but she placed some importance on meeting composer William Sydeman who influenced her to try to be more concise. She composed much shorter works like her *Eight Pieces* for piano, *Darkening of the Light* for solo viola, *Fragments* for piano (also

for orchestra), *Suite for Violin and Piano*, and *Soundings* for harpsichord. She did not feel these pieces were very representative of her, and by the 1970s, she returned to her more expressive and expansive style. The added responsibilities of motherhood may have also encouraged shorter works during the 1960s, although Richter said she did not consider this a factor and never viewed motherhood as an impediment for her creative work.

Richter enjoyed spending time at her own self-created composer retreat, an eighty-acre property in Shrewsbury, Vermont that she and Alan purchased in 1964. The family visited there every summer, and Richter used it for the rest of her life as



Marga Richter

a summer compositional retreat, appreciating its semi-isolated, spiritually-inspiring location.

Most notable from the 1960s is her ballet score *Abyss* (1964-65), commissioned by the Harkness Ballet. The ballet was premiered in Cannes in 1965 and received subsequent performances in major cities.<sup>4</sup> Richter's dark, brooding dissonant music was well suited to the gloomy mood of the Leonid Andreyev story.

During the 1970s, Richter created some of her most striking and dramatic large works: her *Landscapes of the Mind* series, the tone poem *Blackberry Vines and Winter Fruit, Remembrances* for piano, and *Requiem* for piano. She described this music as her response to the beauty she found in nature and various personal relationships.

Prominent conductors performed her orchestral works: In 1976, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski conducted her earlier *Lament* with the Minnesota Orchestra on her 50th birthday, Ainslee Cox conducted her First Piano Concerto with the Oklahoma

Symphony Orchestra with Richter herself as soloist, and Gregory Millar conducted *Landscapes of the Mind I* with the Tucson Symphony Orchestra with William Masselos as soloist. In 1977, Kenneth Schermerhorn conducted *Blackberry Vines and Winter Fruit* with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, and Sheldon Morgenstern conducted *Lament* with the Eastern Music Festival Orchestra in Greensboro, N.C. One reason for this spate of performances was America's celebration of its Bicentennial, which generated strong interest in programming American composers.

Of course, the second wave of feminism was also a powerful movement in American life. Although Richter never referred to herself as a "feminist," disliking the term, she often behaved in feminist ways. During childhood, her mother had been a strong role model, and she had been encouraged by both parents to pursue a career. She had great drive, viewed her work as an integral part of her identity, and was independent-minded. She always had confidence in her own artistic skill irrespective of external successes. Nonetheless, she also liked traditional gender roles. She was mostly financially supported by her husband and valued being the primary caretaker of her children. Teaching, a traditional goal for many women, was never a goal of Richter's. Nevertheless, she did teach piano students starting at the age of fourteen and taught music appreciation at Nassau Community College on Long Island from 1971 to 1972.

Richter showed leadership in her substantial work for two major organizations: The Long Island Composers Alliance (LICA) and the International League of Women Composers (ILWC). As a co-founder with Herbert Deutsch in 1972, Richter led LICA through substantial growth, served as co-director, president, and vice-president at various times, and remained an active member well into her eighties.

Richter worked with composer Nancy Van de Vate in 1975 to found the ILWC. Van de Vate served as chairperson until 1982, and Richter served on the first Board of Directors. The organization's main objectives were to help women composers receive more commissions, performances, and recordings, and to fight for gender-blind and anonymous applications for composition awards. (The ILWC was a predecessor of IAWM, and Richter

became an active member of IAWM when it was founded in 1995.)

Richter represented the ILWC at the 1977 annual convention of the American Symphony Orchestra League in San Diego and organized a few concerts of music by women composers. While she did participate in concerts dedicated solely to women's music, she always wanted society to come to a point where separate concerts were no longer needed.

Richter co-directed, with composers Judith Lang Zaimont and Jeanne Singer, a "Six Day Panorama of Women's Music" at LaGuardia Community College in 1979. Concerts, featuring appearances by eighteen American women composers, were presented, and Richter's *Concerto for Piano and Violas, Cellos and Basses* and her *Soundings* for harpsichord were included.

Richter also became friends with violinist Marnie Hall, a member of the Vieux-temps String Quartet, consisting of four women who founded and became the recording producer for the non-profit company Leonarda Productions. Hall, through Leonarda, produced many of Richter's recordings.

Richter was interviewed frequently and earned numerous awards and grants. These included annual ASCAP Awards beginning in 1966, and over twenty grants from the "Meet the Composer" program. Through the American Music Center, Richter received a copying grant from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Foundation to assist with the premiere of her major orchestral work *Landscapes of the Mind I*. She also received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts to compose *Music for Three Quintets and Orchestra* and *Out*

*of Shadows and Solitude*. Richter's first of many radio interviews was in 1974 when she was interviewed by Martin Bookspan for "The Composers Forum" broadcast on WNYC FM. In 1975, she was interviewed for Yale University's Oral History of American Music project, and in the fall, an all-Richter concert was performed in the Sculpture Garden of the Museum of Modern Art.

Richter's *Landscapes of the Mind* series consists of three separate works for different forces: 1) a concerto for piano with orchestra, 2) a work for violin and piano, and 3) a piano trio. While each of the works is unique, all three share some musical material and were inspired by two paintings by Georgia O'Keeffe, *Sky Above Clouds II* and *Pelvis I*.

The largest and most remarkable of the three, *Landscapes of the Mind I* (1974), is scored for full orchestra (minus trombones and tuba) supplemented with electric guitar, electric bass guitar, amplified tamboura, marimba, celesta, harp, tom-tom, and tabla. About 30-minutes long, it is in two distinct parts. In the first part, the harmonies are dissonant, consisting of augmented octaves, major sevenths, and perfect fourths interlocked with tri-tones. Following a smooth transition, the second ten-minute section is based on the prominent Hindu raga "Marwa" (C D♭ E F♯ A C). The music exploits the dissonance between the D♭/C♯ or F♯/C♯ tonic, which is used as a continuous drone for a hypnotic effect throughout this section. (See Example 2.)

*Landscapes of the Mind I* was premiered by William Masselos and the Tucson Symphony conducted by Gregory Millar in 1976. Despite favorable reviews, the

work was not performed again until 1986 by Natalie Hinderas and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra conducted by Louis Lane.

Daniel Heifetz premiered *Landscapes of the Mind II* for violin and piano in Alice Tully Hall in 1977 and played it in his prize-winning program for the 1978 Sixth International Tchaikovsky Competition and on tour in Russia and the United States. *Landscapes of the Mind III* for piano, violin, and cello, commissioned by the National Federation of Music Clubs, was premiered at their fortieth Biennial Convention in Portland, Oregon in 1979.<sup>5</sup>

During 1975-76, Richter composed her 13-minute symphonic poem *Blackberry Vines and Winter Fruit*. The work was commissioned by conductor Louis Calabro and the Sage City Symphony and premiered by them in 1976; it received additional performances by the Milwaukee Symphony and Oakland Symphony. The title was inspired by photography by Eliot Porter and quotes from Thoreau's *Walden*.

Richter's achievements led to an interview in which she gave an extended description of her musical aesthetics:

Composing is my response to a constant desire to transform my perceptions and emotions into music. Everything that touches me, everything I become aware of as beautiful or mysterious, or painful, or joyful, or unknowable becomes an immediate or eventual source of inspiration. A painting, a photograph, a landscape, a skyscape, a poem, other music, other people—my feelings about all of these things filter through my consciousness and take shape as musical ideas and impulses, which must then be expressed. Music is the way I speak to the silence of the universe.<sup>6</sup>

During the 1980s, Richter continued to compose symphonic and chamber music, but also returned to writing vocal and choral music, all in her richly chromatic language. Her music drew on English and Irish sources; writings by Virginia Woolf and Emily Dickinson; and travels to Arizona, Germany, China, and Tibet.

Inspired by Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Richter completed her *Spectral Chimes/Enshrouded Hills* for three orchestral quintets and orchestra in 1980. The fifteen members of the Wind,

Example 2. *Landscapes of the Mind I*, mm. 451-452.

String, and Brass Quintets are used in various groupings with and without the orchestra, in dialogue with each other, and in unison with the orchestra, enabling a great deal of expressive variety. Later, in 1995, Richter would travel to Prague, where the work was recorded, along with her *Quantum Quirks of a Quick Quaint Quark*, by the Czech Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Gerard Schwarz.

Richter set the powerful Irish text, *Lament for Art O'Leary*, for soprano and piano in 1983. About the murdered Irish Catholic patriot, the work is a cyclical setting in the manner of a traditional keen (lament), using an archaic modal sound with an expressive use of dissonance. A strong climactic point occurs at the words "And your blood in torrents, Art O'Leary, I did not wipe it, I drank it from my palms." The soprano must negotiate leaps of minor and augmented ninths and an ascending glissando of a diminished twelfth followed by a free chromatic descent.

She composed three powerful choral works during the eighties: *To Whom?* (SATB), a setting of a sexually-charged passage from Virginia Woolf's modernist masterpiece *The Waves; Do Not Press My Hands* (SSATTB); a text by Chilean poet Gabriela Mistral, written for and premiered by the Western Wind vocal ensemble (SSATTB); and *Three Songs on Poems by Emily Dickinson* (SSAA), a setting of three of Dickinson's mystical poems: "God made a little Gentian," "I like to see it lap the Miles," and "'Twas just this time, last year, I died."

With funding from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Foundation, Richter boldly arranged an all-Richter concert at Merkin Concert Hall in New York City on October 18, 1981. The concert consisted of a variety of Richter's music played by excellent performers: Sonia Gezairlian Grib, *Soundings*; Curtis Macomber and Richter, *Landscares of the Mind II*; Peter Basquin, *Sonata for Piano*; the Atlantic Quartet, *String Quartet No. 2*; and the Drucker Trio, *Sonora*. Theodore Libbey, Jr. gave the concert a lengthy review for *The New York Times*, describing some of it as "intriguing and enjoyable" but some of it as "routine." Despite this mixed review, the high-caliber concert helped to strengthen Richter's presence in the media's and public's eyes. In 1981, Richter was invited to Germany by Francisco Tanzer, the manager of the Düsseldorf Ensemble, to play and discuss

her *Requiem* and U.S. music in general at an event at the Robert-Schumann-Institut. The performances went well, and she was commissioned to compose a new work for the Ensemble: her three-movement *Düsseldorf Concerto*, based on themes that had personal meaning to her by Gubaidulina, Beethoven, Schumann, and Brahms. It was performed in Austria and Germany and had its United States premiere in 1987 at the New Hampshire Music Festival, where Richter was a composer-in-residence. Among the later performances was one by the San Francisco Women's Philharmonic conducted by JoAnn Falletta.

Richter ventured further abroad in 1986 when she and her husband visited China and Tibet. Skelly was interested in seeing the Tibetan Buddhist monasteries, whereas Richter was inspired by the beautiful landscape in works such *Qhanri (Snow Mountain): Tibetan Variations* for cello and piano.

Sadly, not long after, in 1988, her husband died from an inoperable brain tumor. At the time, Richter was composing the tone poem *Out of Shadows and Solitude*, and at the premiere by the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, she dedicated the work and performance to him. It was later recorded by Gerard Schwarz and the Seattle Symphony.

Richter entered a period of grief during which she found it too painful to compose. She traveled with Marnie Hall in 1989 to London to supervise a recording of her *Blackberry Vines and Winter Fruit* and then to the Aran Islands, off the coast of Ireland, the setting for John M. Synge's play *Riders to the Sea*, which several years later inspired her opera.

Richter resumed composition in February 1990 with a choral work in Alan's honor, a seven-poem cycle, *Into My Heart* (for mixed chorus and chamber ensemble or piano four-hands). She used two of his favorite Walt Whitman poems and a favorite Robert Frost poem, among others. The poems contain images of mountains and ruminations on death and are rather mystical in nature. The cycle is more romantic and tonal than most of Richter's earlier works, with thematic links among movements and frequent pedal tones and ostinato in the accompaniment. This moving tribute to her husband, in the piano four-hands version, was premiered in April 1991 at a three-day "Women in Music" festival hosted by Georgia State University.

In 1992, Marin Alsop, the newly appointed conductor of the Long Island Philharmonic, premiered Richter's short curtain-raiser *Quantum Quirks of a Quick Quaint Quark*. The work is lighthearted with a waltz in 5/4, frequent meter changes, and unusual instrumental pairings. Two large-scale works from the 1990s dominated Richter's activity: her triple concerto entitled *Variations and Interludes on Themes from Monteverdi and Bach* for violin, cello, piano, and orchestra (1992); and her chamber opera *Riders to the Sea* (1996).

The 46-minute triple concerto is a free-form fantasy in one movement, with cadenzas for the individual members of the trio. It was commissioned by conductor Sheldon Morgenstern and the Eastern Music Festival, Greensboro, North Carolina, 1993. The work was inspired by a Tiffany stained-glass window *Rainbow*, which depicts a vibrant rainbow arching over a mountain brook and pond, surrounded by brilliant blue and purple irises. Richter felt that both her music and the window spoke to the feelings of faith lost and regained. In 1997, she traveled to Katowice, Poland to supervise the recording of the concerto with The Polish Radio National Symphony Orchestra.

Richter's other major work from the 1990s was her opera *Riders to the Sea*. She had first read the play by J.M. Synge in 1957 and had immediately considered using it as the basis for a chamber opera because of its portrayal of a woman of exceptional emotional strength. As the opera begins, the woman, Maurya, has lost her husband, father-in-law, and four sons at sea. Her fifth and sixth sons drown during the opera, and, at the end, Maurya gathers her two daughters around her in stoic acceptance.

Reluctant to compose an opera without a scheduled performance, Richter had put off composing it until 1995, when she received a commission from Opera Millennium in Minneapolis. Richter used Synge's play unaltered, and carefully researched Irish folk song to capture the rhythmic inflections of the text in her music. Unfortunately, the funding for the premiere fell through before the work could be produced. Although the cancellation was disappointing, Richter persisted and eventually the complete opera, fully staged, was produced by Music at St. Mark's in NYC, in December 2002. *Riders to the Sea* was conducted by Gregory Buchalter, an assis-

tant conductor with the Metropolitan Opera, and directed by Emily Zahniser.<sup>7</sup>

The work is orchestrated for string quintet or orchestra with a selection of Irish instruments: flute/piccolo, bodhran (Irish drum), tubular bells, Celtic harp, and accordion. It has a gentle, mournful sound, with poignant chromaticism in a mostly modal framework. (See Example 3.)

In September 1990, Ken Burns' PBS documentary film *The Civil War* captured the attention of forty million viewers, and it included a work by Richter. A famous letter written by Major Sullivan Ballou to his wife Sarah one week before he was killed at the First Battle of Bull Run was featured in the film. The hint of transcendentalism in the letter and its passionate and touching tone appealed to Richter. She set an excerpt for medium voice and piano, using a phrase from the letter as the title, *Sarah, Do Not Mourn Me Dead* (1995). Written without a key signature, Richter's setting is very sensitive to the text in a freely chromatic style that loosely suggests tonal centers with fluid transitions between the sections.<sup>8</sup>

During the 2000s, Richter composed music of a more intimate nature, employing a simpler harmonic and melodic language. Many works were written in response to special relationships in her life including a brief romantic interest. Notable humorous works from this time include: *Erin Odyssey* (song cycle of limericks by the composer), *Bye-Bye Bake Shoppe* for string quartet and narrator, *Divers (Diverse) Divertimento* for flute, oboe, and guitar, and *Goat Songs* (song cycle, text by Marcia Slatkin). Richter's love of humor, derived from human foibles, word play, homonyms, and punctuation, is clearly demonstrated in these works.

In 2009, Richter sold her home, downsizing to a house also near Huntington Bay. She lived and worked there until spring 2020, just as the Covid-19 pandemic was intensifying in New York, when she moved to a house in Barnegat, NJ to be nearer to her daughter. Richter never considered retiring, and she continued to compose and arrange performances of her works. She stayed in touch with colleagues, friends, and family, and maintained an active lifestyle to the end. In her zest for living, her accomplishments, and her dedication to her art, Richter serves as a role model for musicians and composers today.

Example 3. *Riders to the Sea*, mm. 475-483.

Although Richter's death is a great loss to her family and friends, her music will be remembered. Plans are being made for the New York Public Library to hold her materials in a special collection.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Richter was the middle of three children. Her older sister was Rena Sylvia (1923-1996); her younger brother was Paul Herman (1929-58).

<sup>2</sup> She had started as a piano performance major studying with Rosalyn Tureck, but after a year, when Tureck left to go on tour, she changed to composition, studying with William Bergsma and Vincent Persichetti.

<sup>3</sup> *Lament*, composed in response to the death of her mother, was recorded with the MGM orchestra, conducted by Izler Solomon.

<sup>4</sup> Paris, Hamburg, Lisbon, Monaco, Washington, D.C., and New York.

<sup>5</sup> The performers were pianist Katherine George, violinist Kathryn Grey, and cellist India Zerbe.

<sup>6</sup> Jane Weiner Lepage, *Women Composers, Conductors and Musicians of the Twentieth Century*, vol. 1 (London: Scarecrow Press, 1989), 223-224.

<sup>7</sup> The cast consisted of contralto Melissa Maravell (*Maurya*), soprano Susan Holsonbake (*Nora*), mezzo Melissa Perry (*Cathleen*), and tenor Aram Tchobanian (*Bartley*). In 2006, the work was recorded by Leonarda Records with

Maravell, Holsonbake and Tchobanian reprising their roles, Anna Tonna singing *Cathleen*, and Daijiro Ukon conducting.

<sup>8</sup> Julie Nord and Richter premiered *Sarah, Do Not Mourn Me Dead* in 1995 at the South Huntington Library, and tenor William George and pianist Mitchell Kirker gave the New York premiere in 2003 for a NewMusicNewYork "Songs of New York" concert in CAMI Hall.

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## Selected Websites:

Archival video footage from a series of "Hear & Now" interviews hosted by Judith St. Croix for American Cable Systems features "An Exploration of the Creative Mind" with composer Marga Richter discussing her creative process and her piece *Landscapes of the Mind I*. Posted on the NYWC YouTube channel <https://youtu.be/qrsb8SZ9YI>

Interview with Marga by filmmaker Leslie Streit for the documentary "An American Ballet Story." <http://www.anamericanballetstory.com/video/a-composers-story.mp4>

Marga Richter's website: [www.margarichter.com/index.html](http://www.margarichter.com/index.html)

Marga Richter Profile with timeline of life events: <https://wam.rutgers.edu/profiles/margarichter-an-interview-with-dr-sharon-mirchandani/>

Profile page on New York Women Composers, Inc. [https://www.newyorkwomencollectors.org/profiles.php4?zdm\\_id=RIC01](https://www.newyorkwomencollectors.org/profiles.php4?zdm_id=RIC01)

*Remembrance* by tenor Will George includes many links to her music. <http://www.williamallengeorge.com/Blog.php>

Yale University Library. *Major Figures in American Music Oral History Series*. <https://yale.app.box.com/s/kfs3xzlfcxhblnvrml3bz9ota8eqq16>

Dr. Sharon Mirchandani is the author of the biography Marga Richter published by the University of Illinois Press. Her research focuses on topics in 20th- and 21st-century American music with a special concentration on women composers and gender issues. She is currently Professor and Chair of the Department of Music Composition, History, and Theory at Westminster Choir College of Rider University, where she teaches a wide variety of courses. Dr. Mirchandani holds a Ph.D. in Musicology from Rutgers University, a double M.M. in Music History and Piano Accompanying and Chamber Music from Temple University, and a B.M. in Piano Performance from Bowling Green State University.

## Memories of Marga

by Rain Worthington

My best friend, Marga Richter, lived each day of her 93 years completely on her own terms. She was lucid and still composing new works until her last days.

I first met Marga at a meeting of New York Women Composers members. I entered the room late and took the one empty seat next to hers. She told me her name and asked who I might be. When I replied, she exclaimed: "Wonderful! You are the reason I came to the meeting—I wanted to meet you." That got my attention. We instantly became part of each other's lives.

Marga was an extraordinary woman and composer. She was one of those rare people whose sense of self-worth and unshakable belief in the value of her work were the essential core of her being. Often within minutes after meeting Marga you would learn that she was a composer, not because of an arrogance, but rather because of her genuine enthusiasm to share her gift of music with you. And, reciprocally, within minutes she would also be interested to discover if music had been a part of your life. After meeting a new person, she would display great delight if, for example, she discovered that they had studied piano when they were young or they joined the band in high school, etc. And she would invite them to her house to play her music for them or send them her scores and CDs. She will be missed by so many who accepted her invitations to visit her in Long Island or in Vermont in the summer.

She approached life as a "take it as it comes" adventure, with passion and openness to new experiences. I never recall Marga exhibiting any sense of fear. She approached situations with an open curiosity as "Hmm, I wonder where this will lead?" And in response, whenever she needed help, perfect strangers appeared on the scene who were willing to drop whatever they were doing to help her find her way through the subways or streets. She was a force of nature and brought out the best in others. She enriched their lives.

Marga was a pioneer, pursuing composition with conviction when there were few women composers attempting to enter the field. Importantly, her music was recognized as substantially significant and began to be performed by orchestras and recorded by prestigious classical labels, such as MGM Records. Her music is dramatic, personal, emotionally charged with chromaticism (not 12-tone) combined with strong tonal centers, modal orientation, and strong rhythmic drive. Music was her primal language, her spiritual path through which she shared her elemental emotional experiences. From within her open, unguarded approach to life, she was able to plumb the deepest complexities and depths of human emotion in her profound music.

I will deeply miss her friendship and active presence in my life, as will the many others whose lives she touched.

## GENDER AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

### Virago Symphonic Orchestra: The All-Female Orchestra

ELINE COTE

#### Introduction

Feminism and gender equality have been the cornerstones of my creative practice and research interest since 2015. Recently, I have been focusing on sexism in classical music in the Western world. As part of a research project I worked on in 2018, I examined gender inequality in top orchestras around the world and found that female representation was about 31%. The harp, violin, and flute were favored for women, while several other instruments were considered to be "a man's "world":

percussion, brass, and my own instrument, the double bass.

I have been playing bass for over 15 years. As a young girl, I did not think about gendered musical categories, and I believed the instrument chose the player and not the other way around. I realized, however, that I had seen only one female bass player in my lifetime, and that was a special moment for me because seeing someone like me on stage gave me a different feeling. I was also influenced by the actress and activist Emma Watson after hearing

her speech on behalf of the organization HeForShe, which promotes gender equality.

From that moment on, I became very passionate about this subject and started looking closely at the situation in my country, Belgium. When I went to concerts, I noticed that there were almost no women on stage in the orchestra, maybe a few violins or a flutist here or there, but that was it. When I thought of conductors or composers, only men came to mind. One evening I began to ponder about ways to put

women in the spotlight: a big stage with a hundred women doing what they love and performing music by women with a female conductor. As a 17-year-old, I could never have imagined that this fantasy would become my own passionate project.

Five years later, in 2019, at age 22, I decided to write my master's thesis on the inequality of women in classical music. Due to a unique program at the Royal Conservatory of Antwerp, I was able to try to make my dream a reality. I decided to carry out this ambitious project in the prestigious Queen Elizabeth Hall in Antwerp, a hall with a hefty price tag.

First, I needed permission from the management of the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra. Was my concept strong enough? Did it have all the characteristics of a complete concert? Was it full-fledged enough to match the level one expects from a performance at this venue? Did an all-female orchestra, playing music by only female composers, have the potential to attract enough spectators? After a few months, and repeated phone calls, I received a positive reply. Then the search for financial support started. I presented my project to the freelance consultant for artists, Tobias Van Royen, and he was speechless. He thought it was impossible, and he did not become an advocate, but he did give me good advice and encouraged me to start a non-profit organization, "Virago." My second appointment was with Annemie Verlinden, a consultant/regional-coordinator for Antwerp-Limburg. She thought it was unlikely to succeed, but admired my ambition and perseverance, and she handed me the tools to make concrete plans.

### Funding the Project

Despite all the reservations, I was determined to continue, but how to get funding was a major problem. I need an enormous amount of money to cover the fee for the hall, rent a piano and the scores, pay for posters, flyers, business cards, program booklets, and appreciation gifts for all orchestra and choir members as well as transportation costs, refreshments during

rehearsals, and composers' rights. I also planned to invite Chi-chi Nwanoku (double bass player from London and my role model) to serve on a debate round table the night of the performance.

I applied for a subsidy from the Flemish Government but received a negative answer. I then organized an auction with a positive result. I contacted numerous companies by mail and by phone; I always asked for a personal interview so they could see and hear how passionate I was about this project. But the answer was negative at least 98% of the time, with the same message: We are not supporting women's rights

Voor De Kunst.nl, which organizes funding for the arts in Amsterdam. I needed to raise \$10,000 in 45 days. At the very last moment, we had an influx of donations and we reached our goal!

### Planning the Project

I chose to name my orchestra The Virago Symphonic Orchestra. "Virago" (from the Latin) is defined as a woman who demonstrates exemplary and heroic qualities. I then needed to recruit talented women musicians. Friends provided me with lists of potential performers, and I was able to convince 91 musicians to make a commitment. The exceptionally talented conductor Pascale Van Os was ecstatic when she honored us by agreeing to conduct.

Now came the important task of selecting the music. I researched the lives and music of numerous composers and compiled a list of about 100 pieces. I listened to each one and selected works that would provide variety and would not only be appealing to the audience but would also stimulate their curiosity and interest in

the repertoire of female composers. I decided on a dozen pieces by both contemporary and historic women. I felt it was important that the program include orchestral works plus chamber music and two choral pieces because it would offer a broader picture of what these women accomplished. My intention was for all members of the audience to find something meaningful in at least one of these quite different pieces.

### The Performance

The concert was presented on March 8, 2020, and it included works by Augusta Holmès, Fanny Mendelssohn, Marlies Hollevoet, Amy Beach, Marga Richter, Mary Jane Leach, Vigdis Hansa Elst, Cécile Chaminade, and Ethyl Smyth. In addition to hearing the music, the audience heard stories about each of the eight composers. I believe that providing some biographical information is of value because it enhances the audience's knowledge of and interest in the composer and her music. Actresses



Virago Symphonic Orchestra

this year. This made me very nervous, but on the other hand, my determination grew. The positive reactions included an invitation from the Boston Consulting Group to act as a keynote speaker at a conference for young female entrepreneurs in Barcelona, as well as to play a piece by a female composer. Unfortunately, COVID-19 put a stop to this. Two companies agreed to become sponsors, and I was able to pay the advance fee for the hall.

I organized a movie night which featured the film *The Conductor*, a true story about the difficulties of the Dutch conductor Antonia Brico, a film so close to our current problems that I wanted to highlight it with my project. Because of COVID, the attendance was much lower than expected, and we only raised about \$50. A big disappointment! The next step was the search for a platform that would provide the best chance of success to launch a crowdfunding drive. I had decided to join forces with

from the conservatory played the roles of the composers. The texts they used, which I found when researching material for my master's thesis, were based on real events that had happened to the women.

#### Personal Reflection on the Project

Despite all the difficulties I encountered and the negative replies and doubts that many people raised, I persevered, but never did I expect the results of my efforts to be so successful, even in my wildest dreams. The concert was a monumental success with an audience of more than 1,000! The audience was extremely enthusiastic, which gave an extra boost to all the performers. The conductor, the musicians, the dancer, the actresses, and the choir—all the participants gave it their very best.

Our intent was that our group's collaboration and concert should benefit an organization that could effectively promote our ideals and goals. We therefore donated a portion of our proceeds to support the work of the IAWM. [The IAWM is very appreciative of your generous donation.]

Previously, I had never organized or realized anything of such magnitude. I dove in but I was soon aware that the whirlwind of feelings and tasks would overwhelm me. I experienced hope, despair, trust, dependency, euphoria, stress, and enormous fatigue; sometimes I could not see the forest for the trees. But nevertheless, I persisted. With this orchestra, I wanted to give the opportunity to talented women musicians to perform on a fantastic stage. This project demonstrated that musical talent, techni-

cal skill, and expression do not go hand in hand with gender. Institutions and ensembles should give women an equal chance in terms of involvement in programming, hiring, and performing because gender should not be involved when it comes to talent.

The project provided personal growth opportunities for me in many ways. I realized very quickly that I was going to have to play different roles to make this project work. I am an orchestral musician and a leader of my bass section, but I became an entrepreneur, an organizer, a planner, a promoter and marketer, a manager, an assistant, a spokesperson, and a public speaker. I am grateful for the experience I have gained, for the boost of self-confidence, and for the chance to start my own orchestra at a young age. As it turns out, women can do anything.

## Becoming a Piano Woman

EMMA KNIGHTS

In 2018, while performing in a cabaret club in Australia, a gramophone fell on my head in the middle of the show. Surprisingly, the accident inspired me to write a cabaret show about my experience as a piano woman and how I felt about inequality. There were so many things I wanted to say, but I knew I could not discuss everything. I decided to tell my story through music by my favourite piano men—the repertoire I learned during my training as a classical pianist. I wanted to shine a light on the issue of inequality without diminishing the work of the piano men I loved and wanted to emulate: Mozart, Beethoven, Debussy, Billy Joel, Ben Folds, and Tim Minchin.

The show is comprised of 29 pieces, including complete pieces as well as snippets based on music ranging from Elton John to Chopin to Bartok to Berlin. Some are piano solos and others are more contemporary songs, like Jerry Lee Lewis' *Great Balls of Fire* or Elton John's *Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word*. Whilst writing my show, I asked myself, for the first time in my career: Where are the piano women? Everywhere I looked there were piano men. At university, I played only music by piano men. In history class, we learnt about piano men. I wanted to add a piece or two by women.

The first female composer to come to mind was Clara Schumann; I had completed a history research project on her and Robert at university. Who else was there?

Miriam Hyde? I knew her name but not her music. Pieces of hers were included on the Australian Music Examination Board syllabus, and there is a competition named in her honour.<sup>1</sup> I found a beautiful piece by Fanny Hensel. Of course, I knew about Felix Mendelssohn, but I had not heard of his sister. In addition, I learned that Felix published several of her works as his own.<sup>2</sup> This was a great story for my cabaret show, and I decided to include her *September* and some information about her life.

One day at an Opportunity Shop/Charity Shop, while I was searching for old records, as I often do, I found a whole collection of records with music by Winifred Atwell.<sup>3</sup> With that many recordings, her music must have been popular, so I bought several records. I was amazed when I researched her and discovered that she was one of the most famous entertainers in the 1950s in both Britain and Australia. Why had I never heard of her? I fell in love with her ragtime music and included her *Five Finger Boogie* in the show, although I still cannot play it as fast as she did!

I decided to add one more song by a female pianist:

my own *Pianist Envy*.<sup>4</sup> This song encapsulates some of the things I faced as a piano woman such as being told to wear makeup and heels to perform while my male counterparts were able to wear sneakers; being told that it must be my time of the month if I did not agree with or like something that was said; or winning an award for the best orchestra pit cleavage.

This was it. I had enough material for my show, and time was pressing on towards my performance of *The Piano Men*, which debuted at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2018. I had chosen to debut it at Edinburgh because I wanted a new venue for my new venture as a pianist, singer, and storyteller. For most of my career, I had been in the background accompanying others. I also thought that if I performed the show halfway around the world and it flopped, no one would know! It did not



Emma Knights

flop, however, and I have been performing it ever since across Australia, plus a return to Edinburgh to perform it in the #pianodrome<sup>5</sup> in 2019.

*The Piano Men* was well received, and I found that audience members would come to me at the end and say, “Have you heard of...?” I was ready to start research for my next project and having a list of other people’s suggestions was a wonderful place to begin. I purchased books such *Men, Women & Pianos: A Social History*,<sup>6</sup> and my best friend gave me a marvellous book, *Girls at the Piano*.<sup>7</sup> I explored the internet and found some outstanding women composers of piano music such as Cecile Chaminade, Hazel Scott, Ethyl Smyth, and Jitta Hipp. One problem that I encountered was that copies of their music were not always available. I also investigated the music of contemporary women such as Alicia Keys and Carole King.

The stories that I uncovered about these and many other women demonstrated their courage and strength as well as the injustice so many of them endured, and they provided inspiration for me. Some of the most striking stories showed how many women used their ability to play the piano to save themselves from death during the war. One of the most amazing stories described how a piano woman, who had to undergo brain surgery without anaesthetic, was able to do so by playing a piano sonata in its entirety throughout the operation; this led to advances in the neurosciences. My favourite story was of a doctor who challenged one piano woman to play a piece while she was giving birth. Which she did.

I then faced the issue of what to do with all of this information. How could I share this with the world? The logical place for me was to turn it into a sister show to *The Piano Men*, and so *The Piano Women* was born. In both of my shows, I perform and sing music from the 1700s, when the piano was created, through to the 21st century. In between singing these songs, I share the stories of my own experiences or those I have found in my research.

At that point, I realized that I had enough material for a three-hour show, but a cabaret show is normally limited to just one hour, so I had to begin the excruciating task of removing whatever was not entirely relevant to the overall message I wanted to convey. I also had to make sure

the show flowed smoothly and made sense without sounding like a music history lecture. I decided the show needed a little humour, so I wrote a song called *Hysteria*, based on the hysteria movement. A medical journal dating from the late 1800s stated that women could be dangerously overstimulated by music and especially by the tuning of a piano! And perhaps that is the reason the piano tuning profession has been dominated by men!

A cabaret show needs to avoid a standard format such as talking about a musician then performing a song by that musician. For example, in one segment of the show, I cover several wartime stories, and each story is underscored with a modern ballad (*Everyone’s Waiting* by Missy Higgins or *I Will Remember You* by Sarah McLachlan). At poignant moments, I sing a line from the song and then continue with the next story. This particular part of the show is filled with sadness and courage, and I find it hard to hold myself together. The struggles these women faced and the solace and safety they found in music is beyond touching. Before performing *The Piano Women* in Edinburgh, I did a test run at home in Adelaide, and there were tears in people’s eyes at that point.

In addition to performing both shows at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and the #pianodrome in Edinburgh plus the Urrbrae Historical House in Adelaide (with its beautiful 100-year-old Steinway), I have also performed *The Piano Men* at UKARIA Concert Hall in the Adelaide Hills, Stockbridge Church in Edinburgh, The Butterfly Club in Melbourne, St. Marys Church in Perth, and many other locations. Both shows have been a part of festivals including the Adelaide Fringe Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Adelaide Cabaret Fringe Festival, and Melbourne Cabaret Fringe Festival. I was scheduled to perform both shows at the Sydney Opera House in April this year, but that performance had to be postponed due to the pandemic. When life is back to normal, I plan to resume touring my shows, and I also hope to turn my research into a university master’s degree paper in the next few years and to make the material accessible.

To be able to share these stories and bring them to life has altered the path of my career and broadened my horizons as a musician. My goal now is to make sure

young musicians today know they can be curious and find music that resonates with them. I plan to encourage them to seek out music by women and hope it will bring them as much joy as it has brought to me.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Although I did not have space for her music in my show, I included a quote by her in *The Piano Women*: “I feel my music can be a refuge for what beauty and peace can still be omnipresent...the triumph of good over evil. I make no apologies for writing from the heart,” Australian Music Centre, “Represented Artist: Miriam Hyde” (2020), <https://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/artist/hyde-miriam>.

<sup>2</sup> Thea Derks, “How Fanny Mendelssohn was eclipsed by Felix” (February 25, 2018), <https://medium.com/@tdrks/fanny-mendelssohn-in-the-shadow-of-felix-4c3782ba8576>

<sup>3</sup> London547, “Five Finger Boogie by Winifred Atwell,” YouTube video, posted August 23, 2007, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uo37ZIHGvRw>

<sup>4</sup> Emma Knights, “Pianist Envy Official Video,” YouTube video, posted August 31, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nC5CWDmbG4>

<sup>5</sup> <https://pianodrome.org/>

<sup>6</sup> Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women & Pianos: A Social History* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2011).

<sup>7</sup> Virginia Lloyd, *Girls at the Piano* (Crows Nest, Australia: Allen and Unwin, 2018).

*Emma Knights is a graduate of the Elder Conservatorium (Classical Performance Piano) and West Australian Academy of Performing Arts (Contemporary Music). She is currently studying for her Honours of Music (Popular Music). She works professionally as an accompanist and music director in music theatre and cabaret and tours her one-woman piano cabarets. She is also finalising her debut piano album, Anticipate.*

### Vibrant Matter Portraits

Vibrant Matter Portraits is a concert series showcasing the work of six female performer-composers who explore modes of listening through their investigations into objects, text, and sound. The series, which includes six concerts over two years, presents each artist’s solo performance practice alongside her compositions for other musicians. Portrait no. 5 will feature the work of Ryoko Akama with performers Stine Janvin and Rebecca Lane. December 18 at 8:30 pm. KM28 Berlin, Germany. Vibrant Matter thanks INM and Musikfonds for their support.

# Women in Music: The Unexplored Dimension of Ghanaian Choral Art Music Tradition

JOSHUA ALFRED AMUAH

With Kingsley Joseph Ennin Kwesi Acheampong

## Introduction

In the West African country of Ghana, choral art music is omnipresent, especially in the Greater-Accra Region, where a choral performance is presented almost every weekend. Given the popularity of choral art music, it is surprising that women have apparently had minimal success in attaining leadership roles in contrast to their more prominent roles in traditional and popular music. Men have gained public recognition as conductors, soloists, and accompanists of choral music, but are there women in similar positions who have not yet been recognized for their achievements? The goal of this research project was to examine women's roles in Ghanaian choral art music tradition, against the backdrop of their roles in popular and traditional musical genres. The investigation involved visits to choral art music performances and interviews with singers, both men and women, music scholars, and key performers of the musical genre.

## Gospel, Traditional, and Popular Music

In traditional music, there are clearly defined roles for male and female performers;<sup>1</sup> for example, in Cape Coast, in the Central Region of Ghana, women are cantors, and in other regions, specific types of music and dances are reserved for women. Their positions, however, are dependent upon whether the group is comprised of all female or mixed-sex performers. If the latter, women are generally given supportive positions.

Gospel music, for a number of years, has been dominated by women who often perform as soloists or in duets and trios. In his study of music in the late 1990s, Isaac Essandoh found that "80% of the gospel-highlife recording scene" was dominated by women.<sup>2</sup> The representation of women in Ghanaian popular and highlife music has increased over the past few years, and women have formed successful all-female bands such as the Dzesi Band in Accra and the Lipstick Band. In mixed-sex bands, however, women, despite their fame in popular music, are not the lead singers.<sup>3</sup> In both popular and traditional music, women

have made substantial progress, but they are still lagging behind in art music.

## Women in Choral Art Music Performances

In her study of gender in musical arts practice and education in Ghana, E. Sasu states that although women have careers in art music, their achievements and attempts to compose tend to go unnoticed.<sup>4</sup> Recently, a young woman composer, Ellen Whyte, challenged the status quo. She wrote simple songs for choirs and began gaining attention in the choral music field, but sadly she passed away after a short illness.

In choral art performances, women frequently serve as accompanists on the organ or piano. They play classical pieces as well as hymn tunes, local chorales, and chants in the Methodist and Anglican churches. They also play "choral danceables." These are songs accompanied by dancing and clapping. A number of women hold positions as voice teachers; some teach both men and women, and some teach only their own vocal part, often working with choristers who cannot read music.

A few women have defied tradition and have taken leadership positions usually held by men: choirmistresses and music directors. Choirmistresses generally have administrative positions while music directors may conduct, teach, and accompany choirs. One of the pioneer female conductors in Ghana is Dinah Reindorf. In addition to conducting choral music, she was the first female conductor of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra.

## Interviews

To learn about the roles that women play in choral music and the challenges they face, we interviewed fifteen women and ten men. As expected, the social and cultural norms of African society were mentioned: men are held in high esteem, while women are still associated with their traditional roles as mothers and housekeepers. Women have a lower social, economic, and academic status, and they continue to struggle for equal opportunities, especially in art music.

Several of the men we interviewed believed the teaching of choral music, con-

ducting, and even accompanying choirs should be the preserve of men and that women should only engage in such activities to a point. They suggested that women, when they marry, are meant to take care of the home and family, and thus they would not have adequate time for the positions under discussion.

A number of men and few women attributed women's lack of success to stage fright. They said that even though women performed well at choir rehearsals, they lacked the courage to perform in front of a large audience. Another interesting comment was that at times women get carried away when they take center stage, and this makes them lose focus and control. The women have probably been given tasks beyond their capabilities and need more training. One complaint by some of the women respondents was that little consideration was given to them in the planning of the repertoire.

Many women conductors have no problem controlling their choristers, but some do lose control, especially when their authority is not respected by their male subordinates. Opinions about the skills of women conductors ranged from "exceptional" and "excellent" to "lacking the passion of men." A few respondents said that some of the women they have heard were better conductors than men in similar positions.

One criticism of women organists was that they performed in a mechanical manner. As an example, the respondent said that the organist carefully played exactly what the composer wrote, and if the woman made a mistake, she might pause in the middle of a performance to make a correction; the typical male organist would be able to quickly improvise to keep the performance going.

Several of the women organists who were interviewed recollected instances when they had very little time to rehearse extended pieces. They also complained that after they spent a considerable amount of time practicing the music, their superior brought in a guest organist to accompany the choir on the day of performance. This insult, of course, made the women reluc-

tant to spend time practicing lengthy or technically difficult pieces. Some of the organists also recalled how their playing skill was doubted by men, and they were even told that they would not be permitted to perform. One woman said she was always saved from such intimidation when the leader of her team was around.

In spite of the many challenges, most of the women interviewed saw their talent as a gift from God, and they believed that serving God was their major motivation. Some were inspired by their colleagues and by people encouraging and applauding them in their work. Most pointed to Dinah Reindorf as their inspiration. They all said that music is their passion, and they will not be discouraged by anyone.

### Brief Profiles of Five Women

In this section, we present brief profiles of five women who are playing major roles as choirmistresses, music directors, voice/song teachers, conductors, and organists/pianists in the performance of choral art music in the Greater-Accra Region.

Dinah Reindorf is one of the few female pioneers of Ghanaian art music, and, as mentioned above, she was the first female conductor of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra. She was one of the earliest Ghanaians to be certified in Music Theory and Composition by the Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music (ABRSM) in 1960; she later went to the Royal School of Music in London to study choral conducting. She conducted at the Calvary Methodist Church in Adabraka and the Accra Ridge Church. As a teacher of music theory, she established a music school, Dwenesie Music Institute, to train children in the Dansoman neighborhood in Accra.

Dr. Augusta Arko Mensah is a lecturer in the Department of Music Education at the University of Education, Winneba (UEW). She is also choirmistress, conductor, voice/song teacher, and Director of Music at the Emmanuel Presbyterian Church, Dansoman. In 2004, she was Director of Music for the Dansoman District of the Presbyterian Church Choirs



**Dr. Augusta Arko Mensah**

Union and later for the Ga Presbytery. In addition, she lectures at music workshops and adjudicates choral art music performances.

Sita Korley is a lecturer in the Department of Music Education, University of

Education, Winneba. She has 29 years of experience in Ghanaian choral music. She has worked as an organist, pianist, voice/song teacher, and conductor of

**Sita Korley** many choirs in Methodist and Presbyterian churches; for 14 years, she served as organist at the Ghana Police Interdenominational Church. She is currently with the Bethel Methodist Church Choir in Tema.

Mawuyrami Ocloo studied at the University of Ghana, Legon, after which she continued her education in the USA at Maryville University of St. Louis, where she earned a Master of Music Therapy degree. When she returned home, she established the Institute of Music Therapy Ghana (IMT). She doubles as the Executive Director of this institute and the Music Therapy Association of Ghana Mawuyrami Ocloo (MTAG). She teaches piano, voice, and guitar; she has also been a professional pianist and organist for more than 17 years. Mawuyrami Ocloo has performed with a number of choirs in both South Africa and Ghana; notable is her participation in the Old Mutual and National Choir Competitions in South Africa. She has also worked with the Light House Chapel International, and currently, she is a soloist and Music Director at the Machaneh Church International, Life Cathedral, in Oyibi, near Dodowa.

Theodora Entsuah-Mensah is a lecturer at the Methodist University College, Dansoman; she holds bachelor's and master's degrees in music from the University of Ghana, Legon. She conducts the Goethe-Institut Choir in Ghana; this choir performs Ghanaian and German choral music for the German community in Ghana during Easter and other festive occasions. Theodora Entsuah-Mensah She has also performed in Germany, where she played a leading role in the establish-

ment of an all-female choir at the Goethe-Institut. In addition to accompanying a number of Methodist Church choirs, she has worked with many other choirs. She is currently the organist, pianist, conductor, and vocal/song teacher at the Mount Calvary Cross Ministry in Accra. Her choir performs orthodox choral music, classical anthems, and contemporary pieces.

### Conclusion

Choral music is performed everywhere in Ghana, but, with few exceptions, it is the male directors, conductors, teachers, and accompanists who have gained public recognition. This study has demonstrated that a number of women occupy positions equal in status to those of men. The social and cultural norms of the Ghanaian traditional community as well as gender discrimination are the primary reasons women's accomplishments in choral music have not been acknowledged. Although some women specialize in choral church music because of their religious passion, many are professional with years of private study and university degrees, such as the five women profiled.



**Mawuyrami Ocloo**

We recommend that women receive sufficient training so that they will be able to perform before larger audiences without fear of stage fright. They should be assigned positions that match their capabilities, and they should not be subjected to humiliation and criticism by those who believe women are not capable of serving in leadership positions. Finally, we recommend that the traditional society's perception of women and their role in society should not affect women's positions in choral music. As such, women who are talented musically and hope to have careers in choral music be given opportunities and recognition similar to those given to men.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Eyram Fiagbedzi, "Women, Music and Culture: A Study of Naa Amanua, A Neo-Traditional Ghanaian Musician" (MPhil Thesis, University of Ghana, Legon, 2005), v.

<sup>2</sup> Isaac Essandoh, "Gospel Highlife: The status and impact of a Ghanaian Popular Music genre" (MPhil Thesis, University of Ghana, Legon, 2005), 98.

<sup>3</sup> Fiagbedzi, "Women, Music, and Culture," 46.

<sup>4</sup> E. Sasu, "Gender in musical arts practice and education in Ghana" (MPhil Thesis, University of Education, Winneba, 2006), 7.

*Joshua Alfred Amuah, Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department of Music, University*

of Ghana, Legon, holds a PhD in Music from University of Ghana, Legon, in collaboration with University of Rochester, U.S.A. He teaches music theory and composition and other related courses, and is actively involved in choral directing and adjudication throughout Ghana and beyond. He has published on topics associated with choral and African art music. Since 2013, he has been a visiting professor of music at the Department of Music Education, University of Education, Winneba.

Kingsley Joseph Ennin Kwesi Acheampong, Teaching Assistant at the Department of Music, University of Ghana, Legon, is an MPhil in Music (Theory and Composition) candidate.

“A great host of women bring the glad tidings.” (Psalm 68:11b)

The “Great Host” project seeks to bring the glad tidings of diverse voices to liturgies through building a curated database of sacred music by a great host of composers. The first offering is a listing of choral music and voluntaries by women composers for the three-year Revised Common Lectionary. This first of twelve installments includes listings for Sundays and feast days from Advent through the Last Sunday after the Epiphany, Year B. In the *AAM Journal* for January 2021, the listings will continue with music for Ash Wednesday through Eastertide, Year B. For a spreadsheet with complete details on all titles, including links to scores and recordings, visit <https://tinyurl.com/y52oemcy>. N.B. *Multitude of Voyces*, Volume 3, will be published in November 2020. If you are interested in contributing to the ongoing work of this database, please contact: [greathostcomposers@gmail.com](mailto:greathostcomposers@gmail.com)

## Racism in Classical Music: An Interview with Stacey Sharpe

DEBORAH J. SAIDEL

The IAWM warmly welcomes new student member Stacey Sharpe, who is studying violin at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. I first met Stacey while subbing for a local music theater production where we played side by side. I encouraged her to sign up for my Women in Music course at VCU, and I was delighted when she did. We spoke at length via Zoom on September 17, 2020.

A native of Suffolk, Virginia, Stacey began music instruction on piano at the age of six and violin lessons at the age of twelve. During her high school years, she served as concertmaster at the Norfolk Governor’s School for the Arts and graduated as valedictorian of her class. Stacey also participated as a performer and piano instructor for her Baptist church, which included several international mission trips.

During her freshman year at VCU, Stacey won the university’s 2017 concerto competition. She has served as concertmaster for VCU’s symphony and as vice president of the student chapter of the American String Teachers Association. Stacey has been featured in my VCU arts series and the National Geographic Instagram page, and she is currently a member of the League of American Orchestras. After graduation in May 2021, she intends to pursue graduate work in both violin performance and string pedagogy.

The recurring theme that emerged from our conversation was Stacey’s concern about the underrepresentation of women of color in music and its negative impact on young children. A lack of representation was evident to her when she was looking for performance role models and repertoire to play. She also found it lack-

ing in the traditional music history canon narrative presented in formal educational settings. She shared some thoughts and feelings with me about what she has experienced as a women of color in field of classical music.

**Stacy Sharpe:** I believe that the racism that exists in the field of classical music is connected to the lack of representation. Sometimes people appear to be very surprised



Stacy Sharpe

when they see me at a gig. I specifically remember one job where my clients and I had not met in person prior to the event. We had only spoken over the phone, and they walked past me multiple times before they realized who I was and approached me. I think this happened because they assumed a Black woman would not be the person they had hired to play the violin.

When I go to a symphony concert, I do not see anyone [on stage] who looks like me. With that being said, it is so crucial for the industry to realize how detri-

mental this can be for young children. I am a firm believer that it is time for things to change. Young Black children need to be able to see that they have the potential to be a successful violinist, bassoonist, flutist, or whatever it is that they are passionate about. They can do anything if they work hard and believe in themselves. It will be almost impossible to do this until the industry is representative of everyone.

There are many women who have to wear their hair a certain way in order to make everyone in the orchestra happy. I have never performed with any type of wrap on my hair, and I have to be more mindful about how I wear my hair, particularly when it is in its naturally curly state, because I feel like I am already going to be noticed for looking different. I don’t look like anybody else in the group. I wouldn’t even wear a black head scarf because it might be one more thing for people to comment on.

**Deborah J. Saidel:** We also talked about the importance of women supporting one another and the importance of cultivating a strong sense of sisterhood and how beneficial this can be. Our conversation then turned towards the Black Lives Matter movement, and here is what she had to say.

**SS:** After the death of George Floyd and the rise of the Black Lives Matter protests, I wanted to be able to do something. Because of the pandemic, I was unable to show my support with boots on the ground at the protests. However, I wanted to do something. I came up with the idea to educate people by analyzing the Black national anthem, “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” on Facebook Live. I had no idea how many people would need to hear this lesson. I

would like to mention one important point that I made when making my presentation, which was that the BLM movement does not mean that we do not believe that all lives matter. All lives cannot matter until the marginalized lives of every othered group of people (including LGBTQIA+ lives) matter.

**DJS:** Next, I asked Stacey about her current studies and projects. She is taking a VCU course called “Podcasting While Black,” where she is learning how to conduct research, to use audio technology, and to become fluent in the rhetorical techniques of Black activists such as Dr. Martin Luther King. Stacey is also participating in a tiered, year-long independent study project that focuses on string peda-

gogy methodologies. In addition, she is interning virtually with The Quad City Music Academy, which is based in Davenport, Iowa. Stacey is diligently working on preparing for her senior recital that will feature compositions by the Black composers: Chevalier de St. Georges, Jessie Montgomery, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, and William Grant Still.

In closing, I asked Stacey what is it that she would most like to see changed in the world of classical music.

**SS:** I believe that the most important change that needs to take place in the classical music world is equalizing accessibility. Until we provide the younger generation with real opportunities to learn from role models, to confidently develop their

potential, and to be inspired by seeing people who look like them, things will pretty much remain the same.

*Dr. Deborah J. Saidel is an interdisciplinary scholar who is affiliated with Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, where she is known for her innovative work and teaching in the humanities. She is also a freelance artist specializing in flute performance (Follow That Flute, Inc.); she maintains a private woodwind studio and regularly performs at festivals. She presents lecture-recitals as well as research papers regarding women in music at festivals and conferences. Dr. Saidel is an executive board member of the IAWM and serves as its treasurer. Her life's work is focused on promoting wellbeing in the world through music-making, mentorship, and feminist musicological scholarship. (See [www.debsaidel.com](http://www.debsaidel.com))*

## COMPOSERS AND PUBLICATIONS

# The Perils of Publication: Orphan Scores and Copyright Termination

ELIZABETH VERCOE

### A Women’s Press is Born

While composers understandably seek publication of their music, they generally do so blind to the risk of losing control of their work should the publisher go out of business. I was still a graduate student when publisher Clara Lyle Boone (1927–2015) responded with enthusiasm to some music I submitted to her for consideration, and I was thrilled at the prospect of seeing my music in print and unworried about the press failing.

Although my doctoral advisor and mentor, Gardner Read, warned me about publishing with a small press, he suggested no safeguards. Between 1975 and 1978, Arsis Press published the first three of nine pieces I submitted including, most notably, the *Fantasy for Piano*, beautifully engraved with a handsome photograph of abstract art on the cover, a hallmark of Arsis publications. There were no contracts for these first three pieces, and brief but binding contracts for the other six. The Copyright Office and BMI list Arsis Press as copyright owner of record for all nine.

Idealistic and politically active, Boone founded the press in 1974 after discovering rampant discrimination against women’s music in the publishing industry. Her first imprints were of her own music, but as word spread, her mailbox filled with scores, and she began publishing the music of other women—on generous terms (20% royalties and, initially, 100

copies for personal use). In the 28 years she owned the press, she published 140 works by some 44 composers, including music by Vivian Fine, Emma Lou Diemer, and Ruth Crawford Seeger.

### A Failed Successor Owner and Orphan Scores

In 2002, Clara Boone turned 75 and felt it was time to find a successor owner of the press. The plan that evolved was to turn the press over to a distributor based in California, Empire Publishing Services in Studio City. For about the next sixteen years, Arsis composers continued to receive an annual accounting from Empire of sales of our music and 20% royalties from those sales plus our usual half of performance royalties from BMI or ASCAP. As contact person for the Arsis Press website and formerly associate editor of the press, I had received some complaints from buyers in the U.S., Germany, and elsewhere that orders were not filled promptly. But by 2018, orders were not being filled at all, despite pleading emails and phone calls. Then the press website ([arsispress.com](http://arsispress.com)) suddenly vanished, and Jane Brockman, fellow webmaster and Arsis composer, discovered that Empire’s check to pay for the website had bounced. (The website was soon restored but without reference to Empire.)

The result of Empire’s sudden disappearance has been a disaster for us composers. Since no orders have been filled

during the last two years, composers whose works are listed in the catalog are unable to obtain copies of their own music for performers, are receiving no royalties on sales, and have no recourse for permissions if they have recording or other opportunities. Moreover, while doing nothing for Arsis composers, Empire continues to collect half of all our performance royalties from BMI and ASCAP, a situation that is both frustrating and infuriating. Our contact person at Empire, the person whom we understand to be the president of Empire, sometimes answers the phone. He says there was a fire and variously claims he has our scores, or the opposite, that the scores were destroyed, that he will reprint our music but that he has no master copies. He has never officially notified those affected or offered any explanation about the cessation of business, and he refuses to give out an email address or even a mailing address, although it is clear that he receives mail at the old Studio City P.O. address.

Because BMI, ASCAP, and the Copyright Office list Arsis Press as owner of record for all 140 scores (with one exception to be detailed below), we—the creators of the music—may not legally make copies of our own work. Meanwhile, BMI continues, as it must, to send checks to Empire for half of our performance royalties.

The Copyright Office and others call these works of ours that remain in limbo “orphan scores” because the claimant is

unknown. Orphan works remain under copyright for the standard term: the life of the author plus 70 years. Kathleen DeLauri, Head Librarian at the Arthur Friedheim Library of The Peabody Institute and Open Access Editor of the Music Library Association, contacted me after the library ordered some of my music published by Arsis Press, and I replied with the disheartening story of the demise of the press. Her first words were “you would be surprised at how common your situation is!” She is working on a project to create licenses for composers to sell their works digitally so they are available for libraries and others to purchase. Of course, one has to own the copyright to participate.

#### Navigating the Copyright Termination Process

Beginning in 2018, several Arsis composers began discussing Empire’s failure to fill orders and started considering their options. Chief among those wishing to regain her copyrights was Judith Shatin who had four works at stake. She began consulting copyright attorneys, one of whom helpfully described an alternative to litigation or negotiation, namely a five-year window of opportunity for copyright ter-

mination, 35 years after the original publication and copyright registration.

We soon realized that the expense of hiring an attorney, even if shared, would be prohibitive, and we began researching the correct way to do the eligible terminations ourselves. However, one composer, incensed at the injustice of the situation and impatient to control her own work (which was published in 1998 and thus ineligible for termination until 2033) did hire an attorney and paid Empire a substantial sum to immediately transfer her copyright. Others just began filling out forms themselves as time was of the essence for some scores, like my *Herstory II*, published in 1982.

Hoping to discover contracts we had signed along with an agreement between Arsis Press and Empire Publishing Services, a small group of composers and friends assembled in June of last year in the Performing Arts Reading Room at the Library of Congress to peruse the Arsis Press Collection. The collection contains the business records and correspondence of the press from 1974 to 2012 and consists of 25 boxes, all of which were waiting for us when we arrived. We viewed every document in every box. To our surprise, several boxes con-

tained the original master copies of scores that were later published, but to our disappointment, there were no contracts and no copy of an agreement with Empire. We still don’t know if Empire has a written agreement and, if so, what the agreement states.

Our first order of business in the termination process, then, was to ascertain exactly when an author is allowed to begin taking action. A website called rights-back.org enables a composer to fill out an interactive form in order to obtain the correct dates for notification of the publisher and potential dates for termination. As an example, my *Herstory II*, published and copyrighted in 1982, had a rapidly closing window of opportunity. The window for notifying the publisher was 2007-2020, and the effective termination, after notification, was 2017-2022, or at most, precisely 40 years from the publication date. I had already missed the window for the *Fantasy* and two other pieces mentioned earlier, so I needed to act soon.

Secondly, we needed to write termination notices to Empire that ticked all the boxes required by the Copyright Office: full title of the music, notice under Section 203 of Title 17 of the U. S. Copyright

## Celebrating the Music of Elizabeth Vercoe

"one of the most inventive composers working in America today" *The Washington Post*

"Vercoe's writing is well crafted throughout" *The Flutist Quarterly*

"the musical argument is convincing at all times" *IAWM Journal*



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Act for music, publication date, contract date if known, copyright registration date and number (to be found on the Copyright Office website), and effective date of termination. Service by first-class mail was acceptable, and we used the address BMI had on file for Empire, which was the old post office box number in Studio City, CA. (See details required for a publisher notification letter at <https://www.copyright.gov/title37/201/37cfr201-10.html>.)

Thirdly, we needed to fill out and mail the Notice of Termination Cover Sheet (TCS) to the Copyright Office, one for each work, along with a check to record the information and a copy of the notice already mailed to the publisher. The \$185 fee can cover up to ten works. (A blank TCS form and detailed instructions are provided on the Copyright Office website at <https://www.copyright.gov/recordation/termination.html>. For the fee structure, see #21at <https://www.copyright.gov/title37/201/37cfr201-3.html>.)

### Aftermath

For many composers in the Arsis catalog, copyright termination is not a very attractive prospect because the music was published in the mid-1990s or later so that the effective transfers wouldn't happen until 2030 or beyond. Another concern is for the music by the 15 composers in the catalog who are deceased. We have been able to contact only a few of the beneficiaries of these, though some, namely the sons of Anna Larson and Claire Polin and the daughter of Vivian Fine, have either expressed determination to file for copyright terminations or have already done so. A further concern is that some of these deceased composers have quite a number of works in the catalog: Harriet Bolz (8), Anna Larson (3), Ruth Lomon (9), Claire Polin (3), Mary Jeanne Van Appledorn (17). That's a lot of music potentially left in limbo and out of reach of performers, not to mention, of course, the other 100 pieces of music by living composers that also remain orphan works.

### Contract Vigilance and Copyright Reform

So, what are the solutions to the problem of orphan works besides copyright termination? Most important, composers can insist on contracts that prevent orphan works from happening in the first place. In retrospect, other composers and I should have known when we signed contracts that we could have requested a clause that

provided for the return of the copyright to the author should the publisher cease operations.

Failing that foresight, a more global solution could be in proposed copyright reforms focused on five main measures: Introducing a limited liability scheme for use of orphan works; a new fair-dealing exception for non-commercial quotation; amendments to library and archives exceptions; amendments to education exceptions; and streamlining the government's statutory licensing scheme. Unfortunately, such reform legislation languishes in Congress and does not appear to fully address the problem of orphan works for the composer.

For composers who have orphan works published in 1982, they must act now before the window of opportunity closes in December of 2020. Those with music published later have more time. In summary, to accomplish a termination without doing all the research or hiring a lawyer, composers may refer to rightsback.org to ascertain the window of opportunity for termination and the Copyright Office website pages cited above for detailed instructions on publisher notification letters and Copyright Office Termination Cover Sheets. (A guide to the entire process is at: <https://www.authorsalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/20180315-ToT-Templates.pdf>.)

Finally, we extend a heartfelt plea to anyone able to help the many composers still sorting out the intricacies of the termination procedure, particularly those for whom the window of opportunity has closed and those without the resources to sue or negotiate. The termination process can be intimidating and expert help would be welcome. So far there are about a dozen Arsis pieces with copyright terminations filed, but ideally, enough composers will terminate the copyrights on their orphan works so that another press can pick up that music and continue Clara Boone's dream and the Arsis Press example of beautiful publications of women's music. Meanwhile, Arsis Press composers can still be contacted through the press website ([arisispress.com](http://arsispress.com)).

### Resources:

An invaluable guide to copyright termination (Termination Transfer) can be found at: <https://www.authorsalliance.org/resources/termination-of-transfer>

Templates for terminations can be found at: <https://www.authorsalliance.org/>

[wp-content/uploads/2018/03/20180315-ToT-Templates.pdf](https://www.authorsalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/20180315-ToT-Templates.pdf)

Three quotes from the extensive 2015 Copyright Office report on orphan works shows how seriously the government takes the problem:

"This outcome [i.e. restrictions on orphan works] is difficult to reconcile with the objectives of the copyright system and may unduly restrict access to millions of works that might otherwise be available to the public."

"There is a robust body of evidence indicating that the orphan works issued in the United States may be just as widespread [as in Europe]. That there is a domestic orphan works problem was confirmed by the Office's 2006 Report and is a view shared widely among the stakeholders consulted for this Report, from creators to owners to users to academics."

"In the public process leading up to this Report, many stakeholders (both copyright owners and organizations representing the public) acknowledged that the orphan works problem cannot be solved without amending the Copyright Act, and that limiting the liability exposure of good faith users is the most appropriate form of statutory change."

See the full Copyright Office report on orphan works online at: <https://www.copyright.gov/orphan/reports/orphan-works2015.pdf>.

### Acknowledgements:

Paul Allen Sommerfeld, PhD, Music Reference Specialist at the Library of Congress, was exceedingly helpful to the group wishing to see the Arsis Press Collection in the Performing Arts Reading Room. We are grateful for his assistance in assembling all 25 boxes for us before our arrival. We are also indebted to the friends and composers (Sis McKay, Janet Peachey, Edith di Bartolo, Jack Campbell, and Andrea Vercoe) who took the time to view the contents of the collection.

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Judith Shatin took the time to discuss our problems with copyright lawyers and put us in touch with attorney Kenneth Crews who provided valuable information

and a starting point for terminating our copyrights. Thanks also go to lawyers Robert Tyler and Brandon Butler at the University of Virginia for their clarification of the copyright termination process.

Jane Brockman, Arsis composer and co-webmaster of the Arsis Press website for 30 years, did some useful sleuthing regarding Empire. She continues to support the website and noted the recently increased fees for terminations.

Lori Laitman kindly gave permission to use her copyright termination story entailing an immediate transfer of rights.

## American Women Composers-Midwest Chapter: The Importance of Community and Connections Through Musical Organizations

DARLEEN MITCHELL

As a composer, educator, and pianist, I have long believed in the importance of community and connectiveness to other composers and performers. Starting early in my career, I became an active member of several organizations such as the International Society for Contemporary Music, American Composers Alliance/American Composers Editions in New York, and BMI, plus performing groups such as New Music Chicago and Marcel Duchamp Memorial Players, a group I founded. I later joined the College Music Society and the National League of American Pen Women.

When the Chicago Society of Composers invited me to join their Artistic Council in 1978, I was surprised that only one other woman, Shulamit Ran, was on the artistic panel. I thought there should be more and that women should have equal representation. I was therefore especially interested when I learned about an organization that supported women, American Women Composers (AWC).

Based upon my own experience, I was well aware that women composers needed greater recognition. I never knew that women composed music until I was in high school. When I began my studies at De Paul University as a music composition major, the assistant dean somehow convinced me that a composition major was not suitable for women. I later decided to stand my ground and changed my major from music education to composition—a very wise decision!

American Women Composers, Inc. was a national organization that included both composers and performers. It was

Neil Gladd, mandolinist and longtime employee at the Copyright Office, suggested links to the Copyright Office report on orphan works.

Brianna Schofield, Executive Director of the Authors Alliance (which oversees the rightback.org website along with Creative Commons), was enormously helpful with the final details for this article. She pointed out an important issue regarding precise dates in the discussion of termination windows, noted the opportunity for termination of works contracted before 1978, and alerted us to the important re-

sources on the Authors Alliance website that provide both a guide to and templates for terminations.

*Dr. Elizabeth Vercoe is the author of the Her-story series of song cycles on texts by women as well as symphonic and chamber works. Her music is published by Noteworthy Sheet Music and Certosa Verlag and recorded on the Owl, Centaur, and Navona labels. She divides her time between coastal towns in Maine and Massachusetts.*

founded in 1976 by composer Tommie Carl and a group of women who came together to encourage and support one another in their mutual musical endeavors. They established a score library, presented programs by the members, released recordings, and initiated a publication.

When I learned about AWC, I was based in Chicago and was teaching at De Paul University. AWC had started to establish regional chapters, and in 1981, I contacted Tommie Carl and several composers and performers in the Chicago area. We formed a group and initiated a chapter called American Women Composers—Midwest. The group included Mary Stolper, flute, Ann Feldman, mezzo-soprano, and Neva Bailey, mezzo-soprano; two student composers from the University of Chicago: Rami Levin, oboe, and Jan Remer, harp; and two women doctoral students in composition at Northwestern University: Janice Misurell Mitchell and Charmian Tashjian. We were later joined by Melinda Wagner and Patricia Morehead. We added Charlotte Ziporyn, a lawyer, to our board and incorporated in 1982. Our membership grew, and for many years, the Midwest chapter was the most active AWC branch, and it operated separately from the national.

After teaching at De Paul for ten years, I took a new position at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago in 1982, and I continued my activities with AWC-M. The following year was a busy one for our group. We presented a concert at the Conservatory, premiering an earlier work of mine. AWC-M performed not only at universities and conservatories but also

at alternative spaces such as art galleries. A fascinating program that included music, art, and dance was held at the Randolph Street Gallery in Chicago, featuring music by Gregoria Suchy and Marilyn Shrude. The AWC-M expanded its horizons and presented a program at the Fifth National Women's Studies Association Convention at Ohio State University in June 1983.

The national organization of AWC produced a recording in two volumes, on the Capriccio label, of works by women in 1983. The composers were selected competitively from throughout the United States, and both Charmian Tashjian and I were chosen. That year, the AWC-M celebrated its recording debut with a party and program at the Jane Addams Bookstore (a feminist bookstore) in the Fine Arts Building in Chicago on November 19. The program included works by Janice Misurell Mitchell, Netty Simons, Ursula Mamlok, and me, and the music was performed, as usual, by AWC-M members.

I cannot emphasize strongly enough the importance of belonging to organizations such as the Chicago Society of Composers and AWC-M in the development of the careers of my colleagues and me. I was thrilled by the increasing number concerts where my music was being heard; for example, one piece that I wrote for my husband, *Journey to the Yellow Springs* (for tuba and chimes) had multiple performances including concerts at International House in Hyde Park, Chicago, an AWC-M recital in December 1984, and the New Music Chicago Festival at the Chicago Cultural Center in April 1985.

One of its most important activities was its educational outreach program for high school students. The program, titled “A Multicultural Mosaic of Music by Women,” was designed to reflect the diversity within the public schools, and the program introduced the works of Latino, Eastern European, Asian, and African American women composers. AWC-M’s goals were to develop ethnic and racial pride, to acquaint students with the work of women composers, and to encourage young women to consider a career in music.

As the AWC-M grew, the opportunities for performances expanded. The year 1986 was an especially busy one. Members of AWC-M traveled to the University of Illinois at Urbana for the National Women’s Studies Association conference. We presented “A Concert of Twentieth Century Music by Women” on June 12, playing works by Lili Boulanger, Beatrice Witkin, Janice Misurell Mitchell, Ruth Lomon, Thea Musgrave, Patricia Morehead, and me.

On September 19, 1986, AWC-M supplied music for an event at the gala grand opening of River City, a new complex south of the Chicago loop, and the first of many new buildings in the development of the loop south and west. Our performance was entitled “Contemporary Pieces and Sound Exploration.” The program included works by Judith Shatin, Jan Remer, Dorothy Rudd Moore, and Ruth Lomon, plus my *Songs of Quiet*, which was literally just finished; we read from xerox copies of my pencil score! One got the impression that Chicago was at the forefront of contemporary music that summer, as the Chicago Cultural Center’s summer concert

series featured several groups performing works by 20th-century composers.

The following year, 1987, was another active one for AWC-M members, and it was particularly memorable for me. A special “Morning Musicae” at the Nineteenth Century Woman’s Club in Oak Park on February 2, featured a program of my music. That spring, Mary Stolper presented a recital at Ganz Hall, Roosevelt University, to honor the fifth anniversary of AWC-M. She played works by Lili Boulanger, Germaine Tailleferre, Ruth Crawford, and me. The following week, she repeated the program in Washington, D.C. to honor the national AWC’s 10th anniversary. The organizations AWC-M, CSC, NMC and ASUC kept me very busy!

I mentioned that the year was a memorable one for me, and that was because I had to leave my colleagues. My husband, who was in the military, was posted to Fort Devens in Massachusetts. AWC-M presented a farewell concert for me at the Chicago Cultural Center, performing my new piece *Watery Moon*, for alto flute/bass flute and mezzo-soprano with AWC-M members performing. The text from Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* expressed my feelings: “The moon methinks, looks with a watery eye; and when she weeps, weeps every little flower lamenting some enforced chastity.”

After my departure, AWC-M continued to be active, and in 1993, it left the national organization and became an independent, non-profit organization. AWC-M is no longer active; it ceased functioning around 1999. As many of you may be aware, the national AWC merged with two other organizations in 1995 to form the IAWM.

I was never able to continue my work with AWC-M. In 1990 the military sent us to Europe, first to Belgium and then Germany, and when we returned to the U.S., I eventually took a position at the University of Nebraska-Kearney and taught there for fifteen years until I retired; however, I still maintained my membership in professional organizations for both fellowship and community.

Earlier this year, I joined IAWM, and I look forward to working with and meeting my new colleagues. In addition to being active in promoting women composers and performers, I have taught women in music courses, and I often use texts by women poets and writers as well as themes related to women in my compositions. One example is an early piece of mine that honors a woman’s voice: *Of things I’d rather keep in silence* (1983). It is an improvisatory/indeterminant work using frame notation and loop techniques, based on the writing of Beatrix de Dia, a medieval trobairitz. The work was performed at an AWC-M concert at the Cultural Arts Center in Columbus, Ohio. Since then, I have set several texts by Hildegard von Bingen and have found inspiration in her writings for purely instrumental works; two examples are *Whirling Wings* (2003), for solo flute, and *Visions*, a tuba concerto (1995). Other works use texts by women writers such as Kathleen Norris and Simone Weil. My *Songs of Women* (1994) uses biblical texts from Ruth, Sara, and Judith.

Of the roughly 140 compositions I have written, over half were inspired by women poets, spirituality (Christian as well as Buddhist, Native American, and others), ecology, and the desire for peace. Almost all are the result of connections and community.

## MUSIC EDUCATION

### Redesigning Private Music School Education in Sweden: Gabriele Katthän on Challenges and Strategies

PAUL-ANDRÉ BEMPÉCHAT

An interview with Gabriele Katthän, Founder and Director of LIMUS (Lund’s International Music School), a pioneer of innovative, private musical education in Sweden. (This interview was conducted in German, Swedish, and English.)

**Paul-André Bempéchat:** It is a great honor to meet a colleague with such a remarkable history of personal and professional

resilience! Please tell us a little about your life and training.

**Gabriele Katthän:** Thank you! I’m thrilled that IAWM is interested in learning about music education in Sweden, and I am also delighted to have the opportunity to meet you! I was born sixty years ago in Northeim, near Göttingen, in Germany. My parents and all of my five brothers and sisters played instruments, so there was always music in the house. After Gymnasi-

um (high school), I started my studies in musicology and art history at the University of Göttingen. But one year later, when I was just eighteen, I was accepted at the HDK, Hochschule der Künste (University of the Arts) in West Berlin, and I moved to Germany’s most exciting cultural capital, which was divided by a wall at that time. In Berlin, I studied for many years and became a piano teacher, concert pianist, and harpsichordist.

**PAB:** Impressive, indeed. What are your musical preferences and inclinations?

**GK:** This is a tricky question as my preferences have changed a lot throughout different periods in my life. Roughly, I would say I prefer Haydn to Beethoven, Messiaen to Prokofiev, and Louis Couperin to François Couperin, and Debussy makes me feeling good even on bad days. Bach, of course, is a favorite, and just now I am working intensively with Beethoven. In Berlin, I frequently performed with chamber music ensembles, and I made my debut with the Philharmonie at the age of 22 playing Bach's Fifth Brandenburg Concerto. I had my radio debut shortly thereafter with a concert for harpsichord and mandolins.

**PAB:** Why did you move to Sweden?

**GK:** I moved to Lund, in southern Sweden, in early 1989, because I fell in love with a blonde Swede; he gave me some headaches but also two lovely daughters born in 1993 and 1996. Now, both are musicians and the younger one just moved to Berlin.

**PAB:** How did your career in Sweden evolve?

**GK:** My first position in Sweden was as a teacher of harpsichord and chamber music at the Malmö Academy of Music. Soon afterwards, I combined this with a position at the Municipal Culture School (*Kulturskolan*) in Lund. Many interesting years with talented students and good colleagues followed. But the years also demonstrated that music teaching in Sweden was controlled by political ideologies rather than by artistic vision. I found that immense, unexploited creative potential was inhibited, stifled, or actually prevented by traits of jealousy and suspicion.

In 1997, I decided to open a private music school, and I began by testing different formats. After several years, in 2010, I finally founded the ultimate construction, LIMUS, Lund's International Music School.<sup>1</sup> It is a school for life-long learning, independently directed by the visions of professional musicians and teachers, and it is the first one in Sweden with fully developed departments for different ages and music subjects. I'm proud to see more private schools opening now all over Sweden.

**PAB:** Given your superb training in Berlin as a soloist, what brought you to teaching?

**GK:** I have been teaching piano since I was 15. At a very early age, I became passion-

ately interested in the impact music makes on people. I found that by teaching I could help young people develop authentic personalities, able to listen to their own inner voices but also to others. I could help them learn the discipline of practicing, of daring to dream, and never giving up. At age 18, I decided that teaching music privately would be the *cantus firmus* of my life. I wanted to work with students of all ages who would take music lessons after school.

I had excellent teachers in Berlin who assisted in my development as an independent musician, a skilled teacher, and a creative entrepreneur. At the piano, I was fascinated when I discovered the secrets of how to create a soaring tone by free movements with weight but without pressure and how to sustain a free-flowing musical mind. While other students in the room next to me plowed through all the Chopin Etudes,

I devoted days to working on the first eight bars of Beethoven's E-flat major Sonata, op 27, no 1. I listened to the finest artists visiting Berlin, spent days at exhibitions and late nights in small, off-beat theaters where the young creative scene

performed exciting cross-overs. The *Piano Technique* book by Karl Leimer and Walter Giesecking and *Dynamic Piano Teaching* by Margit Varró as well as the method books by J J Quantz and CPE Bach attracted my attention much more than practicing to become just another pianist performing in a concert hall.

By the age of 21, I had started teaching at Europe's largest municipal music school in Berlin-Steglitz, and at age 24, I was trusted to hold training days for about 70 of my piano colleagues at this conservatory. I would like to honor the leader of this school, Rüdiger Trantow, for mentoring and encouraging the young woman I was for a lifelong commitment to music schools. At the Hochschule der Künste, I was a pianist in the Lieder class of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, and I participated in many masterclasses; I was mainly interested in how the instructor was teaching and

what impact the teaching had on the student. By the time I moved to Lund, early in 1989, I was extremely well equipped with knowledge, experience, and commitment.

**PAB:** And did this fantastic amalgam of experience support or enhance your work in Sweden?

**GK:** To be honest, during the first years, I thought I would need to switch to another profession. I am a positive and curious person, and I tried to adapt without losing my own track and focus. It was difficult, but looking back on it now, my good education gave me the security I needed.

The first apparent difference between Germany and Sweden that I noticed after arriving in 1989 was a distrust in Sweden of both classical music and professionals in the field. Classical music and private lessons were judged as "exclusive"—a rich man's hobby. Friends would remind me that Sweden, until just 120 years ago, had been a country with mostly peasants; the field of classical music never reached more than the upper society. Concerning music education, Sweden, in the 1950s, initiated municipal music schools, offering affordable music lessons that were highly subsidized through public funding. In the beginning, this attracted parents, as it suddenly seemed "cheap" to learn how to play an instrument.

**PAB:** So, the state controlled all private music education.

**GK:** Yes. As we say, the Swedish state still considers two things worth controlling: the price for alcohol and the price for private music lessons. Regarding state control of music education, I think nobody cared about the consequences. What had been private music lessons became organized teaching directed by the municipalities. By 1989, this system had nearly eliminated all the private teachers' studios, which also meant a big loss of good, competent teachers and their commitment to traditional musical excellence. Private music schools nearly disappeared throughout the entire country. Instead, thousands of children waited in queues to be admitted for subsidized lessons. When, in 1997, the government decided to impose a 25% VAT (Value-Added Tax) on private music teaching, there was a quick growth of black-market teaching. To hire a private music teacher who would not declare income and taxes became so common that even highly respected families took advantage of the situation.



Gabriele Katthän  
(photo by Jan Nordén,  
Lund)

**PAB:** How did this impact you?

**GK:** I found that my profession was now devalued to a non-profession without any labor market. There was no diversity, no natural competition between schools, no creative renewal. Today, Sweden's largest employer of after-school music teachers is the municipal music school, nowadays operating as *Kulturskolor*, or "Schools of Culture." Indeed, Sweden is losing the identity of the music school in its endeavor to gather the learning of all types of cultural expressions in just one municipal institution.

**PAB:** What are the differences in pedagogical orientation between the municipal schools and yours?

**GK:** The municipal culture schools are not run by the government. But they get subsidies from both the government and the municipality. Sweden has no formal curriculum for music subjects that are taught in these schools. What is taught is up to the teacher according to the teacher's musical education, background, and preferences. Some might teach classical music, but, according to the teachers, what they mainly teach is what "the children want to learn and are able to play." Nowadays, I would estimate that 92% of what is taught in these schools is popular music.

**PAB:** That's incredible, coming from the land that produced Birgit Nilsson, Jussi Björling, Greta Garbo, Elisabeth Söderström, Nikolai Gedda, Anne-Sophie von Otter, Anna Larsson, and, and, and...

**GK:** Sweden rules by *Jantelagen* (The Law of Jante).<sup>2</sup> It means that nobody should be treated better than anyone else. *Jantelagen* is not doing classical music any favors. You can't learn Beethoven in the 20-minute lessons that the municipal culture schools are offering under the pressure of the thousands of students waiting for subsidies. The curriculum for music in primary schools includes playing keyboard, guitar, and drums. This gives every child an opportunity to get acquainted with an instrument. After school, children have different needs, different preferences and must be afforded diverse ways to develop. Diversity is needed.

Of course, generous subsidies are good, but they need to follow the individual child, not focus on just one institution. It should be possible for every child to be subsidized and be able to choose the teacher and the school.

We should not limit our discussion to just after school lessons. Today, orchestras are bleeding, and so are the institutes of higher education in classical music. Nowadays, Sweden offers no specialized higher education for private music teachers. Instead, culture schools are claiming to produce "culture teachers" who can teach a variety of subjects such as piano, circus acts, and drawing. Creating secure positions for teachers at a municipal culture school has become more important than a flexible working environment for those able to teach classical music. This is also a result of the workers' unions, which are very strong in Sweden. In their endeavor to impose equal working conditions they subvert the individuality of cultural enterprises.



Gabriele Katthän teaching Jessica Lin  
(photo by Erik Mårtensson)

**PAB:** This must present enormous challenges for someone such as yourself, striving to encourage and develop independent creativity. How was LIMUS able to grow, survive, and thrive?

**GK:** I decided to build a pilot-project. I wanted to show that diversity is necessary and valuable. I wanted to prove that the young Swedish generation has been keen to attend a school such as LIMUS. At the same time, I knew that dedicated teachers all over Sweden were longing for a more liberal working situation. Today, my private music school, built only upon the fees paid by parents, is fully developed along different lines: The Music Kindergarten, the continuous teaching of children and young adults, the Young Academy, the adults taught by punch-tickets (ten lessons in a package, valid for six months), the music theory department, and the ensembles.

**PAB:** What subjects are taught at the school, and how many teachers and students does the school have?

**GK:** At LIMUS, we teach mainly classical music, but also film music and sometimes popular music. We are not teaching jazz yet, as I am still looking for the ideal teacher who can ensure a consistent presence and high-quality service. Twenty-four teachers of all classical instruments instruct about 500 students of all ages, and we present about 25 concerts every year. Most of the teachers are active performers. We also organize the exams of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) with excellent results, and we collaborate with contemporary composers who write new music for us. For example, I am looking forward to the premiere of Staffan Storm's *Berlin im Licht* ("Berlin, Illuminated"), written for two of my students, now professional pianists and also teachers at LIMUS.

We remain absolutely clear about our aim to maintain classical music through modern teaching approaches and methodologies. Our students learn how to read music, which in Sweden is a rare ability—even for teachers at the primary and secondary school levels. LIMUS is international, as all of us teach in Swedish and at least one foreign language. Personally, I feel the mix of teachers from all over the world to be a huge asset. And I am extremely proud of my colleagues! Through projects like "Beethoven's Own Day," LIMUS Contemporary, or "Pappa Bach's Birthday," we demonstrate our ability to combine a high artistic level with good, basic teaching. Young people are passionately interested in learning classical music when offered a place to grow. From there they can make an impact on the musical life of our country.

**PAB:** Your school then can serve as a model.

**GK:** Yes, our school can serve as a model for redesigning private music school education in Sweden. It is really important to understand that I needed a platform for creative work and therefore designed the school to its present state of pedagogical freedom and dynamic musical reorientation. Finally, with the music-check the school has become a model for a vital blend of private financing and public subsidies.

**PAB:** A music-check? This sounds interesting.

**GK:** The music-check enables children to make their own choices between different authorized music schools. They all receive the same subsidies, and the subsidies follow the child. This gives children greater access and encourages new music schools. In Lund, it took twenty years of negotiations to establish the music-check. Finally, in 2019, it started with two grades. This year, it is already three and next it will be five. In LIM-US, about 20% of all students are able to use it. More and more municipalities in Sweden are adopting the music-check system, aware that public subsidies need backup by private initiatives and creative renewal.

**PAB:** You mentioned your interest in women composers. Please elaborate.

**GK:** LIMUS is very active in presenting concerts and developing projects that introduce and promote women composers. We offer programs specifically devoted to music by women, and we include music by women in the standard repertoire. After all, progress must be made to establish women composers as part of the basic musical canon. For example, when, in 2015, a new anthology of Swedish piano music was launched, my Young Academy was requested to record the women composers for YouTube.<sup>3</sup> The repertoire included works by Valborg Aulin, Laura Netzel, Elfrieda André, and Victoria Borisova-Ollas. Subsequently, my students played these pieces many times afterwards in concerts. In another concert (May 2016), students performed music by Lily Boulanger, B. A. Miller, Joanna MacGregor, and others.<sup>4</sup>

On the pedagogical front, and most especially for LIMUS, I have been collabor-

rating for over twenty years with the Swedish-Danish contemporary composer Åse Söderquist Spering, who mainly writes and arranges music for piano students. She is a master of arranging classical and popular music for small hands without losing the essentials of melody and sound. I have translated some of her books into German, and we have maintained a lively creative exchange.<sup>5</sup>

And, of course, dear Clara Schumann! Upon moving into our new home in 2019, I named our little concert hall after Clara. It was her bicentenary, and we dedicated an entire concert to her that September, during which I also read from her letters and lectured on her life.

So, I dare say that students at LIM-US are quite knowledgeable about women composers. They also have opportunities to meet contemporary composers in workshops, where they can develop warm, working relationships, which contribute to their creative endeavors.

**PAB:** You told me about your fight with cancer and how music has kept you going.

**GK:** In 2013, I was becoming tired and had pains in the stomach. I thought it was normal when working hard. But it was colon cancer. And it was nearly too late when it was discovered in spring 2014, just the day before an important piano competition with my students. I was saved by Lund's and Malmö's famous cancer specialists. I needed to be saved several more times, the latest from breast cancer in fall 2019. I know all about tough treatments and the pleasure of receiving negative x-rays. But I also know that making music is one of the best medi-

cines one can have. I have been very open about the fact that it is my body, not my mind, that is ill. Considerate colleagues, students, and their parents make it possible for me to continue teaching, sometimes even when I am lying down on the couch. Still, my batteries are low chargers, but life with music always sustains one's curiosity about how to move on to the next phrase.

**PAB:** Thank you, Gabriele, and all the best—from all of us—for sustained good health and much happiness.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> [www.lundsmusiksalong.se](http://www.lundsmusiksalong.se)

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law\\_of\\_Jante](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_of_Jante)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.lundsmusiksalong.se/?page\\_id=4455](http://www.lundsmusiksalong.se/?page_id=4455)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.lundsmusiksalong.se/?page\\_id=4926](http://www.lundsmusiksalong.se/?page_id=4926)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.lundsmusiksalong.se/?page\\_id=1743](http://www.lundsmusiksalong.se/?page_id=1743)

*Pianist Paul-André Bempéchat has toured in virtually every country in Europe and across North America. In 2021, he will begin recording all of Beethoven's sonatas for Danacord Records. As a music historian, he researches and champions the music of Europe's unfairly forgotten composers and is the international authority on the Franco-Breton Impressionist Jean Cras. He has for four years served as Artist-in-Residence at Harvard University's Leverett House and is now music fellow at Cabot House. M. Bempéchat continues as research scholar at Harvard's Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, where he exploring theological underpinnings in the works of Chopin and Rachmaninov. In 2017, the French government knighted him as Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres; that year, Uppsala University conferred him the title of Hederskapellist, Honorary Fellow of the Royal Chapel and Academic Orchestra.*

## Young Women Composers Camp: Reflecting on Our First Virtual Summer

ERIN BUSCH, Founder and Artistic Director

It has been a summer of change for everyone, and one of great transition for educational and performing arts organizations across the nation. Those of us at the Young Women Composers Camp, a summer camp sponsored by Temple University in Philadelphia, made the decision back in March to transition our program online, and we implemented several structural changes in order to design a more organic virtual program. Our mission is to amplify the voices of female-identifying and non-binary composers, to allow them access to a high level of musical training, and to work towards a more equitable and diverse composition

field. We knew that we needed to make some adjustments in order to create a successful online realization of our program, which we initiated in 2018.<sup>1</sup> But we also knew that our program and community were needed more this summer than ever before.

One large structural change that we made this summer was to reduce camp hours. We normally hold our in-person program from 9 am to 4 pm on weekdays for two weeks at Temple University, but given the harsh realities of screen fatigue (as well as the many unknowns that our students may have been dealing with this summer), we decided to hold classes for

just a few hours each day. We also decided to welcome undergraduate students to apply to our program, in addition to our normal cohort of high school composers. This decision was made in light of the many summer festivals that were cancelled or postponed this summer, as well as the understanding that many undergraduate students were without the necessary resources or funding to continue to create music or receive guidance. The expansion of student eligibility contributed to our largest cohort ever—comprised of 50 students from across the U.S., Canada, Asia, and Australia—and also helped to

foster an environment of mutual support and peer-to-peer mentorship.

We maintained a regular daily schedule over the two weeks, beginning each day with a composition seminar from 11 am to noon. This seminar was taught by a variety of composers from different sectors of the field, including but not limited to: Alison Plante (Film Scoring), Erin Rogers (Improvisation), inti figgis-vizueta (Non-Traditional Notation), Lisa DeSpain (Composing for Musical Theater), and Adam Vi-diksis (Digital Audio Workstations). We also welcomed guest composer Gabriela Lena Frank for a casual discussion with our students about her life and experiences as a Latina composer. These seminars were often discussion-based, and were structured in a way to include frequent student interaction throughout.

After our morning session, we took a break for lunch and returned for a theory seminar from 1 to 2 pm. Topics included text setting, musical texture, scansion and prosody, strategies for non-linear forms, orchestration, analysis, and introduction to sound physics, synthesis, and Max/MSP. Needless to say, we covered a lot of different territory! Theory seminars were taught by our core composition faculty members: Melissa Dunphy, Niloufar Nourbakhsh, inti figgis-vizueta, and Flannery Cunningham. By offering our students a wide variety of seminar instructors, topics, and career paths within composition, we hope to have provided them with a wide spectrum of knowledge about the various options open to them, as well as connect them with mentors currently working in the field.

Immediately following our theory seminar, we entered our final session of the day, which was a student work-share hour. During this time, students could sign up for a time slot to share a completed work or a work-in-progress and receive feedback from an instructor and fellow students. This was a time for students to get to know each other's music and influences, and for more experienced students to offer encouragement and guidance. This was often the favorite session of the day, as it was a chance to hear what students were working on and witness first-hand the supportive nature of our community. It was beautiful to watch students lifting each other up through encouraging comments, suggestions, and affirmations.

The day formally ended after work-share at 3 pm, but we also offered at least one after-hours event each evening. These were optional sessions that usually took place in the early evening, and included events such as sessions from our ongoing Young Women Composers (YWC) Workshop Series, an AMA with composer Sarah Kirkland Snider, and a live realization of a Pauline Oliveros sonic meditation with members of the Sō Percussion Summer Institute, among others.

The highlight of the summer for our students was the chance to receive private lessons and write a new work for a professional performer/s. This summer, our students received two 45-minute private lessons from one of our core instructors, and met with a solo instrumentalist or vocalist from the International Contemporary Ensemble or Variant Six. Each student composed a short new work for their performer, and all works were recorded and compiled into one of two world premieres concerts that were live-streamed over Facebook Live at the end of July. We are so proud to have added 50 new works to the solo repertoire, written by a diverse collection of young female and non-binary composers from all across the world. Interested parties can find the recordings of both concerts on our YouTube channel by searching for our channel name, Young Women Composers.

We were dedicated to creating a virtual summer camp experience for our students, and we are proud to say that the anonymous student evaluations we received were overwhelmingly positive. We are proud to have continued to support the female-identifying and non-binary composer community through this work; however, we knew that we wanted to do even more for our professional community as well. We wanted to offer accessible programming to a wider audience, without financial restriction, that continued and expanded our work to amplify female-identifying and non-binary voices. In response, we put together a five-week Workshop Series, which was free and open to anyone without restriction of age, gender, location, or experience level. We hosted ten workshops that featured some of the most exciting female and non-binary voices in new music today, including composers Kate Soper, Vivian Fung, Angélica Negrón, Nina C. Young, Gabriela Lena Frank, and Pamela Z, as well as artists, performers, and administrators: Aiden Feltkamp (Emerging

Composers and Diversity Director, American Composers Orchestra), Eve O'Donnell (Artistic Producer to the Artistic Director, National Sawdust), Sarah Williams (New Works Administrator, Opera Philadelphia), and Claire Chase (Founder and Flutist, International Contemporary Ensemble).

Additionally, we launched a Virtual Choir Project in order to premiere our first commissioned work by composer Jungyoon Wie. We had previously co-commissioned this work with the Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music in support of her CREA Initiative fellowship (Composers for Racial Equity in the Arts), of which Jungyoon was one of the first recipients. The piece was intended to be performed by the YWCC Choir; however, when we transitioned online, it became clear that the choir element of our program would need to change in its scope. Therefore, we decided to extract choir from the camp and create an open submission portal for the premiere of Jungyoon's new work for SSA choir. The piece is entitled *My Own Muse, I*, and sets a poem by living poet Carlina Duan, who is based in Ann Arbor. About the poem, Carlina writes: "This poem was written this spring, amidst the current global pandemic, as a reminder and an affirmation of our own individual strength. I love the idea of being 'my own muse'—of looking inwards to being inspired, and of celebrating the interior histories and contexts where I'm from."

As I write this article, recordings are being submitted by female-identifying and non-binary sopranos or altos without restrictions on age, location, or experience level. We are excited to bring together the global female and non-binary community through this virtual premiere, and hope it will be the first of many similar endeavors. We also plan to program a live performance of the piece at our next in-person camp.

Though it has been a fairly unpredictable summer in many ways, we are so proud of what we have been able to accomplish and the lives that we have been able to change through our organization. Receiving personal testimonials from our students about their camp experience is immensely gratifying, and reassures us that we are on the right path as an organization. After our concert livestreams, one 2020 student submitted the following:

"I'm so grateful I got to attend this camp! It really changed how I think about composing, and how I believe in myself.

I never realized how valuable it was even just to know there are other girls and folks out there who are my age, and who compose! Before YWCC, I think I grew up subconsciously believing that I could not become a ‘real’ composer....I can’t express how priceless this opportunity was to me.”

There are many changes on the horizon for our organization, including an expansion to include year-round programing,

and we are excited to share them with you in the near future. For the time being, we are extremely grateful for the opportunities we were able to pursue this summer and the composers with whom we were able to interact, and we plan to continue expanding this important work.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For additional information, see: Cynthia Folio, “The Young Women Composers

Camp: Amplifying the Voices of Young Women,” *Journal of the IAWM* 24/2 (2018): 21-23. Erin Busch, “Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Online Programming by the Young Composers Camp,” *Journal of the IAWM* 26/1 (2020): 24-26.

*Erin Busch, a composer, cellist, and educator, is currently pursuing a PhD degree in composition at the University of Pennsylvania. She is the 2020 winner of the Libby Larsen Prize in IAWM’s Search for New Music.*

## Everyone Should Feel Welcome

SARAH LEMIEUX

Music is a human joy, and everyone should feel welcome to create it. As a composer and performer, I am very eclectic. When people ask me, “What kind of music do you play?” I say, “All of it,” and it is true—electronic, electroacoustic, chamber, jazz, folk, ambient, experimental, lo-fi chill beats—there is no genre, style, or sound in the world that I don’t feel I can share. Part of this has to do with my family; they played and listened to all kinds of music, such as classical guitar, experimental French folk, delta blues, and dream theater, and they treated it all as equally worthy of joy and attention. Part of it also has to do with the wonderful community at Vermont College of Fine Arts, where I earned a master’s degree in music composition and learned that context and perspective are as much a part of a musical experience as the instrumentation.

Before I attended VCFA, however, I had a complicated relationship with music and the art of creation as I tried to interact with the musical world. For example, as a performer fresh out of undergraduate school in New York City, I wanted nothing more than to be taken seriously for my artistic capabilities. Instead, I was asked to wear miniskirts when I was hired for gigs. When I put my chamber jazz ensemble together, the violinist I had hired from the symphony would frequently nudge me to the side and start conducting my pieces in rehearsal.

Even my first experience with piano lessons was off-putting. Before beginning formal instruction, I had explored the piano as though I were searching in a forest—seeing how far I could go in each direction, exploring combinations of sounds, and even crawling underneath the piano and daydreaming there. By contrast, the restrictions of my first formal lessons felt not only narrowing and diminishing but arbi-

trary. I was intimidated by the formality of my instruction, and I was unable to articulate my troubled feelings about the structure and focus of my lessons.

Now that I am a composer and an ensemble leader, I can appreciate the specificity of good notation. As a bandleader and an educator, I can appreciate pedagogy that builds a strong foundation of skills. Being able to read fluently, having hours of scales under your fingers, and using correct posture and position take a diligent student with capacity farther than they could go without



Sarah LeMieux

those foundations, and they form a necessary baseline for professionals. In both my teaching practice and as a performer and collaborator,

I make sure to explain that these things are tools made by human minds for human minds, and if any of them do not work, we can try something else. These are not fixed concepts and practices. They have evolved, and they can continue to evolve. Everyone is welcome to be a co-creator in this evolution.

Most important for me in working with students is imbuing a sense of agency. Opening up music to and for students of all abilities and backgrounds—including context, curriculum, pedagogy, set, and setting—is a good way to make them feel as though they have agency to collaborate, participate, and change systems and structures of all kinds, not just musical ones.

I have had the wonderful experience of designing instruction for music students with special needs for almost twenty years, beginning as a performance coach for my brother Brendan’s rock band. My broth-

er has Williams Syndrome, a genetic syndrome that comes with some medical and cognitive disabilities and different abilities. It is also quite common for individuals with Williams to have a deep affinity for music as well as a heightened natural capacity.

Brendan and his colleagues were talented, hardworking musicians who required accommodations to be able to play and learn at a high level. A young keyboard player needed to wear special headphones to allow her to focus on her performance in a group situation. Working from standard notation was not a possibility with the group, so we created color-coded memory aids, and they learned by ear. Parts sometimes needed to be modified. The performances often broke the fourth wall, with the performers encouraging the audience to sing and clap along, even in traditionally formal contexts. The work these musicians created together was on a high professional level, as their performance of complex pieces of music demonstrated.

Approaching teaching through the lens of flexibility and accommodation early in my career let me bring that approach forward into the rest of my teaching, which ranged from early childhood to adult learners, and from neurotypicality across the spectrum of the human mind. It also allowed me to see the ways in which typical instructional pedagogy would benefit from making space for individuation.

As I stated in the opening sentence, music is a human joy, and everyone should feel welcome to create it. From a skill-building standpoint, this means flexible pedagogy; for example, meeting students where they are, emphasizing enjoyment in process and a growth mindset, and letting go of any expectations one might have about a determined outcome. From a curricular standpoint, this means venturing out from the ivory tower of traditionally re-

vered repertoire, and bringing students music from different historical times and places, made by people of all races, all national, ethnic, and religious backgrounds, and all gender identities and expressions. It is really not hard, and moreover, it's delightful.

I have the privilege of serving on the Board of Education in my town, and in my first year, the district finished the process of writing a K-12 music curriculum for the first time. Proudly, the Head of Humanities presented the curriculum at a meeting, and in many ways it was robust. It provided a leveled rubric for listening and analysis, performance and creation, and history, by grade level. It was developmentally appropriate. I leafed through to the section that listed works that would be required for study by all students: Tchaikovsky, Mozart, Brahms.

Tchaikovsky, Mozart and Brahms composed incredibly beautiful music, by anyone's standards. The problem I saw,

and continue to see, is that we were approving a curriculum for a district that consisted of more than two-thirds Latinx, Black, and Brown students. I am not suggesting that people of all races and colors cannot or would not appreciate or enjoy music made by people of any race or color—quite the opposite. Music has a profound and palpable ability to connect people across all boundaries, including time and space. However, it is important to show children that people who look like them, and come from families like they do, and speak the languages they hear at home, are welcome in any role they might choose for themselves as they grow into adulthood.

All of us in positions of any authority are responsible for helping to create a better world that is more just, more inclusive, and more joyful. The best way to do this, I think, is to help as many people as possible feel connected to the process of creation. In

this strange pandemic moment of significant social change, we need to maintain an awareness and continue to grow space for the idea that we can do things differently. Creating anything imbues the creator with a sense of purpose and agency that blooms outward into life. Inclusive curriculum and pedagogy may seem like a fashionable trend compared to traditional instruction, but traditions are only traditions because we made them so.

As a composer, I feel a sense of agency in my own creation of this essay, to make use of my own words as a refrain in this piece: *these things are tools made by human minds for human minds. These are not fixed concepts and practices. They have evolved, and they can continue to evolve. Everyone is welcome to be a co-creator in this evolution. Music is a human joy, and everyone should feel welcome to create it.*

## THE INFLUENCE OF ARMENIAN AND KOREAN TRADITIONAL MUSIC

### The Road to Home: Memories of Life in Armenia

TATEV AMIRYAN

I was born in a very small, rural town in Armenia to a family of government workers. I was attracted to music from the earliest days I can remember. Everything that involved sound was fascinating to me, and I believe I was born with a special connection to music. As a young child, I participated in a variety of musical arts: singing, dancing, playing an instrument, and composing music. My formal musical education started at the age of seven at our community music school, where I studied piano, solfège, and music history, and sang in the choir. Until my parents could obtain a piano for me, I practiced on the floor on a hand-drawn keyboard, trying to imagine the sounds in my head and the feel of the keys under my fingers. I believe this is how I developed a special aptitude for sound and a desire to create it myself. One of the most memorable and joyful days of my life was when my parents could finally obtain a piano for me.

Aside from music, my life at home was difficult. My typical Soviet-raised parents rarely received much praise from their parents, and they believed that criticism was the only way to make a child grow. As a result, I did not receive encouragement, and I faced merciless (but not intentionally mean) criticism from my parents, which made me feel that I was never good enough.

I therefore grew up with a lack of confidence in myself and with a mentality that there was nothing special about me. It was decades later when I realized that I had a special gift: that I was born to be a musician and that I had a mission, which inspired me to continue with music despite the twisted and bumpy roads of my life.



Tatev Amiryan

My musical journey overlapped with a period that was a turning point in the history of Armenia. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Armenia proclaimed its independence, which marked the beginning of the territorial conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan (1988-94) over Nagorno-Karabakh (also known as Artsakh), a predominantly Armenian-populated region in the South Caucasus, which turned into nearly six years of warfare. I lived the majority of my childhood during wartime, experiencing all the misery of life that war can cause. This is the reason I gained an understanding of life and became a grown-up while still a child.

During the long, cold winter nights, when there was no gas or electricity, no entertainment or fun, I would spend many hours at the piano. I would practice and write music by candle-light, wearing gloves and covering myself with a blanket. Life was dark and cold, and the joy of music warmed my heart. Since both of my parents were working during the day, it was my responsibility to go to the store to get our daily portion of bread, which was limited to only one small loaf per family. While standing in a line for hours in the freezing cold or rain, I pondered the meaning of life; I felt cheated and despondent, and I no longer even wanted to live. Today, when I look back, I feel so sorry for that little girl, and I wish I could go back in time and hug her and tell her that a better life exists and there will be nicer days.

In spite of the struggles and the gloominess associated with my childhood, it is a place I have always looked back to in my



2021-2023  
*strategic plan*



2018 Annual Concert at Trinity College in Dublin. Miriam Kaczor (flute), Siun Milne (violin), Yseult Cooper (cello), Máire Carroll (piano). Diane Berry, Kelly-Marie Murphy, Esther Shuyue Cao, Anna Rubin, Anna Murray, Amy Brandon, Jane O'Leary, Cara Haxo, Silvia Rosani, Rhona Clarke, and Judith Shatin attended.



In 2017, at the Annual Concert at Kansas State University, IAWM President Carrie Leigh Page accepts the American Composers Forum's Adventurous Programming Award.



Ensemble Vocal Luna with composer Christina Rusnak in Havana Cuba, 2016.

The IAWM began this planning process by including input from you – our members. Thank you to all who responded to our survey in the spring. Your insight – on what the leadership team does well, and where we falter – helped provide us with a blueprint to continue what you so clearly love about the IAWM and the goals and strategies to move forward. Hence, the mission of the IAWM has not changed, but we are reinvigorated with a new vision to better serve our members in the future. We are focused on Connection, Opportunity, Visibility and Relevance.

## mission

The International Alliance for Women in Music fosters and encourages the activities of women in music.

## vision

The IAWM is the world's leading organization devoted to the equity, promotion and advocacy of women in music across time, cultures and genres.

## values

Inclusion, Diversity and Equity



Support and Connection



Global Advocacy and Visibility



Communication



Courage

# *goals and strategies*

## GOAL 1

Through IAWM's programming and advocacy efforts, increase the visibility, opportunities, connections and relevance of IAWM and its members

### STRATEGIES

- ◆ Ensure that all of IAWM's programming and advocacy are inclusive and equitable, and that they promote intersectionality in all activities, including racial, ethnic, geographical and musical diversity.
- ◆ Increase the value, connection and relevance of IAWM membership and engagement
- ◆ Amplify advocacy and visibility for Women in Music and IAWM
- ◆ Advocate to improve the awareness, opportunities and relevance of IAWM in all Musical Communities
- ◆ Establish and Maintain strategic partnerships to further IAWM's network and strength



## GOAL 2

Ensure the future Financial Sustainability of the IAWM

### STRATEGIES

- ◆ Improve the Financial Sustainability of the board through long-range Financial Planning
- ◆ Establish and Maintain certified Accounting Practices
- ◆ Develop a Branding / Marketing Committee and Plan to increase awareness and growth
- ◆ The Membership chair will work with Finance, Advocacy, Marketing and Development to seek opportunities to increase membership
- ◆ Create a Development / Fundraising Committee and Plan to provide external support and to foster IAWM growth



## GOAL 3

Improve the IAWM's organizational structure, development and effectiveness

### STRATEGIES

- ◆ Increase Board Development and Capacity
- ◆ Focus on Equity and Inclusion to expand diverse voices and strengthen IAWM
- ◆ Expand Membership Internationally so that our membership better reflects the world of women in music
- ◆ Improve the effectiveness of the IAWM board with more structured processes and continuity plans





## *more to come in 2021!*

Thank you to all of the board members, present and past, who spent many meetings and contributed to the plan in 2020!!

Kerensa Briggs ♦ Monica Buckland

Michele Cheng ♦ Samantha Ege

Matthew Hoch ♦ Natalia Kazaryan

Lil Lacy ♦ AJ Layague

Eve Meyer ♦ Carrie Leigh Page

Wanda Brister Rachwal ♦ Dana Reason

Natalia Rojcovscaia ♦ Christina Rusnak

Deb Saidel ♦ Angela Slater

Kelly Vaneman ♦ Sarah Westwood

and Kathryn Woodard

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life and my music. Sometimes I wonder why I am so attached to it, since the quality of life was so poor and joyless. Maybe music is that little stream of light that shines brightly, calling through the darkness, the light that warmed me in the cold days and helped me cope with the hardships. In fact, it is through my childhood that I discovered the healing power of music that helped me to survive.

Many of my compositions are inspired by my childhood memories and reflect the war-time reality. One of them is *Echoes from Childhood* for piano. It is a musical reflection of my recollection of the summer nights when there was no electricity; for entertainment, we children played hide and seek outdoors. I remember how hungry we were as we ran carefree in the dark streets of our neighborhood with our parents calling us home. The piece aims to show how a child can cope with struggles and can find happiness in little things, and it shows how the light of a child's soul can strike through the darkness and sorrow.

One of the most tragic and overwhelming emotions of my childhood was my memory of the funerals and the people mourning their loved ones, which I often witnessed daily and tried to comprehend. Human loss was something that I could not quite understand as a child, but it caused overwhelming emotions in me. The picture of my childhood friend, who lost her father to the war, running after military men and begging them to take her to her father has been forever tattooed in my memory, and it inspired my piano piece *L'Espérance* (expectation, hope). The traumas of my childhood remain with me and are difficult to overcome. They have shaped me and remain a part of me.

After fifteen years of formal education in music (community music school, Tchaikovsky Special Music School, and the Komitas State Conservatory in Yerevan) and earning degrees in multiple majors (composition, musicology, and piano), I found myself still searching. I did not quite know where I was headed. There were not many opportunities to get established, since music composition was a highly male-dominated field in Armenia. I felt underestimated and discriminated against as a woman composer. Women did not receive equal support, and their work was not appreciated.

Because there was no way for me to earn a living as a musician, I had to take an office job, which allowed very little

time for music, and, of course, I was unhappy and felt lost. I realized that it would be necessary for me to leave Armenia and try to establish myself elsewhere. I was especially attracted to the United States with its openness and abundant opportunities. I faced enormous challenges and many obstacles on the way, and it took me almost three years to be able to realize my goal. In January 2011, I moved to the United States as an international student to pursue doctoral studies in the composition program at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance. This was the beginning of a new journey with new experiences and accomplishments.

Living alone, far from home and family, proved to be difficult, but I continued to compose. My homesickness gave birth to a number of compositions, including *Retro Non* for string quartet and *Hiraeth* for solo piano. *Retro Non – No Way Back* (from the Latin “no repeat”) is about the life-changing choices that we have to make unwillingly. It is about the longing, the sorrow, and the feeling of loss that we carry inside throughout our lives.

Aside from homesickness, the biggest challenge for me as a composer was to survive outside my cultural environment. Despite the war and other struggles, my homeland gave me enormous strength and creative energy, which I found essential. This was the first time that I realized the immense importance of national belonging for me as a composer, and this feeling drastically changed the nature of my music. I wanted to express the “Armenianness” that it had not had before.

Music has been an essential part of Armenian culture since ancient times. Armenian folk music has accompanied every aspect of people’s lives, ranging from agricultural work, housework, childcare, and lullabies to holidays, love, weddings, funerals, and religious ceremonies, and it offers a rich variety of genres from epic and ritual to humorous. My love of traditional Armenian music plus my training in Western music enabled me to develop a musical language that represents an organic blend of both traditions, integrat-

ing Armenian traditional modes and scales with Western harmonies and techniques. The influence of Armenian folk music appears in my works in different ways. In *Last Lullaby* for soprano and piano, I aimed to recreate the genre of the traditional Armenian lullaby but through contemporary interpretation.

In *Armenian Fantasy* for piano, I used Armenian modes as a basis, and in “Spring in the Mountains” from *Six Pictures for Piano*, I used rhythmic and melodic patterns from folk dance songs to build the melodic material. In the piece, the main motive is based on repeated notes and a descending perfect fourth, similar to that of Armenian folk dance songs such as *Hop Shurma* (Հոփ Շուրմա). See Examples 1 and 2.

My inspiration from Armenian sacred music appears in my recent piece *Praise the LORD* for mezzo-soprano and piano, an English setting of Psalm 148. The theme in the vocal part is based on a diminished-fourth scale, and it incorporates the decoration style typical of the vocal melodies of Armenian sacred music. With its ascetic and restrained character and strictly metrical setting, the vocal part resembles the monophonic chants (Sharagans) and hymns of the Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Church. See Examples 3 and 4. *Praise the LORD* was selected as one of the winners of the IAWM 2021 Annual Concert Call for Scores.

A major inspiration for me has been the music of Komitas (1869-1935), an Armenian priest, composer, ethnomusicologist, singer, and choirmaster who is considered the founder of the Armenian national school of music. Komitas was one of the first Armenian musicians to obtain professional training in Western classical music,

Ex. 1. *Six Pictures for Piano*

Ex. 2. *Hop Shurma*, an Armenian folk dance song

and he used his training to build national music traditions. One of the most valuable of Komitas' contributions was his collection of folk songs. He visited various Armenian regions, collected and wrote down thousands of Armenian folk melodies, giving them a new life and preserving them for future generations. Besides writing original compositions, Komitas also arranged Armenian folk songs for piano and choir to promote Armenian music and make it accessible to wider audiences.

Komitas' piano works have become an essential part of my concert repertoire, and his music has served as a great source of inspiration for my own compositions since my earliest works. I have always been drawn to the crystal purity, refinement, and genuineness of his works, springing from the very roots of Armenian folk music, and that is what I have strived to achieve in my compositions. Komitas's music has served not only as inspiration for me but it has also played a role in my compositions, serving as musical material for my works. In my piano piece *Ortus*, I used the rhythmic and

melodic intonations from his song *Shogher Jan*, and in my *Waiting For The Dawn* for piano, I have quoted his song *Andouni* (Homeless) to build a bridge to his own compositional language and musical traditions. Touched by the tragic life of Komitas, who suffered a mental breakdown after witnessing the atrocities of the Armenian Genocide in 1915 (and later spent the rest of his life in a psychiatric hospital in Paris), I wrote an homage to him, *Tristesse* for piano, which references his piano music traditions through contemporary representation.

As an ambassador of Armenian musical culture abroad, one of my goals as a composer and pianist is to continue promoting Armenian music traditions and to educate foreign audiences about Armenian culture and history. Some of my works tell the story of my people and reflect the tragic pages of their past. Among them is one of my largest works, *The Birth of the Eternal* for string orchestra, piano, and percussion, which was a part of my doctoral dissertation (2015). As a centennial commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, it honors

the memory of 1.5 million Armenians who were massacred by the Ottoman Turks. The Ottoman government's systematic extermination of its own non-Turkish and non-Muslim minority is marked in history as the Armenian Genocide; in fact, the very word "genocide" was coined to describe this particular event and the intentions behind it.

As time passed, even after a hundred years, the pain of such an immense human loss remains alive among the Armenian people, a pain that they carry in their blood from generation to generation. Having survived this attempt at extermination in 1915, the Armenian people today also mark that year as a time of revival. Much like the myth of the Phoenix, this dark page in history gave a new birth, and a new life to the Armenian people, who proved their great strength and resilience. It also established a stronger belief among Armenians in their ability to endure. The piece symbolizes rebirth and revival and accentuates the power of belief. A musical tribute to my perished ancestors, this piece is also a look back to this most tragic period of Armenian history from a descendent of Genocide survivors and from a twenty-first century perspective.

My Armenian upbringing has played a significant role in shaping my musical mentality and image as a composer. Living far from my homeland made me closer to my roots, and the longer I lived away, the stronger I got attached to it. Over time, the concept of home has become a permanent element in my music. Through the long journey of self-searching and self-establishment, it is in a foreign land that I have found myself. Even though I often question: "Where do I really belong?" Feeling no ground under my feet, in between two different worlds and realities, I have come to realize that music is the only home to me. No matter where I am in this world, in my music I feel at home.

*Dr. Tatev Amiryan is an award-winning composer and pianist. Her music has been performed throughout the U.S., Europe, the Middle East, and Japan by renowned ensembles and performers. Amiryan received First Prize at the Armenian Allied Arts 71st Composition Competition, the UMKC Conservatory Chamber Music Composition Competition, Metropolitan Chorale of Kansas City's Composition Contest, Abundant Silence Composition Competition, IAWM, Crossing Borders Music and Juventas New Music Ensemble Call for Scores, and the 2nd Prize at New Ariel Recordings Fifth Piano Composition Competition. Please visit <https://www.tatevamiryan.com>*

Larghetto  $\text{♩} = 75$   
Maestoso  
breathy tone, very little vibrato *mp*

Praise-the - LORD. Praise-the-LORD from the hea - vens:  
praise him in the heights. Praise him, praise him all his an-gels:  
praise him, all his hosts. Praise him, praise him sun and moon:  
praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye hea - vens of hea-vens, and  
wa-ters - that be a - bove the hea-vens. Let them praise the name of the LORD,

Ex. 3. *Praise the LORD* for mezzo-soprano and piano (only the vocal part)

Qashqatnir. Andante

Ան - ձիմ նը - ւիր - եա - լըր սի - րոյն  
Զրիս - տն - սի երկ - նա - լըր նա - հս և տալըր  
եւ կու - սամը ի - նաս - տոմը, ի պար - ծա - նըր

Ex. 4. "Anzing Nrivealq," a type of Sharagan (monophonic chant)

# UKOREVV: Universal Korean Organic Ensemble — Viktoria & Virtuosi

VIKTORIA ELISABETH KAUNZNER

On a crisp evening in October 2019, in a concert organized by the cultural department of the South Korean Embassy in Berlin, eight classical musicians assembled on stage to perform my work entitled *Lasagna of Insects*. They played traditional Western instruments as well as traditional Eastern instruments such as the piri (double reed) and haegeum (Korean-type violin). They were accompanied by an electronic sound artist and a light designer, when suddenly a dancer floated through the auditorium mimicking a praying mantis. Why would I compose such a strange work, and what kind of ensemble is performing it? Answers to these questions are in the article that follows.

I grew up in the picturesque landscape of the Bavarian Forest in Germany, and my childhood was shaped by classical music as well as the folk music of Eastern Europe. I studied violin with the legendary Zakhar Bron and received an excellent education in composition and music theory. I was in my 20s, enjoying a successful career as a performer and composer, when I was offered the opportunity by the Liszt School of Music in Weimar to teach at its branch in South Korea. I had long been fascinated by the Korean Buddhist philosophy, traditional shamanism, and admiration for nature, so I decided to accept the challenge. At the age of 28, in 2010, I moved to South Korea and was youngest female European violin and chamber music professor at Kangnam University, and I learned to speak Korean.

I vividly recall one influential moment during my time in Seoul. I was watching the ballet *Giselle* and was deeply touched by how the combination of a Western symphony orchestra with Korean traditional instruments created a marvelous, magical effect. This was a key moment in my life, and I knew my mission for the future. I decided that when I returned to Germany in 2018 I would create an



Viktoria Elisabeth  
Kaunzner

ensemble composed of internationally renowned soloists and chamber musicians performing on Western classical instruments and Korean traditional instruments, with special emphasis on strings. The orchestra could serve as a musical ambassador, a new silk road, from East to West. Asian harps and zithers (gayageum) could interact with European harps and zithers; gut strings could combine with double-twisted silk strings (haegeum), and so forth. We called the ensemble UKOREVV: Universal Korean Organic Ensemble — Viktoria & Virtuosi. Because of everyone's strong interest in science, nature, and the arts, we added "universal" and "organic" to our name.

Our members come from three continents, and the size of our group is flexible, ranging from solo performers to an ensemble of ten or more.<sup>1</sup> Our programs might include singing, dancing, painting, poetry, electronics, and special lighting. We improvise, and we often address natural themes such as animals, insects, or food. We perform our own works or arrangements, sometimes with a touch of humor, as well as standard repertory. We also provide an opportunity and an experimental laboratory for contemporary composers, and we hope more IAWM members will write for our group. Our intent is to perform music along with a discussion that will inform, inspire, and sometimes amuse our audience and not send them home baffled, as some contemporary music does. A brief description of a few pieces in our repertoire should be helpful in understanding our approach.

In May 2019, we made a YouTube video of my piece *New Silk Road* at Werkstatt, an atelier with handcrafted lamps in Berlin. Three jewels and minerals in the video represent the new trade route leading from Asia. The music is a hypnotic Iberian-Korean fusion, with *Chinyangjo* rhythm (18/8, very slow, with accents) in reverse order. The fascinating sound is derived from the Korean gayageum, which is played while seated on the ground. This flexible instrument with movable rosewood bridges and 12 to 25 double-twisted silk strings is joined by the Bavarian zither, harp, Turkish saz, violin, cello, clarinet, piano, and percussion. In January of 2020, we published a genuine chocolate recording of *New Silk*

*Road*, produced by Wohlfarth Chocolatier in Berlin. It is a seven-inch record consisting of 100% vegan chocolate that one can eat after listening several times. The Christmas 2020 edition is in progress.<sup>2</sup>

Although we occasionally perform humorous works, our repertoire includes concertos and other serious works,



Gamin playing the piri

such as the commissioned piece by Gamin, a woman composer and world-famous piri (double reed) specialist and sheng (Chinese mouth-organ) player, who holds the prestigious title of Yisuja (Master). She says her work, *Sunset Clouds*, expresses "the conflicting dualities that exist in our chaotic world: happiness, sadness, war and disaster, while at the same time, the persistent innocence of children."

My piece for ensemble, *Golden Sponge* (2017), has been praised for its exotic colors as it immerses us in a sea world that teems with life. It is scored for piri, haegeum (string), sheng, violin, and percussion, which produce a distinctive, transparent, and bright spectra of sounds with micro-tonal coloring. It is a multimedia work, including loop and field recordings, in which each of the three musicians sits behind a translucent gauze screen and is silhouetted against the changing colored lights. The poetic imagery of the music depicts the beautiful sponge with its seahorse and snail neighbors and other flora and fauna plus the sounds of shells, stones, and wood fluctuating formlessly. The work symbolizes the rituals of animism (the attribution of a soul to plants, inanimate objects, and natural phenomena), which is still practiced in Asian countries. It can produce a trance-like state and inner calm.<sup>3</sup> *Golden Sponge* and romantic music by Nikolaj Medtner (1879-1951) will soon be released by Sony Classical on the CD *Eurasian Gold*. The instruments will be the finest available, and I will be performing the violin part on the "David" Guarneri del Gesu violin (ca. 1735).

The current pandemic has created challenges for us as well as for all the per-

forming arts, and UKOREVV has become an online club with musical exchanges and a support team that maintains frequent communication. Many concerts have been canceled such as one we were especially looking forward to at Lotte Concert Hall in Seoul in March 2020; it was to have featured my piece *Lucid Dreams* for baritone, violin, three flutes, and Eurasian orchestra. In case the restrictions go on beyond the next concert season, we will consider performing more open-air concerts or indoor programs for a small number of guests. So far we have presented only solo and duo concerts such as the two open-air concerts at the Mendelssohn Palais and the Liebermann Society, which inspired our improvisation about the beautiful garden. One problem that arises in outdoor venues is that an instrument needs acoustical space to unfold its sounds and the whole overtone spectrum. A microphone with artificial reverb simply does not give a satisfactory effect.

Currently, we have exciting plans for next summer: UKOREVV, in cooperation with the German Chamber Orchestra Berlin, will present the world premiere of Violeta Dinescu's concerto *Roman Fleuve* for violin and strings. She composed it in

the summer of 2019 at the Black Sea and dedicated it to me. Korean composer Kim Dae Sung and I have discussed plans for a concerto for violin, gayageum, and Eurasian orchestra, and Seoul-based composer Elisenda Fabregas intends to compose a violin concerto with Eurasian spirit for us. We are planning to add a new dimension to our concerts. In my piece *Jasmine Rice* for improvising violin, Eurasian ensemble, and lighting, we want to add scent. Wolfgang Georgsdorfer, inventor of a fragrance organ called Osmodrom, pianist and visual artist Kurt Laurenz Theinert, and I are sharing conceptual ideas.

Other plans include Jobst Liebrecht's *Three Fantasy Pieces* for violin and piano, which he has dedicated to me; it is based on poems by Michael Hamburger and is waiting for its premiere. Violeta Dinescu's recent dedication, *The Birds*, on a poem by John Grayson Brown, will be part of a concert that also features music by Ursula Mamlok. We are discussing a commission for a concerto by Malaysian composer KeeYong Chon, and I plan to write a concerto about the saiga antelope. It is a critically-endangered animal, which, during ancient times, inhabited vast areas of the Eurasian steppe.

Until now, UKOREVV has depended on our volunteer support team. We are actively searching for an agent, an enthusiastic person who can create bridges between Eastern and Western traditions. In order to realize all of our plans for the future, we will need to find long-term sponsors to join us in partnership. If we do, our dreams will become a reality!

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> UKOREVV: Universal Korean Organic Ensemble—Viktoria & Virtuosi includes the following performers. Gamin, (piri, taepyeongso, saenghwang/ composition); Sung Youjin; Yu Bora (gayageum/ composition); Choi Sori, Park Solji (haegeum); Kang Sungwoo (daegeum); Hyeri Song (flute); Francesco Petri (clarinet); Sasha Boldachev (harp/ composition); Johannes Schubert (zither); Rebekah Reid (violin/ composition), Kanghyun Lee, Jonathan Reveuni, Weimo Gao (cello), Dr. Roman Salyutov and Yaoyao Brandenburg (piano); Ondrej Bernovsky (harpsichord); Ahmad Hussein (saz); Peter Fleckenstein (percussion); Isak Han (electronic sound artist); Ennio Tangocci (sound design); Nora Rogglausch (live painting); Alessandro Navarro Barbeito and Won Jin Young (dance); Viktoria Elisabeth Kaunzner (violin, composition, artistic director). Please visit [www.viktoriakaunzner.com](http://www.viktoriakaunzner.com)

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYIVZwM5XZs>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vpzCbTS9OjE&feature=youtu.be>

## REPORTS

### Women Banding Together

LAURA JOHNSON

with contributions by Virginia Allen,  
Jenny L. Neff and Lori Schwartz Reichl

Reminisce about your musical studies and performances from childhood through adulthood. How many women have you had the opportunity to collaborate with or learn from within the private studio and classroom, through composition, or on the podium? How many women conductors have you observed leading an ensemble at the secondary, collegiate, or military levels? How many specifically in the band world? Who have been your greatest mentors, and how many of these inspirational figures have been women? The quantity is low (although rising!), yet the quality is remarkable.

This perception of a lack of meaningful mentorship specifically for women band directors led four multigenerational women to create the global group “Women Banding Together” in the spring of 2020. The co-founders are Virginia Al-

len (Juilliard faculty member and retired Army band conductor), Laura Johnson (Chesapeake Public School Band Director and Assistant Conductor of the Bay Youth Wind Symphony, Virginia), Jenny L. Neff (Associate Professor of Music Education, Director of the Master of Music and Summer Music Studies at The University of the Arts, Philadelphia), and Lori Schwartz Reichl (author, educator, consultant, and founder of MakingKeyChanges.com, Maryland). All of the Women Banding Together co-founders are active clinicians, presenters, and guest conductors.

The mission of Women Banding Together (WBT) is to cultivate mentoring relationships among current, future, and retired women band directors at all levels, including band directors who identify as female or non-binary. WBT provides a platform to explore unique issues for women band directors, to connect with women band directors who seek support in the growth and development of their careers, and to assist anyone of any gen-

der in the mentorship of current and aspiring women band directors.

Since our founding in May, we have hosted five panel discussions and three virtual happy hours. It is our intent to engage with the WBT community every two weeks, typically alternating between panel discussions and virtual happy hours. The topics explored during our panel discussions have included “Transitioning with Resilience,” “Actionable Steps Towards Change,” “Reflecting on Our Classrooms and Communities Through the Lens of #BlackLivesMatter,” “The Student and Parent Voice Through the Lens of #BlackLivesMatter,” and “Back-to-School Health and Wellness.” Our October panel discussion will focus on building relationships with administrators. Our virtual happy hours are typically held in a more informal format; however, our second happy hour featured a member of the WBT community from Australia who discussed instrumental instruction in her country during the pandemic. The Women Banding Together YouTube chan-

nel includes recordings of this happy hour as well as our panel discussions.

The WBT community includes individuals from across the globe, including Canada and Australia, and throughout the U.S. Although WBT was originally intended to fill a void in the band community, the pandemic has provided an opportunity to offer support and encouragement to all educators, regardless of subject. Our offerings are attracting military musicians, choral and orchestral conductors, as well as aspiring conductors (including high school and collegiate students!). We have been able to host meaningful and impactful discussions that have included people of all genders in the music field. These panel discussions and happy hours have created networking opportunities for educators to receive and provide support to one another. It has been an absolute joy to see the nurturing community that has formed through the work and shared wisdom of the Women Banding Together community.

All are welcome to join our community. Whether you are a current conductor, aspiring conductor, or simply support the conducting field, there is a place for you within Women Banding Together. Please consider visiting and liking our Facebook page, where you can learn more about our upcoming panel discussions, happy hours, and additional resources. You may also join our email list by emailing us at [womenbandingtogether2020@gmail.com](mailto:womenbandingtogether2020@gmail.com). Finally, you can contact any of the co-founders through their websites for further information or individual mentorship. We look forward to banding together with you!

#### Resources

Co-Founders: Virginia Allen (<http://www.virginiaallen.com>). Laura Johnson: (<https://sites.wp.odu.edu/laurajohnson-odu/>). Jenny L. Neff (<http://www.jennycreativeedge.com>). Lori Schwartz Reichl. (<https://makingkeychanges.com>).

#### Women Banding Together General Information

WBT Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/womenbandingtogether/>).

WBT Email ([womenbandingtogether2020@gmail.com](mailto:womenbandingtogether2020@gmail.com)).

YouTube Channel (<https://tinyurl.com/wbtchannel>).

## Association of Canadian Women Composers/ Association des Femmes Compositeurs Canadiennes

DIANE BERRY

The ACWC/AFCC is working hard on plans for their upcoming 40th anniversary celebration in 2021. While it is a difficult time for such an undertaking, a number of creative and exciting ideas have come forth. Early on in the discussion of how to celebrate the anniversary, there was debate about the advantages and disadvantages of a gathering. Once Covid struck it became obvious that a large gathering was out of the question. Celebrating our forty years would mean holding a number events, many of them virtual, and in all parts of the country. The positive side to this is the ability of all our members to participate, no matter where they live or their circumstances.

There are still hopes that concerts will have returned by the middle of next year, and tentative plans are being made for concerts in all regions of the country, including the north. These will feature the works of composers from that region. As the prevalence of online concerts increases, both streaming and on YouTube, it may be possible that those events will be available virtually to all members and others, reaching a larger audience overall.

The ACWC/AFCC website now has a page set up specifically for the anniversary celebrations. Starting in January, a historical “nugget” will be posted each month. These will include information on the founding of the ACWC/AFCC, events from its 40 years, information on historical Canadian women composers, influential teachers, notable works by Canadian women, and more. Another reason to visit our anniversary page will be a link to the monthly playlist. Plans are in the works to create a one- to two-hour playlist each month, consisting of recorded works by members. Each month will offer a different category of music such as electro-acoustic, chamber works, choral works, etc. It is hoped that every one of our 105 members will be represented, at least once, on one of these playlists. We are hoping to entice musicians and music lovers to visit the site regularly during the year by creating this opportunity to discover new and exciting music and composers.

If the ACWC/AFCC were to hold a conference in 2021, one feature would be various panels and discussions. The anniversary committee has decided that with the increased comfort level with, and use of technology, those panels can still go ahead, and every member will have the opportunity to tune in. These are still in the beginning planning stages, but it is hoped to have an online panel discussion on the history of the ACWC/AFCC and Canadian women composers in general early in the new year.

We would like to encourage IAWM members and friends to help us celebrate by visiting our website and our anniversary page, by listening to our playlists, reading our little bit of history, and perhaps even tuning in to one of our panel discussions.

Visit our website at <http://acwc.ca/>; or the very active Facebook page at Association of Canadian Women Composers (ACWC/AFCC); or follow us on Twitter @ACWComposers 2.

## LunART

LunART Celebrates Works Created by Women: From past to present, from revered to forgotten, from rap to rhapsody.

ALLISON JERZAK

LunART, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in Madison, Wisconsin, whose mission is to celebrate, support, and promote women in the arts through public performances, exhibitions, workshops, and interdisciplinary collaboration. LunART is the brainchild of Dr. Iva Ugrcic. Originally from the Ex-Yugoslav Republic of Serbia, Dr. Ugrcic experienced many barriers in the pursuit of a musical career and found that gender inequality was the most troubling, persistent issue she encountered. While pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Flute Performance at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, she found that her doctoral work on Romanian composer Doina Rotaru validated her belief that there are many women artists who have much to say but have not had the opportunity to share their voices. This was the catalyst for the creation of the LunART Festival.

Dr. Ugrcic launched the project in collaboration with her colleague, Dr. Laura Medisky. The first LunART Festival was held in June 2018, and it included public performances, exhibitions, and workshops throughout Madison. Since its launch, LunART has transformed from a stand-alone, three-day arts festival to an organ-

nization offering year-round educational and outreach events, both online and in the community, capstone by a five-day arts festival featuring women artists from around the world. Over the past three years, LunART has showcased works by over 200 women artists, both historical and contemporary.

LunART managed to have a productive year, despite 2020's unexpected challenges. Prior to the pandemic, we performed several outreach concerts around Dane County and launched several new, on-going initiatives. In June, we launched Women of the World (W.O.W.) Blog featuring writings by and about women in the arts. These posts have ranged from artist interviews to exploring canonical challenges within the classical repertoire. In July, we started our LunART Live lunchtime series. This series of half-hour interviews feature women in a variety of disciplines including ethnomusicology, sound engineering, music activism, composition, and more. The LunART team is excited about the variety we are able to offer in these new initiatives, and we are looking forward to the possibilities they offer for the future.

While COVID made our annual summer festival an impossibility, LunART hosted a two-day virtual festival, "Human Family," on October 10 and 17. LunART has always strived for racial inclusivity and diversity in its work toward gender equality in the arts; however, in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement, we felt it was important to acknowledge that Black women have been doubly marginalized in many artistic spaces. In that

spirit, "Human Family" featured works by Black artists, past and present.

Featured contemporary classical artists included Jessie Montgomery and Valerie Coleman. Coleman's work *Fanni Imen*, based on Maya Angelou's poem, "Human Family," inspired the title for this event. Composers from the past included Florence Price, Margaret Bond, and Undine Smith Moore. Audiences heard music deeply rooted in African-American spiritual traditions with Price's *Folksongs of Counterpoint* and Moore's *Afro-American Suite*, and a fusion of neo-romantic and jazz musical idioms in Bond's Suite.

In keeping with our multidisciplinary spirit, "Human Family" also featured artists who use words and movements to tell their story. Highlights included poems and spoken-word pieces, as well as a contemporary dance piece, *Body, Sweet Home*, an exploration of what happens when the body and the soul are left in complete solitude.

Looking ahead, we hope to resume our summer festival in 2021. LunART Festival has two main streams: performance and education. Nested under our performance umbrella, each season we select a composer-in-residence (past composers include Valerie Coleman and Jenni Brandon), run a call-for-scores competition, which is open to women of all ages and nationalities, and organize about ten performance events around the city of Madison.

Our performances take many shapes. The festival kicks off with a musicological lecture and is anchored by three gala concerts featuring music by classical women

composers from both the past and the present. These concerts are interwoven with other mediums like dance, spoken word, poetry, and complementary art exhibitions. In our 2019 season, we curated "Women Against Hate, United by Love," a collaborative artwork created by Kelly Parks Snider, Rachael Griffin, and Leigh Garcia, which appeared throughout the festival. In addition to our gala concerts, we offered several more casual performances that included poetry readings and comedy shows.

The festival's educational stream primarily consists of our "From Page to Stage" program for emerging composers. Six emerging composers are selected through an application process and work with our composer-in-residence to hone a particular piece of their music in master-classes and private lessons. These workshopped pieces are performed by festival artists at the final concert, with each applicant receiving a professional audio and video recording of their piece. Other educational activities include a panel discussion led by our composer-in-residence and other guest artists covering a wide range of topics such as "Multi-Faceted Artists" and "The Art of Collaboration."

The future looks busy for LunART, and we are excited about our projects, new and old, as we move into 2021. For more information about LunART, please visit our website at [www.lunartfestival.org](http://www.lunartfestival.org) or the very active Facebook page: LunART Festival. LunART, Inc.; 409 N Midvale Blvd #3, Madison WI 53705 | 608-695-3442

*Allison Jerzak is a pianist and LunART Grant Coordinator.*

## COMPACT DISC REVIEWS

of French-Malagasy composer François Bayle, an eminent composer of electronic music who studied with Messiaen and Stockhausen. He coined the term "Acousmatic," for music designed to be heard through speakers, rather than live from instruments, taking advantage of the compositional principles offered by audio recording techniques. Alonso's work on this CD comfortably fits into the "Acousmatic" category by using multi-tracked digital and analog synthesizers that Alonso performed and produced herself. Apart from her award-winning (SACEM) compositional work, Alonso also teaches music at Universidad Internacional de la Riojah and is co-founder of Campo de Interferen-

cias, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting "Sound Art" in Spain.

Before moving on to the music on *Khôra*, it is important to explore the word's meaning(s). *Khôra* is a complex Greek word going back at least to Plato's dialogue *Timeus* (360 BCE), which contemplates beings both static and transitory, formless but recognizable, time-bound but eternal, and even connotes notions relating to motherhood and the womb. Not surprisingly, this multi-valent term has been explored in Modern and Post-Structural philosophy by Martin Heidegger (1889-1976); Jacques Derrida (1930-2004); and Julia Kristeva, all of whom have a tendency to gravitate toward theories of differ-

### Edith Alonso:

#### *Xwpa (Khôra)*

Written, produced, and performed by Edith Alonso; Analog and Digital Synthesizers. Truth Table Recordings TT006 (2019)

ROBERT BLACK

*Xwpa (Khôra)* is a collection of six electronic music compositions, written, produced, and performed by Spanish composer Edith Alonso. She studied classical piano as a child, moving on to saxophone and guitar, then on to playing electric bass in a punk rock band. She pursued a doctorate in music at Université Paris 8 (Vincennes-St. Denis), completing a dissertation on the aesthetic practices

ence (or, in Derrida's coinage, *différance*). It is worth quoting Alonso's own interpretation of *Khôra*, which inspired this work, as set forth in her CD liner notes. She says it could mean a "no man's land," and it could "also be like a receptacle, a space, a place; a matrix that puts together all the matter that is continually in motion. *Khôra* is travel into another world, far and unknown, where we find a desolate land. However, it is possible to rise up and think that everything is possible, and as Icarus tries to touch the sun, this time, there will be no falling down."

Alonso clearly frames the inspiration for these works in philosophical and poetic terms. Her individual titles for the six compositions on this disc, titled mostly in French or Spanish, further amplify philosophical and poetic themes. While Alonso's work is thoroughly contemporary and "Acousmatic," one might also think of the compositions as twenty-first century "tone poems."

All of the six compositions share a coherent sonic palette drawn from both analog (Korg Ms20, Moog Minotaur, and Elektron Analog Keys) and digital (Waldorf Blofeld) synthesizers. The formal emphasis is on sonority, rather than melody or harmonic progression. Alonso creates washes of electronic sound that move, swell, and evolve to no discernable tempo or time signature. Common is her use of low-frequency oscillation, pedal, or ostinato as a "bass" component that grounds most of the compositions. On top of these low frequencies, Alonso frequently builds waves of mid-frequency sounds, by turns grating and soothing, and often includes a high-frequency contrast sound to really provide full-spectrum sonorities.

The opening composition, "Qui mérite l'éternité?" (Who deserves eternity?), utilizes a throbbing one-note bass motive upon which heavily reverbed note-clusters wax and wane. That texture is punctuated by high-pitched metallic splashes that crash and fade. The next track, "Nadie te espera" (No one waits for you), finds a similar layering of low frequency droning and mid-frequency sound clusters that slowly evolve against a high-pitched sound that resembles gas escaping from a valve. Changing dynamics and timbral nuances maintain a listener's interest as the piece builds into

a cacophonous roar, drops to a repeating "glitchy" electro-shock pulse over a simmering pan-tonal wash, and ends with a low, oscillating bass note that fades into silence. Tracks three and four are "The Sadness of Yesterday" and "Dreams in the Sea."

The fifth track, "Tears for Somebody" (the only title given in English), stands out among the six compositions in that it uses discernable melodic fragments that come and go in a kind of Webern-like *pointillism*. The closing track, "Se ha quebrado en sol" (The Sun Has Broken), begins with silence, then slowly introduces a percussive and bell-like pattern as an upper voice persists as distorted, square and saw-wave clusters that expand and *crescendo*. The piece ends with a machine gun-like bass motive that grows more intense as a clear major tonality emerges from the middle voices for the first time. The composition concludes on a fading G#m7 chord (or thereabouts!) and then arrives at a recognizable tonality after what has been dominantly atonal. Could this be the Icarus in Alonso's liner notes who finally touches the sun? Maybe.

The recording is engineered splendidly. The sound is clear, the separation of voices is distinct. The music is unpredictable as it morphs through different sonic textures, but Alonso has a keen sense of movement, and when she dwells on a moment, it is done thoughtfully. All in all, *Khôra* presents interesting and challenging electronic music that bears re-listening both on its own terms as music, but also as a sonic corollary of philosophical ideas and poetic images. In this regard, I think it is fitting to borrow Horace's famous concept from his *Ars Poetica* (19 BCE) "Ut pictura poesis" (as in painting, so in poetry) and modify it into "Ut poetica music" (as in poetry, so in music) as it appears in this collection of poetic and philosophical sound art.

*Robert Black is an independent scholar and songwriter. He holds BFA and MA degrees from Kent State University and a PhD from the University of Washington (Seattle). Additionally, Dr. Black has studied music composition at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. His portfolio includes original music for plays by Aristophanes, Brecht, Picasso (yes, Pablo Picasso!), Sartre, and Shakespeare. He has recently completed a two-act opera based on James Joyce's Ulysses and is working to find a company to premier it.*

## Cabaret Songs of Madeleine Dring

Wanda Brister, mezzo soprano; Courtney Kenny, piano and voice; Nuala Willis, contralto. Cambria 1251 (2019)

STEFANIA DE KENESSEY

To discover a long-neglected composer of cabaret songs is delightful; to find that the composer was a woman is doubly delightful; to know that she was a truly gifted practitioner of the art adds immeasurably to that enjoyment. Madeleine Dring (1923–1977) was an English composer, singer, and actress. Raised in a musical household, she started her musical education at the age of ten at the Royal College of Music. She studied violin and piano as well as composition, even garnering a few lessons with Ralph Vaughan Williams. She soon started to write songs, both serious and comic, as well as chamber music; as an adult, she grew into a highly versatile, amazingly productive composer.

By the 1950s, she was a regular contributor to high-profile musical revues at prominent venues in London; these included the renowned Players' Theatre, which had opened in 1937 with musical comedies and Victorian-style music hall fare, and the Royal Court Theatre, built in 1888, where G.B. Shaw's plays were staged regularly during the early part of the 20th century. Dring was also a frequent performer of her own work—as both pianist and singer—at the Royal College of Music's "At Home" concert series. She later worked widely in television and radio; her dance drama *The Fair Queen of Wu* was broadcast by the BBC; she wrote the incidental music for numerous stage plays; and she was commissioned to create the score for a ballet, *The Real Princess*.

Sadly, her versatility and practical approach to music-making meant that relatively few of her songs were published in her lifetime; several that are listed in revues have not yet been found. Moreover, Dring rarely provided dates for her compositions; only now are these being recovered through archival research into newspaper reviews, program booklets, and the composer's personal papers.

The last few years have seen a welcome surge of interest in Dring's legacy. A nine volume collection of her songs, edited by Wanda Brister, was published in 2018 and her one-act opera, *Cupboard Love* (never

performed during her lifetime), premiered in the United States in 2018 and in Scotland in 2019 on a double bill with *Riders to the Sea* by her teacher Vaughan Williams.

This recognition is long overdue, and *Cabaret Songs of Madeleine Dring* (2018, Cambria Records) makes an important and spirited contribution to this historic effort, with wonderful performances by Wanda Brister, mezzo-soprano; Courtney Kenny, piano and voice; and Nuala Willis, contralto. Each performer brings an intriguing personal connection to the music of Madeleine Dring.

A professor of voice at Florida State University, Wanda Brister discovered Dring's music sometime in 2000; shortly thereafter, she began working on the composer's legacy. She initiated a long correspondence with Dring's husband, Roger Lord (principal oboist of the London Symphony Orchestra for over thirty years, starting in 1951), and their only son, Jeremy; currently, she is assisting the granddaughter with organizing a large trove of unpublished manuscripts. Brister is also at work on a comprehensive biography of the composer, *Madeleine Dring: Lady Composer*, scheduled to be published this year.

Courtney Kenny's contribution is remarkable in two ways: not only was he 84 years old at the time of the CD's release, but he had known the composer and had worked with her professionally: in 1958, as the musical director for Dring's show "Child's Play" and in 1959, as her recital accompanist. Trained as a pianist at the Royal College of Music, Kenny started his career in musical theater, subsequently spending decades at renowned opera houses such as Glyndebourne, Wexford Festival, and the New Sadler's Wells. He served as the vocal coach for this recording.

Contralto Nuala Willis, who joins Brister on the caustically witty "Model Models," has also enjoyed a remarkable career that spans opera, musical theater, and cabaret. She has collaborated with Kenny for more than fifteen years, specializing in finding rarely heard gems from forgotten musicals.

The songs on this disc were written—when the date is known, which is not always the case—primarily during the 1950s, when Dring was in her 30s. There are 17 selections in all: four have both music and lyrics by the composer, while the

last three are her arrangements of Cole Porter songs. Two of her songs are taken from *Airs on a Shoestring*, a hugely successful British musical revue that was first staged at the Royal Court Theatre in London in 1953 and ran through the spring of 1955 with over 700 performances. The implicit (perhaps explicit) bias against women composers of the time is evident from the revue program, reproduced on the last page of the CD booklet. Here, Dring is listed only as a performer, and NOT as a composer, although "Sing High, Sing Low," for which she wrote both the music and the lyrics, takes a place of honor as the last song in Act One.

Stylistically, Dring's work hearkens back to a somewhat earlier era, with echoes of Cole Porter and George Gershwin, colored with reminiscences of Rachmaninov (her childhood favorite) and Poulenc (whom she admired greatly as an adult). But her compositional voice emerges as distinctive and very much her own, and her special brand of humor, both verbal and musical, gives the repertoire a fresh, witty, occasionally dark twist.

*Cabaret Songs of Madeleine Dring* offers a wonderful collection of songs by a composer who clearly deserves wider recognition. The performances are lively, entertaining, clever, stylistically apt and—equally importantly—cover a wide range of emotions, from hilarious comedy to serious introspection. (If there is one minor quibble with the CD, it is that the texts are not printed in the CD booklet.)

Although not included on this disc, it is perhaps worth quoting the final lines of "Song of a Nightclub Proprietress": the setting of an initially humorous but ultimately bleak poem by John Betjeman. It perfectly summarizes Dring's sensibility:

There was sun enough for lazng  
upon beaches  
There was fun enough for far into  
the night;  
But I'm dying now and done for,  
What on earth was all the fun for?  
I am ill and old and terrified and  
tight.

*Stefania de Kenessey* is the composer of Bonfire of the Vanities: The Opera, an updated and reimagined version of the novel by Tom Wolfe, where both the New York Stock Exchange and American capitalism finally collapse. She is the founding president of the IAWM and a professor of music at The New School.

## Violeta Dinescu and Johann Sebastian Bach: *Suites & Roses*

Works for solo cello, performed by Katharina Deserno. Kaleidos Musikditionen (2020)

### ELIZABETH START

This is a captivating, well-crafted CD, pairing the well-established composer Violeta Dinescu with a clearly simpatico and accomplished interpreter in cellist Katharina Deserno. It presents a carefully thought-out sequence of works performed beautifully. The lush sound of Deserno's 1712 Testore cello, combined with the resonance and reverberation in the recording, make it a truly immersive cello experience, presenting a journey that explores the expansive range and tonal possibilities of the instrument.

What seems initially to be an unexpected juxtaposition of the Dinescu works with the first two solo cello suites of J. S. Bach becomes, upon listening, a coherent and organic overall experience. The transitions between pieces make sense both tonally and emotionally as the three Dinescu works, *Sieben Rosen*, *Kleine Suite*, and *Abendandacht*, alternate with the Bach Suites in G major and d minor. The pairing of the Dinescu pieces with these timeless works of Bach, which are considered pillars of the solo cello literature, also serves to further illuminate the artistry of both Dinescu and Deserno.

*Sieben Rosen*, the first piece on the CD, was initially completed as a work for flutes in 2012. This cello version, dated 2014/2018, consists of seven miniatures, all between one and two minutes long and presented in such a way as to create an almost seamless, continuous work. The composer was inspired by Bertolt Brecht's poem "Liebeslied III," which speaks of seven roses, six of which are blown away by the wind, leaving one remaining for the poet. The poem goes on to say, "Seven times I'll summon you," and, like the roses, the poet expects the lover to stay away until the seventh summons, and then "come without delay." The similarity of the summons gestures in each movement, combined with the variety of departures made from those summons, creates the impression of the poet pondering the unique characteristics of each rose, while also thinking of the lover and experiencing a kaleidoscope of emotions.

The fourth rose miniature, titled “Con Voce,” gently introduces the human voice. Deserno’s voice emerges from the cello sound and combines with it, creating a brief heterophony, then harmony, with the cello line. This divergence of pitch between cello and voice sets up the instrumental double stops that are prominent in the next two movements, “Feroce” and “Largo.” The final movement, entitled “Dal niente,” represents the seventh summons, which the poet expects to be answered. However, it ends feeling unresolved to this listener, an open question leading, as its title suggests, into a long silence. As one ponders if the poet’s final summons was successful, Bach’s Suite No. 1 in G major begins, resolving the uncertainty with its familiar and comforting sonorities and undulations.

As the CD liner notes point out, no manuscript in Bach’s hand exists for these cello suites. This is both challenging and liberating for the performer, creating many possibilities for choosing articulations, phrasing, and dynamics, in addition to the era-appropriate liberty in ornamentation. Denesco’s performance shows a coherent and thoughtful interpretation of both Suites. Her ornamentation on the repeats of the binary, stylized dance movements is inventive yet appropriate and leaves one anticipating each repeat to hear what ornamentation will be employed.

The next work is very appropriately placed in the sequence, as Dinescu’s *Kleine Suite*, 2018, was written, at Deserno’s request, in response to the Bach Suites. As Bach used stylized dance in his suites, Dinescu’s writing is often steeped in Romanian folk music, with its relationship to dance as “intuitive physical expression.” Bach is not directly quoted, nor are we aware of fragments of folk dance, but rather “traces of remembrance of dance gestures which discharge themselves in fluctuating movements” (Dinescu).

The light usage of the human voice in *Sieben Rosen* becomes more independent and expressive in the *Kleine Suite*, but is still used sparingly, enhancing and expanding the cello’s voice, never taking the foreground. There are gestures that are clearly rooted in the language of Bach but already transformed and creating points of departure for the expanded palette of sounds of cello and voice. The pitch range of about 2.5 octaves in Bach expands to the instru-

ment’s entire four-plus octave range, further augmented by Deserno’s voice.

The first movement, “Libero,” begins by taking us from Bach’s G major tonal world with a quick explosive gesture and immediately introducing the most avant-garde sounds heard yet on the album, widening the palette of sounds and pitch range immediately. Trill figures, which serve an ornamental function in Bach, expand into their own larger gestures and cascades of sound. This is hinted at in “Molto Rubato” and becomes even more prevalent in “Vivo,” expanding the range of undulation.

Many techniques are employed, including ponticello, glissandi, pizzicato, and harmonics which extend the available range and timbre further—but they never seem to be effects simply for effects’ sake. After the “Vivo,” “Tranquillo” grounds us with many drones underpinning more active upper voices, some of which belie the movement’s title by being abrupt and active. This is a “Tranquillo” that gives the mind freedom to wander in many directions.

The title of the fifth and final movement, “Agitato,” is initially embodied as more of an agitated mood rather than frenetic activity. If one expects a *moto perpetuo* here, that expectation is soon dispelled. This is a section of shifting moods, where agitation occurs in response to gestures that might begin calm but add angst and spark commentary that ranges from aggressive to pensive. The subsequent move to the introspective Bach D minor suite is again satisfying tonally and re-enforces the pensive and ruminating moments of the “Agitato,” within the narrower range of pitch and stylistic conventions of Bach’s era.

The final work on the CD, *Abenddacht*, 1985/2018, is the earliest Dinescu work presented, and according to the liner notes, was Deserno’s “starting point and source” for the CD project. She chose the version of the work “for trumpet or instrumental voice” from 1985. The liner notes indicate that the transferability of the “proto-composition” was thought out by the composer from its initial creation. This track emerges almost seamlessly, perhaps as an echo, after a pause, from the final note of Bach’s D minor Gigue. Marked “tranquil and melancholic,” it is at times rhapsodic, but primarily contemplative, with prominent use of augmented seconds. Accepting but not resigned, its final thoughts fade away, giving a sense of repose. This “Even-

song” reflects on the day and the complexities of life in general, and looks back calmly at the entire CD it inspired.

*Elizabeth Start, a freelance cellist/composer since 1984, currently lives in her hometown of Kalamazoo, Michigan and is Director of the Michigan Festival of Sacred Music, cellist in the Kalamazoo and Elgin (IL) Symphonies, a member of the Chicago Composers’ Consortium and the Chicago Musicians Club of Women, and she is Secretary/Treasurer of the Kalamazoo Federation of Musicians. She has degrees from Oberlin, Northern Illinois University, and the University of Chicago. www.elizabethstart.com*

## *Emergence:* *Emily Dickinson*

Nadine Benjamin, soprano, and Nicole Panizza, piano. Stone Records 5060192780864 (2019)

### STEFANIA DE KENESSEY

“Emily Dickinson, the 19th-century recluse of Amherst, Massachusetts, is reckoned to be the poet most set to music, ever.” If this headline from *The Guardian* seems a little over the top, it is not; according to a study published by Washington State University, Dickinson’s poetry had been set to music more than 3,000 times by the year 2004. An astonishing statistic.

Soprano Nadine Benjamin and pianist Nicole Panizza make a powerful contribution to this repertoire with *Emergence: Emily Dickinson*, a collection of thirty songs by five composers, spanning three generations: Aaron Copland (b. 1900), Luigi Zanelli and Sylvia Glickman (b. 1932), Juliana Hall (b. 1958), and Ella Jarman-Pinto (b. 1969). The performers are versatile, highly accomplished, and internationally recognized, and their performances are superb. They are attentive to detail, without losing sight of the longer musical lines and dramatic arc of each song. They are sensitive to the stylistic idiosyncrasies of each composer and of each historic period. They engage in virtuosic technical display when needed, and they collaborate beautifully, bringing to life every nuance, every syllable, every note. An astonishing achievement.

Nadine Benjamin is active as an opera singer, making her 2018 debut with the English National Opera as Clara in Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess*, and a recitalist who champions twentieth-century composers. Nicole Panizza lists her multifaceted talents as coach, vocal accompanist, and scholar; she has done extensive research

on American music and literature, with a particular emphasis on the life and works of Emily Dickinson.

The recording opens strongly, if predictably, with Copland's renowned *Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Written in 1949-1950, the song cycle represents something of a departure – perhaps even a milestone – for a composer who wrote infrequently for voice and piano. The Dickinson song cycle premiered in 1950 at Columbia University in a performance by Alice Howland with the composer at the piano; unfortunately, the reception was unfavorable. History has been kinder since then, and the song cycle has finally taken its rightful place as an important contribution to an important form by an important American composer.

Stylistically, these songs turn away from the popular idiom that had made Copland's name known to the general public; we hear few echoes of the memorable, melodically and rhythmically ingratiating music that characterizes *Rodeo* or *Appalachian Spring*. But as always, Copland reveals himself to be a master craftsman who sustains the listener's interest, from start to finish, with his depth and sensitivity to matters both musical and literary. The vocal lines are intriguing, often unpredictable, offering an elegant combination of sophistication and simplicity. The piano supplies far more than mere accompaniment and engages in a regular give-and-take with the vocal line, predicting some of its flourishes, commenting on others. Above all, the songs pay meticulous attention to Dickinson's verse. Examples abound: in the first song ("When all the children sleep"), "silence everywhere" is beautifully rendered by the voice dropping into chest voice even as the piano reaches for a high, barely audible filigree figure; in the ninth song ("I felt a funeral in my brain"), the ominous rumblings in the low register of the left hand yield to sparse, accented chords that sound "like a drum"; in the tenth ("I've heard an organ talk sometimes"), we hear the church's clear triadic hymns; and in the last song, "The Chariot" (perhaps one of Dickinson's best-known poems), the voice sustains the final note of "eternity" – into eternity. Copland may be a hard act to follow, but the other composers on this disc do a marvelous job.

Luigi Zanelli is represented by "Seven Epigrams of Emily Dickinson." Each of these short songs—the longest of which lasts barely two minutes—offers some un-

anticipated felicity: the melismatic flourish on the word "delight" in the first showcases Nadine Benjamin's supple, gorgeous voice, and the repetition of the phrase "who knows" in the second deepens the sadness of a question without an answer.

Sylvia Glickman's wonderful "Black Cake: A Recipe by Emily Dickinson," originally written as an encore, was inspired by Julie Harris' one-woman show about Emily Dickinson in the 1970s. Humorously serious, Glickman infuses her highly unusual text-setting lines such as "2 teaspoons nutmeg, 5 teaspoons cloves, mace and cinnamon"—with seriously humorous intensity. Apparently, Dickinson's recipe has been tested, and the cake is "edible."

Like Glickman, Ella Jarman-Pinto is represented modestly with only one selection, but "This little rose" is beautiful, imaginative, and memorable. The song features a lilting, attractive melody, placed over a simple piano accompaniment; the main theme returns several times, and each repetition is handled deftly.

The rest of the recording is devoted to the music of Juliana Hall, and deservedly so: this gifted, incredibly productive composer has written over 50 song cycles, including another 25 Dickinson settings. "In Reverence" is one of her first compositions; harmonically and vocally, it is attractive, acerbic, angular. It calls on Nadine Benjamin's amazing technical prowess and revels in extended vocal techniques, which range from whispering and rapid textual repetition at the conclusion of "It is an honorable thought" to high-pitched squealing during the opening (and concluding) bits of "Papa above! Regard a mouse."

"A Northeast Storm," a standalone song commissioned by Lyric Fest in Philadelphia, sets an excerpt from one of Dickinson's letters, complaining about being cooped up in the parlor on account of the weather. Like the cake recipe, this is an ungainly text, but Hall rises to the challenge and makes it work, inventively quoting Chopin when "Vinnie is at the instrument."

The most recent and most important composition is *To Meet a Flower*. The three songs, taken from an earlier song cycle, are dedicated to Benjamin and were premiered by the singer at the London Festival of American Music in 2016. The songs are beautiful as music and imaginative as textual interpretation. "Whose are the little beds" has a triadic, sunny beginning, although the

music is not afraid to venture into tone cluster terrain when casting its glance on the flowers of "the blanket red." "God made a little gentian" has a striking, angular, rhythmically-compelling piano motif that it uses to great effect and with great variety, while "The daisy follows soft the sun" builds from evocative, gradually ascending chords that arise effortlessly out of the poem.

Cleverly curated and brilliantly performed by soprano Nadine Benjamin and pianist Nicole Panizza, *Emergence* is a superb addition to the growing repertoire of Dickinson songs, and it is highly recommended.

*Stefania de Kenessey is the composer of Bonfire of the Vanities: The Opera, an updated and reimagined version of the novel by Tom Wolfe where both the New York Stock Exchange and American capitalism finally collapse. She is the founding president of the IAWM and a professor of music at The New School.*

### *Moto Quarto*

Trio Casals: Sylvia Ahramjian, violin; Ovidiu Marinescu, cello; Anna Kislitsyna, piano. Navona NV6237 (2018)

JAMIE CARIDI

*Moto Quarto* is the fourth in a series of recordings by the Philadelphia-based Trio Casals, and one can immediately fathom why the trio is internationally acclaimed. After debuting at the 1996 Pablo Casals Festival in Puerto Rico, the three musicians have gone on to play concerts world-wide as a trio and as individuals. The quality of both the performance and the recording is excellent, and the trio's intonation, ensemble, and musicality as well as sensitivity and expressiveness are to be commended. In this age of technological perfection, many recordings are edited to such a point that they are sterile and far from the experience of live performances. That emotional void is not the case with this recording.

Nine composers are represented, four of whom are women: Emma-Ruth Richards, Joanne D. Carey, Allyson B. Wells, and Clare Shore. Richards is a young British composer, well known in the UK and introduced to the U.S. by the Trio Casals with a work for solo cello, *Dark Radiance*. It is six minutes in length and is in memory of a friend's baby who passed away. In Greek philosophy, light is a metaphor for Truth or Goodness, darkness is Chaos or Evil. Richards is drawn to the exploration of these opposing values in her composi-

tions, and she successfully portrays these diametrically opposed themes in this work for solo cello. The opening low cello motive, which also appears at the end of the piece, is plaintive, yet hopeful. Ovidiu Marinescu masterfully navigates the technically challenging, yet expressive sections of this important addition to the cello repertoire. One hopes this recording will stimulate more performances of this and other pieces by this talented composer.

Joanne D. Carey is a gifted but complex composer who approaches composing as “an alternate reality,” an inner magical world where one can play and be playful, yet serious. Piano Trio No. 2, inspired by a poem of the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, opens with a piano solo, an invitation to join Carey on this musical adventure, which alternates languid, melancholy descending chromatics with bold angular themes in a fiercely agitated rhythmic motion. Transitions are highlighted by trills or repeated notes that never sound trivial.

Allyson B. Wells (AKA Allyson Brown and Allyson Brown Applebaum) began composing as a teenager and was commercially published by age eighteen. She originally composed *Since Then* for clarinet, cello, and piano in the 1980s. Trio Casals was a quartet when they first asked Wells to compose for them. While she was writing the commissioned piece, the fourth person left, and the remaining three members were shocked and saddened by the loss. Their profound grief was the driving force behind the new composition, which expresses their emotions: sadness, wistfulness, and some anger. These emotions did not last forever, and the composition is also about recovering from grief and moving on successfully. The trio opens with angry chords, then continues with wistful, improvisatory-style passages by the instruments individually and as an ensemble. The listener can sense the sadness and nostalgia in the contrapuntal passages. The precision of the ensemble in playing the jazzy, complex rhythms is superb.

In 1984, Clare Shore was the second woman to earn a DMA degree in composition from the Juilliard School. She has received more notable awards than I have space to mention. Each movement of *Day Tripping* was inspired by a day trip kayaking through Florida’s waterways. “Peace at Dawn” is evocative of a misty morning sunrise along Florida’s Peace River and the

joy of coexistence with the wildlife that take refuge there. This vignette provides three minutes, forty-three seconds of impressionistic bliss as it depicts daybreak with the rising sun, rippling river and wildlife sounds. The second movement, “Jupiter Run,” opens with cello as a percussion instrument, followed by the piano with jazz chords supporting the cello and violin melodic riffs. This movement is technically challenging with complex rhythms and nowhere to catch a breath until the ending piano glissando. It emulates Florida’s narrow, winding, swift moving waterway of the same name where there are no places to “get out” until the “take-out” point.

Tracks 1, 2 and 3 of *Moto Quarto*, entitled *Three for Three* by David Nisbet Stewart, represent the swing dances of the 1930s and 1940s using traditional ternary and sonata forms. The composer makes effective use of interplay among the instruments. *Sunset at Montélimar* by Peter Deutsch was inspired by the eponymous small town in southern France. Ovidiu Marinescu shines once again in the intense five-minute *Poem for Violoncello Solo* in this dark, pithy piece by Christopher Brakel. Brakel composes multimedia works, focusing especially on the relationship between music and poetry.

*Suspension of Disbelief* by Keith Kramer is a magical piece based on Japanese and Hindustani traditions used in a non-traditional manner. Multiple pauses of various lengths precede transitions to new sections on this journey of discovery. The three instruments are explored in every possible manifestation of sound, always interesting and never losing the attention of the listener. The final and longest track of this recording is *Totentanz* by Matthew Fuerst, who was inspired by the many bleak reports of overpopulation, climate change, pollution, and endangered species. The composition begins playfully with a harmonization of the “Dies Irae” chant, then slowly, but violently descends into chaos and dies away.

Trio Casals is committed to music education and outreach, offering master classes at schools and colleges as well as performing in shelters for victims of domestic abuse, nursing homes and hospitals. *Moto Quarto* is music with a message.

*Jamie Boyd Caridi has a Master of Music degree in Piano Performance and a Master of Arts degree in Applied Women’s Studies, which she*

*uses to advocate for women in music through lecture recitals and concerts. She teaches piano at her home in Glendora, accompanies vocalists and instrumentalists for concerts and competitions, and is pianist/organist for Christ the King Lutheran Church in Walnut, Glendora Christian Science Church, and Emmanuel Presbyterian Church in Claremont.*

## Perspectives: Music by Women Composers for Violin & Piano

Dawn Wohn, violin; Esther Park, piano; liner notes, edited by David Brin, with layout and design by Lonnie Kunkel. Delos Productions, Inc., DE3547 (2019)

GEORGE HENDERSON

*Perspectives* offers a compilation of shorter works for violin and piano by women composers from the 1890s to the present day. The composers featured on the CD include: Reena Esmail (b. 1983); Ellen Taaffe Zwilich (b. 1939); Vítězslava Kaprálová (1915-1940); Jung Sun Kang (b. 1983); Chihchun Chi-sun Lee (b. 1970); Florence Price (1887-1953); Lili Boulanger (1893-1918); Vivian Fine (1913-2000); and Amy Beach (1869-1944). This stunning collection is a welcome addition to the concert violin repertoire as it contains some of the more familiar works of the historical composers along with some relatively unknown works by contemporary women.

The opening selection, Reena Esmail’s *Jhula-Jhule*, commences with a thin, extremely high violin note, which descends into curlicues of melody taken from two Indian folksongs. Played with a swift *glissando* against sparkling piano *arpeggios*, the passage work convinces the listener that this is sheer violin music at its best. It is based on two Hindustani melodies that were passed down by her grandparents: “Ankhon vina andharon re” and the lullaby “Jhula-Jhule.” Esmail’s setting conveys both the time-travel and the loving aspects of a culture shared across the stream of time.

*Episodes* by Ellen Taaffe Zwilich was written for and premiered by Itzhak Perlman (2003). The first episode resembles “Jhula-Jhule” in its piano part, which enhances the connections between different composers and is indicative of how well Wohn and Park understand their material. Zwilich’s second episode, “Vivace,” supplies some spectacular piano runs against which the violin takes skittering flight. Al-

though the liner notes label these pieces as atonal, they are so skilfully written that they do not sound as such.

*Legenda* (1932) is an early work in the short but brilliant career of Czech composer and conductor Vítězslava Kaprálová. She composed it when she was 18. It was the first of three pieces that she wrote for violin and piano, and it shows her superlative gift for bittersweet melodic invention. During this student phase, Kaprálová's output can be interpreted as modernizing the Czech influences around her, which she did so well that her work still sounds contemporary. The piano writing is dense and resembles the fine musical carpentry characteristic of the older Czech style, while mingling with Kaprálová's developing voice. In this context, the pizzicato and double-stopping passages create an orchestral effect that both Wohn and Park fully exploit.

Jung Sun Kang's *Star-Crossed*, the most modern work on the program in both date and style, is an improvisatory meditation that features a mid-section in a convincing rock-ostinato style and an arresting modulatory bridge passage. For me, the highlight among the newer works in this collection is Chinchun Chi-sun Lee's *Provintia*, "Sunset of Chihkan Tower." It is an avant-garde work for solo violin that tells the history of a Taiwanese landmark and includes a vivid description of aerial combat, complete with bomb effects. Written originally for the two-stringed Chinese fiddle, the *ehru*, and using both Dutch and indigenous Taiwanese musical material, *Provintia* manages to be scholarly and exciting in equal measure. Praise is also due to the recording engineer who has captured an outstanding performance in vivid detail.

The two pieces by the 20th-century African American composer Florence Price showcase characteristic aspects of her music. The first, the short *Deserted Garden* (1933), begins with a bluesy, spiritual theme of painful sadness, transitions

### Marin Alsop

She was the first woman to direct a major American orchestra. Today, Marin Alsop conducts in Vienna, Baltimore, and São Paulo and is an invited artist in cultural centers around the world. She is also on the jury of a new exclusively female competition in Paris, "La Maestra," which seeks to celebrate and promote the star conductors of tomorrow.

to a memory of past gaiety, then returns to melancholy, something no one did quite as convincingly as Price in this period. As program music, we get a real sense of what this garden means to the visitor as she imagines its past. The undated *Elfentanz* would be worth buying this disc for on its own; it is one of Price's happiest melodic inventions, which frames an interesting set of ideas in trio form, and perhaps is drawn from the same dance as Delius's *La Calinda*, with its bouncy yet elegant vitality. Notably, Wohn and Park render this piece with panache.

Lili Boulanger's short, mysterious *Nocturne* (1911) takes us beyond the conventions of its impressionistic style, with soft jazzy elements, which remind us that impressionism stands alone among the classical genres in giving back as much as it took from African-American popular culture. Boulanger quotes both Wagner and Debussy, leaving it for the listener to decide whether she does this as a naïve fan or as a comment on a dilemma present in contemporary French composition—the very problem she would solve in her later music by welding impressionist tropes into engines of Wagnerian power.

*Portal* (1990) by the late Vivian Fine is an assertive example of modernism that does not give two pennies for your comfort, but eventually makes itself grudgingly admired, like the intransigence of a cranky relative whom one understands only too well. (I doubt whether I will ever enjoy listening to *Portal*.)

Saving some of the best for last, the closing composition, Amy Beach's *Romance* (1893), is a beautiful representation of passion in the Gilded Age. Song-like, in keeping with much of her work, it evokes a world of moustachioed men and bustled women as real people with deep feelings, feelings that were accentuated and stirred by her music. *Romance* received a standing ovation and encore on its first performance by Beach and violinist Maude Powell, an early champion of women's careers in music.

Wohn and Park's mission was to present rarely heard music by a diverse selection of female composers. As Wohn writes, with understated irony, "I truly enjoy introducing listeners to music they have not heard before, and music by women composers often falls into that category" (liner notes). Her enjoyment is evident in her playing, in which precision is matched by clarity and depth of tone. Park, a long-time accompa-

nist of Wohn, excels; one can listen to and enjoy the accompaniments, for they often stand on their own, considerable merit.

A woman composer today has a good chance of being included on a concert program, but a woman composer from the past is under a greater disadvantage—her works were rarely recorded. Bakelite and vinyl informed the musical tastes of generations, and the availability of such recordings dictated radio programming until relatively recently. Thus, intermingling the old and the new in a compilation format is an intelligent choice, one that exposes the modern listener to the previously neglected and the historical listener to the composers of the future. When such carefully chosen works are played and produced as well as the pieces on *Perspectives*, we have a recording with wide appeal and one that deserves commercial success. *Perspectives* is the kind of CD that is worth buying for a gift as well as for one's own education and enjoyment.

*George Henderson* is a veteran New Zealand indie rock musician and songwriter, whose bands include *The Puddle* and *The New Existentialists*. The discovery in a Salvation Army op shop of a second-hand CD set including Mary Louise Boehme's premiere recording of Amy Beach's *Piano Concerto* in C# minor began an unexpected path of musical discovery. In early 2020, he presented three radio programs about women composers of the 20th century (Beach, Price, Boulanger, Bacewicz, and Kaprálová) for Karen Hay's "Lately" show on Radio New Zealand.

### *A Quiet Piece—Music for Saxophone by Living Women Composers*

Lori Arordova, saxophones; Laurie Middagh, piano; Melanie Williams, soprano. Privately Released, 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Music (2017)

ALYSSA REIT

*A Quiet Piece* includes works by some of the most distinguished contemporary composers: Lori Arordova, Amy Quate, Nancy Van de Vate, Hilary Tann, and Catherine McMichael. A scholarly and creative grant provided funding for this CD, which was recorded and produced by the University of Montevallo, Alabama. Named after the alto saxophone solo by Nancy Van de Vate, this collection offers an excellent sampling of twentieth- and twenty-first century music played by artists who are committed to performing new music.

In *Light of Sothis*, Amy Quate aims to depict the brightest star in heaven in three

contrasting movements: “Grace,” “Passion,” and “Faith.” “Grace” starts with a reflective introduction—a floating saxophone melody over delicate upper-register chords in the piano. The rest of the movement unfolds in ABA form, expanding dynamically and emotionally in the return to the A section, all wonderfully rhapsodic. In contrast, “Passion” is a fast, high-energy movement, with a frequently repeated melodic phrase and a surprise ending. Despite the repetitions, the movement is effective because of its broad range of color and dynamic shaping. The opening section of “Faith” features a cadenza-like saxophone solo, which is considerably less tonal than the preceding movements and makes extensive use of *rubato*. The composer introduces the piano with a dramatic, arpeggiated chord and then moves to a regular rhythm and more traditional harmony, following a classic arc of increasing energy and then dissolution. The movement closes with a brief revisit to the style of the opening chords of “Grace.” The slow tempo causes the work to sound rather heavy.

In the first of the three *Songs of Cotton Grass* by Hilary Tann, “A Girl’s Song to her Mother” (for voice and saxophone), she presents attractive melodic ideas that create the feeling of a caress that matches the lullaby theme of the text by Welsh poet Menna Elfyn. A “mini-motif,” played by the saxophone staccato, appears frequently throughout the entire set of songs: a descending minor third to a minor second (e.g., G-E-D#) with the rhythm eighth, quarter, dotted-eighth, though often the rhythm of the third note is varied. As the piece develops, the saxophone interjects itself between the gently lilting vocal phrases. Gradually, the parts join in short canonic segments.

The second song, “Wings of Grasses,” again begins with a solo saxophone, featuring lengthy sixteenth-note segments that alternate pitches either a second or a minor third apart. When the vocal part enters, the motif from the first movement returns, but the two parts generally maintain their respective roles. The piece closes with the saxophone recalling short segments from the previous song, while the voice repeats a languid contrasting phrase. In the third song, “Vale of Feathers,” the opening plaintive saxophone melody beautifully supports the text: “Who would have thought a cradle and a bed are the same in the end?” At various points, a lively arpeggio-like figure

leads to the familiar motif. Particularly effective is how Tann skillfully combines the melody with a refrain from the opening song. An examination of the score shows a wide range of musical nuance in Tann’s use of dynamics and *tempo*, and her notated details demonstrate her creative sense of shading and color. Unfortunately, the performance does not reflect these elements.

Another of Tann’s compositions, *Windhover* (solo soprano saxophone), represents a falcon in flight. The opening leaps to a shockingly high note immediately create a feeling of austerity. The melody line often jumps up and floats around in the upper *tessitura*, depicting the falcon circling in search of prey. Other sections race through a stream of atonal pitches, sometimes landing on high trills—ah, now the bird is after something! Compared with other recordings of this work, the tempo the performers use on this recording is considerably slower, thereby diminishing the intended excitement and uncertainty of the falcon’s flight.

In *Drinking With the Moon Alone*, Ar dovino sets three provocative traditional Chinese poems, making use of an interesting blend of modern dissonance with harmonies and melodies evocative of the pentatonic scale. All three songs in this set have accompaniments that reflect the poetry with a variety of textures that theatrically paint the meaning of the words, such as the delicate, high open fifths on the piano suggesting “stars,” or the low dense chords for “I was drunk and we lost one another.” It is always a pleasure to hear straight-forward song settings, where the words are understandable and well highlighted.

*Stopping by the Woods* by Catherine McMichael is a charming trio in 6/8 meter, with refreshingly traditional melodic lines and harmonies, very suitable to the warmth of Robert Frost’s poetry. It roughly follows a conventional song form: instrumental introduction, A-A-B-interlude-A2, followed by a long elaboration. But the piece loses much of its power due to over-repetition of the final text; the extension is more than a quarter of the music, and it undermines what was initially a very successful dramatic arc. It would have been more satisfying if the piece had ended after the initial statements of Frost’s famous lines.

*A Quiet Piece* by Nancy Van de Vate is a reflective piece for solo alto saxophone featuring disjunct motion and occasional dramatic arpeggios within a gentle, atonal

harmonic framework. Its haunting melodic material sets the stage for the entire recording and, as the title piece, it should have dictated the performance practice for the artists on this recording.

Overall, the performances demonstrate an extremely limited use of color and dynamics, which causes one to wonder if Ar dovino felt too cautious to offer a broader, more emotional range. Moreover, there is a general lack of diligence with regard to intonation, correct notes, and balance, which begs the question of whether or not the performers were under time-restrictions that precluded the accuracy that modern listeners have come to expect. I also noted with some dismay that the names of the piano accompanist, Laurie Middagh, and the soprano, Melanie Williams, are not printed anywhere on the cover of the CD, a breach of normal professional courtesy.

*Alyssa Reit* is an independent performer, teacher, composer, arranger, and storyteller in the New York City area. Her main body of work has been creating theatrical-musical settings of myths, classic stories, and fairy tales, with a focus on bringing out their inner meanings.

## *Somewhere* by Andrea Cheeseman

Andrea Cheeseman, clarinet, bass clarinet.  
Ravello Recordings, RR8018 (2019)

ANNA RUBIN

Clarinetist Andrea Cheeseman’s artistry is on full display in this elegantly-paced recording of seven electroacoustic pieces. Her technical prowess is matched with her elegant interpretative skills. She specializes in works with electronics, as she explains in the liner notes: “I treat the computer as another musical instrument.” Throughout the recording, the clarinet is amplified and at times processed in real time. As a player, she strives “to find unique ways to blend with the electronics and to shape phrases.” The pacing of the CD is highly effective: the first three works are *adagios*, the third and fourth are the most dynamic, while the last two works return to a more lyrical mood. The recording includes the work of the following composers: Benjamin Broening, Mathew McCabe, Kirsten Volness, Judith Shatin, Joseph Harchanko, and Mark Phillips.

The first three pieces are slow, melancholy works that enable Cheeseman to drift fluidly between electronic and acous-

tic sounds. Benjamin Broening, a recipient of many honors and commissions, exploits the *cantabile* and lyrical character of Cheeseman's style in *Arioso/Doubles*. The electronic backdrop of the work transforms into a variety of beautiful textures, against which the player executes longing, aching lines.

Matthew McCabe's *Somewhere* begins with continuous, breath-like electronic clusters with a slowly evolving clarinet line. The piece develops like a succession of long breaths. Cheeseman executes beautifully-shaped long tones, which at times are echoed in the electronics. A largely static work, a languorous mood prevails with occasional flurries of rapid clarinet figuration. The piece closes with a kind of rain-like patterning. In contrast, Mark Snyder's *Messy* is anything but disorganized. The delicate electronic texture develops very gradually to a more intense climax and then subsides. It requires the player to sustain long tones, and in the climax area, to sustain long trills.

Kirsten Volness is a young Minnesota-born composer with an impressive résumé including as co-founder/director and pianist of a new music ensemble/concert series, Verdant Vibes. *Ultraviolet*, a short work, opens slowly with Cheeseman inserting herself into the hazy and complex *timbres* with sustained tones, while the accompaniment becomes whimsical, intense, and unpredictable. Notably, the clarinet maintains a jazzy melodic line spanning the entire range of the instrument. While the intensity initially subsides in the middle third of the piece, the player is required to navigate complex melodic shapes until the piece gradually ebbs away.

Judith Shatin needs no introduction to IAWM Journal readers. She is an accomplished and renowned composer in many genres, not the least of which is electro-acoustic music. Her works are performed internationally, and her many commissions reflect the high regard in which her music is held in the contemporary music world. *Penelope's Song* is a tribute to Penelope, Queen of Ithaca and wife of Odysseus. She said she would take no suitor until she finished weaving a shroud for her father-in-law, Laertes. However, since she unraveled at night what she wove by day, she made no progress over the twenty years Odysseus abandoned her in his many wanderings. This piece sings of her and her loom.

The electronics were created from recordings Shatin made of weaver Jan Russell working on her wooden looms. She "processed and shaped these, weaving a new sonic fabric, and then treated the acoustic and digital elements as warp and weft of a new tapestry" (liner notes). *Penelope's Song* has been adapted for six other instruments as well as for the clarinet.

The electronic accompaniment begins with a relentless rhythm and imperceptibly shifts over the course of the continuous work, which is shaped into a fast-slow-fast progression. The opening pulses of the loom immediately grab the listener's attention. The clarinet responds with an athletic call and response figurations. The accompaniment thins out eventually into a whirring, high, metallic pattern with a gentle high melody in the clarinet. The clarinet is exposed in lengthy, tender tones and delicate multiphonics as the electronics emerge as more diffused clouds of sound. Gradually, when the highly panned and processed loom sounds return, the energy intensifies with the clarinet's disjunct melodies and drives to a climactic high *glissando*.

*Breath* by Joseph Harchanko returns to a languid calm. Tonal clusters contrast with more complex textures in the electronics with slow, meandering melodies in the clarinet. Harp-like flurries of notes in the accompaniment fail to ruffle the slow melodies of the soloist. Discordant chords soon give way to a triumphant tonal progression with a throbbing distortion of the live clarinet. The clarinet ultimately echoes the earlier harp-like *obbligato*.

The final work on the CD is composer and sound designer Mark Phillips' *Favorable Odds*, which begins in a lyrical and pastoral mood. The second section is introduced by a short, more discordant part and then settles into a pulsating pattern, accompanying a gently jazzy and repetitive melody in the clarinet. The piece modulates higher and higher until the clarinet settles on an extended tone. However, the ending is not as convincing as it might have been.

Certainly, this recording offers a fine and diverse assortment of concert compositions that will inspire audiences and challenge the artists.

*Anna Rubin has composed for small and large ensembles as well as electronic media since the late 1970s. An upcoming commission from New Music USA features the narrative of women immigrants from Central America and will premiere in the spring of 2021.*

## Carol Ann Weaver:

### *Songs for My Mother*

Mary-Catherine Pazzano, vocals; Willem Moolenbeek, soprano and alto saxophone; Ben Bolt-Martin, cello; Andrew Chung, violin; Jana Skarecky, didgeridoo; Carol Anne Weaver, piano. LORAC Productions LOR-027, SOCAN, Canadian Music Centre (2018)

## KATHLEEN SHIMETA

Carol Ann Weaver's *Songs for My Mother* honors her mother's life in rural Kentucky and their family trips to the African wilderness with all its compositional inspiration. Six of the songs are settings of her mother's early journal entries from her life in Kentucky. Weaver's music reveals a daughter's admiration, love, and understanding. Incorporating elements of jazz and blues in her vibrant, supportive accompaniments, the composer writes short vocal phrases that make strong statements about her mother's character and sense of humor. The songs are vocally approachable because of Weaver's compositional poise, which skillfully balances texts with instruments and piano accompaniment.

Opening with a cello and piano pedal tone, "Grant Us Peace" begins the song cycle in a solemn, hymn-like fashion. Weaver layers the instruments adding the saxophone on a sustained note, followed a few measures later with the singer entering on a sustained note, and then invoking a plea with the words "thy peace." Between the seven pleas for peace, the saxophone, piano, and cello have countermelody interludes with extended key changes and melodic development.

Miriam Weaver's newfound Kentucky experiences are depicted in the next three songs. "Feedack Curtains" consists of non-stop physical activity. The singer's short, *staccato* phrases are supported by a brisk, folk-like accompaniment that paints for the listener the rugged dirt roads, the house without running water, and neighbors too far away to say hello. When the feedsack curtains are made and pictures hung, the *legato* vocal line tenderly expresses "this is our home," with the phrase sung as a duet expressing that family makes a home. "Hard Shell Baptists" has a syncopated, jazzy accompaniment, while the singer, with repeated words and phrases, reveals her mother's amazement and apparent humor as she observes her neighbors' outdoor service. The Baptists' extended improvisatory singing

and the two preachers' loud, long sermons are captured by Pazzano's colorful singing and crisp diction. A routine household task proceeds with an eighth-note relentless accompaniment, which leads the singer into describing her "Flat Irons" with wooden handles brought from home. Heated on the fire, used very quickly, then switching to another iron and another, even on hot days. As the intensity of ironing continues, the voice and piano conclude that Miriam Weaver was quite pleased with her flat irons.

Rejoicing at the birth of a new granddaughter, who has sprung from the womb into light, the child is assured that no matter the hunger, longing, sorrows, or joy, she will be loved by the father and her angel mother. Weaver's "Lately Sprung" lullaby gently moves through harmonic changes building to each part of life's journey with excitement and delight. Pazzano embraces the emotion of the song with delicate phrasing and simple expressivity.

From her mother's final thoughts and words, while surrounded by family, the last two songs, "Crossing Over" and "To the End," have soothing melodies and harmonies that move between consonance and dissonance defining the conflict of experiencing life to the end and crossing over. Pazzano performs these emotional songs without being overly sentimental.

Weaver's family trips to Africa inspired her three wordless songs. Utilizing her field recordings from Kruger National Park and Imfolozi Game Reserve in South Africa, she overlays nature's sounds with voice, piano, and instruments. Birds, crickets, and frogs begin "Soaring Bateleur." Without interrupting nature's music, the cello and piano softly enter supporting a simple melody for the voice that soars like the eagle over the acacia savannah. Weaver captures a musical picture in "Leaping Impala" with a four-measure, *staccato* quarter-note pattern in the piano; fast *staccati* eighth notes played on the violin; and upward and downward leaps in the vocal part. That impala is directly in front of the listener. Completing the set of songs is an African night soundscape of crickets and birds; the piano plays rippling triplets; the cello, in an octave pattern, interrupts with a short melody; and the singers hover above in a soft duet lullaby.

Love of nature and our planet are the songs that complete the CD. Pazzano radiates delight and pleasure for the joy the ocean's currents and sands bring to our lives

in the song "Sea and Sound." John Weier's poem "Blue Green Planet" is set in ethereal, short, chant-like phrases that develop into a melody. The didgeridoo, a wind instrument made of tree bark, adds a velvety earthy sound in this tribute to our planet. With an upbeat and pop song quality, "Rising," with text by the composer, contains a catchy sung melody and lively improvisation for the piano, voice, and saxophone.

*Kathleen Shimeta is a leading authority on Canadian-American composer Gena Branscombe. Her CD, Ah! Love, I Shall Find Thee: Songs of Gena Branscombe, is on the Albany Records label (Troy599). She has performed her one-woman show, "Life! Love! Song! A Visit with Gena Branscombe" throughout the United States. The newly-formed, non-profit Gena Branscombe Project has awarded scholarships to students in the areas of arts administration, conducting, and composition. The Library of Congress interviewed Ms. Shimeta for their blog featuring her work reconstructing Miss Branscombe's dramatic oratorio, Pilgrims of Destiny. The work was performed at Clark University in April 2019. Kathleen has had articles published in the Association of Canadian Women Composers Journal, Sigma Alpha Iota Pan Pipes, the WNYC blog, and WomenArts Journal.*

## Recent Compact Disc Releases

### Beth Anderson: *Namely*

The composer uses the names of creative figures who are important in the composer's life as source material. In these 65 new text-sound compositions, from John Adams to Pamela Z, Anderson takes the names of influential artists and twists them into musical works of their own with the help of her formidable vocal techniques. She makes use of a "magic square," which generates the text material that is spoken by the performer. Other Minds OM 1027-2. Available from Amazon and Other Minds (2020).

### Elizabeth R. Austin: *Window Panes*

*Window Panes* is a compilation of five works composed by Elizabeth R. Austin over the years and recorded between 1991 and 2019. There is great diversity in style, complexity, and structure among the compositions. The disc includes the following: Symphony No. 1, "Wilderness," for two reciters and orchestra, on a text by Carl Sandburg. Symphony No. 2, "Light-house." *An American Triptych*, for piano; the work incorporates elements of jazz and blues. Five *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, for soprano and piano, on a text by Eliz-

abeth Barrett Browning. *Puzzle Preludes*, for piano; each prelude includes music by a well-known composer: Brahms, Bach, Chopin, Beethoven, Mendelssohn. *Three Rilke Lieder*, for soprano, baritone, and piano (played by Austin) on a text by Rainer Maria Rilke. Navona NV6304 (2020).

### Centennial

The disc, subtitled "Amplifying the Connections between History, Music, and Social Issues," presents solo and chamber music performed by José Antonio Zayas Cabán, saxophone. The recording features works by four women composers: Shelley Washington, Gemma Peacocke, **Amanda Feery**, and Fanny Mendelssohn to mark the 100-year anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which prohibits denying the vote to anyone based on sex. The album is not a celebration of the amendment; it urges listeners to recognize that much work remains to be done. Navona NV6309 (2020).

### Juliana Hall: *Bold Beauty: Songs by Juliana Hall*

The CD presents four song cycles that include 27 songs: *Cameos; Letters from Edna; Syllables of Velvet, Sentences of Plush; and Theme in Yellow*, performed by soprano Molly Fillmore and pianist Elvia Puccinelli. Blue Griffin Records (2020).

### Lil Lacy: *Windborne*

Lil Lacy's *Windborne* for solo accordion is performed by Bjarke Mogensen. Orchid Classics (2020). See <https://www.orchidclassics.com/eps/> for details.

### Jacqueline Leclair: *Music for English Horn Alone*

The CD features works by women composers ranging in age from 27 to 72; their music for solo English horn spans an extremely wide stylistic range. The disc includes the world premiere of *Layered Lament* by **Faye-Ellen Silverman** plus works by Meera Gudipati, Hannah Kendall (world premiere), Jenni Brandon, Karola Obermüller (world premiere, commissioned by Leclair), Lisa Bielawa, and Cecilia Arditto (world premiere). New Focus (2020).

### Erin K. Murphy: *Day & Night: Modern Flute & Piano Duos by Women Composers*

Flutist Erin K. Murphy and pianist Kirstin Ihde perform six 20th- and 21st-century flute and piano duos by women composers: Melanie Bonis' *Sonata* for flute and piano (1902), Lili Boulanger's *Nocturne* (1911), Germaine Tailleferre's *Pastorale* (1942) and *Forlane* (1972), Lita Grier's So-

nata for flute and piano (1956), and Nancy Galbraith's *Atacama* (2001). Both Grier and Galbraith are living American composers. Albany Records (2020).

### **Playing on the Edge 2**

The CD is the second volume in the series for string quartet, performed by the Sirius Quartet. It includes *The Canary Who Sang* by Dayton Kinney and draws parallels between the historical canaries in coal mines, who warned the miners of danger, and today's whistleblowers. The work is an allegorical comment on our political climate with the idea that a single voice can disrupt, challenge, and change opposing and unrelenting forces of power. Dayton was inspired by women's voices and stories about whistleblowers whose reports are often silenced. The quartet follows the narrative of a young girl who comes forward, but a powerful force tries to stifle her voice. The bittersweet return of her canary theme offers a sense of hope. The album also includes works by Bruce Babcock, Roger Fong, Daniel Burwasser, John Summers, and Gregory J. Harris. Navona NV6315 (2020).

### **PRISMA Vol. 4**

The disc features contemporary American works for large ensemble by Adrienne Albert and Rain Worthington plus works by Brian Belet, John Franek, Mara Gibson, and Angel Sanchez. Albert's *Courage for Winds* is a powerful, rhythmic work with an underlying snare drum military-type beat. The work has been called "inspiring and heartfelt," and Albert explains that it was an outgrowth of her battle with breast cancer. She said: "*Courage for Winds* speaks to the strength in all of us to overcome adversity in our lives."

Worthington's *Shadows of the Winds*, performed by the Janáček Philharmonic Orchestra, Stanislav Vavřínek, conductor, Ivo

Fišer, cello, was inspired by the sounds of a windstorm, as the wind increased and diminished in cycles. The work has a broad wash of mystery, as if looking out from a perspective of a high place as shadows of time and memories travel in waves over a vast emotional landscape below. Navona NV6298 (2020).

### **Hannah Selin: Wild Echo**

*Wild Echo* was created by singing violinists Hannah Selin (aka Pyxidata) and Hannah Rose Nicholas in a remote collaboration during the COVID-19 pandemic. It delves into the deep uncertainties of this moment, gradually unfurling a dreamscape where trapped spirits manage to escape skyward. The lyrics were originally written by Nicholas and her songwriting students during the early days of the lockdown, and were later reassembled by Nicholas. Bandcamp and all streaming platforms (2020).

### **Sketches of China**

The CD features works for solo guitar, guitar and orchestra, and chamber pieces with traditional Chinese instruments performed by Xuefei Yang. The double album includes *Shuo Chang* for solo guitar by Chen Yi. The work was also selected as the set piece for the 2021 Guitar Foundation of America International Competition. The CD is available on all digital platforms. Decca Classics China (2020).

### **Ethel Smyth: The Prison**

The hour-long vocal symphony, on a text by Henry Bennett Brewster, is performed by Sarah Brailey, soprano, and Dashon Burton, bass-baritone, with the Experiential Orchestra and Chorus, James Blachly, conductor. The work tells the tale of an innocent prisoner in solitary confinement awaiting execution. *The Prison* (1930) is Smyth's last major work. She wrote it from experience, having spent three weeks in Holloway Pris-

## **BOOK REVIEWS**

tion in country music through the contributions of a few key women musicians, is as much a sociological and theatrical history as it is a musical one. Indeed, the book offers changes in country music as a synecdoche for changes in American culture at large. The lives of the artists on which Vander Wel focuses exemplify a kind of renegade personality—at least in their roles as performers—that confront the prevailing expectations of femininity, and they proffer new visions of gender norms, particularly in the dominant practices of country music

on (London) in 1912 for throwing rocks at a politician's house when she was active as a suffragette. Chandos (2020).

### **Three Tributes**

The three works on the CD, in memory of Henry and Florence Freeman, are performed by Gloria Justen, violin, with Orchestra 2001, James Freeman, conducting. The disc includes Andrea Clearfield's Violin Concerto, *Romanza* (2007), Kevin Puts' Quintet for Piano and Strings: "The Red Snapper" (2005), and Gunther Schuller's Sonata for Two Pianos, Four Hands (2010), performed by Robert and James Freeman. Innova (2020).

### **Voices of Earth and Air, Vol. 3**

Works for chorus performed by the Kühn Choir of Prague, Lenka Navrátilová, conductor, and Vox Futura, Andrew Shenton, conductor. The CD includes two short sacred works by Deborah Anderson: *Windows*, for women's voices, and *Colorado Prayer*, for SATB. The music for these works is available from: [jwpepper.com/myscore/Deborah-J-Anderson](http://jwpepper.com/myscore/Deborah-J-Anderson). The CD also includes music by Theresa Koon, Kong-Yu Wong, Scott A. Shell, William Cooper, Hans Baker, Santiago Kodelm, Christopher J. Hoh, and Garth Baxter. Navona NV6299 (2020). To purchase: <https://amzn.to/3bNeMVg>

### **Betty Wishart: Moods**

Betty Wishart received a 2020 Regional Artist Project Grant from the Arts Council of Fayetteville and Cumberland County to record a second album of solo piano music performed by Jeri-Mae G. Astolfi. Ravello Records (2020).

### **Rain Worthington: Music is not a Competitive Sport**

The Podium Time Podcast features conductors Jeremy D. Cuevas and Luke Lyons-Hunt speaking with composer Rain Worthington.

during its so-called "Golden Years." The particular "Hillbilly Maidens, Okies, and Cowgirls" Vander Wel chooses to craft her story were clearly popular in their day but are more than likely unknown today, having been replaced by women performers coming of age in the more celebrity-driven television time period and, more recently, social media. I expect Vander Wel's story will be, by and large, unfamiliar to all but the most hard-core country music historians, but it is a fascinating and informative story, well-organized and written and one

**Stephanie Vander Wel:  
Hillbilly Maidens, Okies,  
and Cowgirls: Women's  
Country Music, 1930-1960**

Urbana: University of Illinois Press, paperback, 260 pages, bibliography, index, photographs, and musical examples, \$25.95. ISBN 978-0-252-04308-6 (2020)

**ROBERT BLACK**

The new publication by Stephanie Vander Wel, which traces three decades of innova-

that reveals the shoulders upon which more well-known country artists—from Dolly Parton to Taylor Swift—now stand.

The book is uniquely organized into a kind of space-time travel itinerary. Its seven chapters (plus Introduction and Conclusion) are arranged in three main parts, taking the reader from the early radio days of Chicago during the Great Depression, out West to burgeoning Hollywood and the California roadhouse scene, then back East to post-war Nashville, where the country music scene would mature and flourish, and where its center still remains. Each stopover explores the contributions of powerfully talented women within their given socio-temporal context and demonstrates how these women changed not so much the music—in terms of formal elements or stylistic development—but changed what popular music could be about: its role in society, topics it could explore, and the kinds of identities that could take center stage and command audiences.

Each of Vander Wel's three main sections focuses on one or two exemplary performers set within a concrete socio-historical context. The Chicago tour explores the careers of Lulu Belle (1913-1999) and Patsy Montana (1908-1996), both of whom utilized theatrical tactics to shake prevailing gender norms. Lulu Belle's approach was through the use of "grotesque" humor and outrage, while Patsy Montana leaned toward the "glamorous tomboy," utilizing prevailing visual signs of femininity with costume and makeup, but whose repertoire conjured a feisty autonomy. While there is some discussion of the performances of these women, Vander Wel provides much detail on the social and geographic context. In this respect, the writer documents the large migration of Appalachian residents to Chicago during the Great Depression due to its larger employment opportunities. Further documented is the power and reach of WLS Radio (named after the Sears-Roe-buck nickname of the "World's Largest Store") to carry their radio shows to at least five states during the day, and more than three times that amount at night. With the influx of Appalachian and Southern musicians, WLS began airing "The National Barn Dance Show" (a forerunner of the late-sixties/early-seventies television show "Hee Haw"), which brought this country music to a large audience otherwise fed on a steady diet of the classics. "The National

Barn Dance Show" became a huge hit for WLS, and Lulu Belle and Patsy Montana garnered massive popularity.

The next stop in Vander Wel's book is Hollywood, picking up at the tail end of the Great Depression. Just as Chicago saw a huge influx of Southern and Appalachian folk during the 1930s, California became the destination of folks from the American heartland seeking their fortunes out West. Following what is sometimes called the "Okie Migration"—captured famously in John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939)—Hollywood saw a large influx of musicians, again bringing their brand of country music to a locale whose main mode of production, the fledgling global phenomenon known as "Talkies," provided a perfect means to bring country performers to a large audience. In these chapters, Vander Wel provides descriptions of the performance styles of Carolina Cotton (1925-1997) and Rose Maddox (1925-1998), both of whom became very popular for their musical and theatrical talents (Cotton was a virtuosic yodeler), but also for the visual elements they cultivated: with the visual-orientation dominating film, stunning, elaborate costumes became *de rigueur* for these performers.

Finally, Vander Wel moves the story back East to Nashville, where she follows the emergence of "Honky-Tonk," and the careers of Kitty Wells (1919-2012), Jean Shepard (1933-2016), and Goldie Hill (1933-2005), who brought back what Vander Wel refers to as "domestic respectability," a subtle softening of the previously brazen female independence and low-brow humor exemplified in the Chicago and Hollywood episodes. During post-World War II, the mood of the country began waning away from the distraction demanded during harder times and settled into entertainment that was less challenging.

A reader will not likely learn much about music from *Hillbilly Maidens*. However, there is a lot to learn about how country music as an evolving cultural expression advanced the form during a tumultuous period in the twentieth-century United States. Vander Wel provides only three brief musical excerpts, but she includes eleven photographs: again, the emphasis is more sociological and theatrical. One interesting approach Vander Wel uses when discussing musical performance (mainly vocal) is a narrative semiotics, where certain vocal sounds (glottal stops, nasal twanginess, squeaks, etc.) and variations in chest and head voices signify certain attitudes or social positions: ambition, demureness, or ditziness. Vander Wel is quite adept at understanding how these vocal styles are produced physiologically, but her interpretations beg the question of how these stylistic attributes map to any reliable meaning. One might recall here literary critic and poet R.P. Blackmur who, in *Language as Gesture* (1952), noted that "Gesture, in language, is the outward and dramatic play of inward and imaged meaning." Vander Wel seems to be endeavoring to connect the outward and dramatic play of these women vocalists to some kind of meaning, but there is no interpretive methodology developed, so the reader is left to take Vander Wel's interpretations without problematization.

One look at Vander Wel's notes and bibliography shows that she is familiar with the work of musicologist Susan McClary, who has more rigorously pursued this kind of interpretive method (particularly in her book *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (1991), but Vander Wel's book is not theory-laden and to criticize that would be like reproaching the linden tree for not being an oak. This book is more about exposure of major contributions to the history of country music by women whose stories have been largely untold.

In her Conclusion, Vander Wel briefly summarizes the musical travelogue of the main body of the book and provides brief but useful ties to more modern/contemporary performers like Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton, The Dixie Chicks, and Miranda Lambert, showing how the "Hillbilly Maidens, Okies, and Cowgirls" influenced and paved the way for them and how, in their own ways, they continue to contest class and gender expectations in the twenty-first century. In all, Vander Wel's book is a wonderful and compelling read on a very niche but important topic in the history of popular music.

*Robert Black is an independent scholar and songwriter. He holds BFA and MA degrees from Kent State University and a PhD in Critical Theory from the University of Washington (Seattle). Additionally, Dr. Black has studied music composition at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. His portfolio includes original music for plays by Aristophanes, Brecht, Picasso, Sartre, and Shakespeare. He adapted Godard's film A Bout de Souffle (Breathless, 1960) for the stage, which he directed at Kent State University. He has recently completed composing a theatrical song-cycle based on James Joyce's Ulysses (1922).*

## Suzanne Robinson: *Peggy Glanville-Hicks: Composer and Critic*

Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 314 pages, bibliography, index, photographs, cloth, paper, e-book. ISBN 978-0-252-04256-0 (2019)

WENDY SUITER

Suzanne Robinson is to be congratulated for providing us with an extraordinary collection of documented facts as well as inferences about one of the most celebrated composers of her time, Peggy Glanville-Hicks, or “P.G.H.,” as she liked to be known.<sup>1</sup> In her book, Suzanne Robinson, a historical musicologist at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, Australia, with particular interests in cultural history and sexual politics, offers a thorough and comprehensive telling of P.G.H.’s life and work from her birth in Melbourne, Australia, in 1912, to her death in Sydney, Australia, in 1999, via a 35-year extensive professional life in the USA and Greece from 1941 to 1975. The facts, presented in chronological order, are collated from an incredibly detailed (quite possibly exhaustive) search through a multiplicity of personal and public documents found in archives both in Australia and internationally. The work Robinson has put in to locate and read all these materials is a huge undertaking in itself. Then to order this abundance of material into a sensible narrative is another notable achievement. The book includes 26 photographs of P.G.H., some with friends from childhood through to her final years; extensive endnotes (nearly 30 pages) providing the documentary sources; a selected bibliography, which lists all of P.G.H.’s extant compositions; a list of secondary sources cited in the book; a general index to the text; and a separate index for specific pieces of P.G.H.’s music mentioned in this book.

This telling of her story, however, has little dramatic shape, and important aspects are only touched upon in passing. Big life changes, such as moving from America to Greece, or the discovery of a persistent brain tumor, are told in the same manner as going out to dinner with friends. Robinson informs us that the details in P.G.H.’s personal diaries and papers enable us “to view the life as it was lived, how life and composition were intertwined, and the highs and lows of a mid-twentieth century career,”<sup>2</sup>

yet the narrative style rarely interprets or gives an emotional underpinning to the words found in the source documents.

Although P.G.H.’s letters and diaries, as reported in the book, consistently show that she conducted her life to address the sexism she encountered as a professional composer in post-war America, it is notable that Robinson does not explicitly include this as one of the key themes in this book. Robinson does conclude that P.G.H. “would have been gratified that her obituarists avoided describing her as a woman composer,” citing P.G.H.’s own words: “Don’t think me bitter, I prefer it the hard

way – rather than be considered ‘really very good, for a woman.’”<sup>3</sup> Another understated comment towards the end of the Introduction, that P.G.H.’s life and music “looked ahead of her time,”<sup>4</sup> is mentioned again only briefly in the concluding paragraphs of the Afterword: “If her life may not have been as rose-tinted as she would have liked, there is no denying how creatively she lived it and what prodigious feats of imagination were needed to construct it.”<sup>5</sup> Musicians were aware of her work; for example, Yehudi Menuhin wrote that P.G.H. was “one of the foremost propagators of new music in the United States in the 1940s and 1950s.”<sup>6</sup>

### Recent Publications

#### Leta E. Miller and J. Michele Edwards: *Chen Yi*

This user-friendly guide to the composer’s rich and engaging music has been described by Nancy Rao, author of *Chinatown Opera Theater in America*, as follows: “Drawing on extensive interviews, they depict this globetrotting composer’s cultural milieu in vivid detail and persuasively demonstrate the multifaceted and transnational dimension of the composer’s musical world. Their musical readings are vivid and insightful, full of rich information about Chen’s aesthetics, idioms, and distinctive style.” The biography is part of the “Women Composers” series published by the University of Illinois Press (2020).

#### Heather Frasch and Ryoko Akama: *mumei*

Frasch and Akama announce the release of three physical editions from their publishing company, mumei, inaugurated in the UK in 2015. The volumes feature interdisciplinary text-sound contributions. Volume 7: the work of Ryoko Akama. Volume 8: a collaboration between Frasch and a female Korean sound poet, lo wie. Volume 9: the work of fluxus artist Mieko Shiomi. Please see <http://mumeipublishing.com/> for more information.

#### Juliana Hall

Her recent publications include *Cameos*, E. C. Schirmer, No. 8892 (6 songs for soprano and piano on poems by Molly Fillmore); *Cameos*, E. C. Schirmer, No. 8893 (6 songs for mezzo soprano and piano on poems by Molly Fillmore); *Sentiment*, E. C. Schirmer, No. 8991 (monodrama for mezzo soprano solo on texts by Caitlin Vincent); and *Songs of Enchantment*, E. C. Schirmer, No. 8988 (10 songs for soprano or mezzo soprano and piano on poems by Walter de la Mare).

#### Calvert Johnson, ed.: *Florence Price: Complete Organ Works*

ClarNan Editions announces the publication of volume 5 of the complete organ works of Florence Price (1887-1953), the first African-American woman successful as a classical composer. Volume 5 includes the challenging *Passacaglia and Fugue* plus six short pieces. Well-known are her *Suite No 1*, *First Sonata*, *Variations on a Folk Song* (“Peter, Go Ring Dem Bells”), and *In Quiet Mood*, available in the first four volumes of the series. All volumes, starting in 1992, are edited by Calvert Johnson, Professor Emeritus of Music at Agnes Scott College, who also recorded all the music in the first four volumes in *Chicago Renaissance Woman: Florence B. Price Organ Works* (Calcante CD0014).

The publication can be obtained through Classical Vocal Reprints, 800-298-7474, or [www.classicalvocalreprints.com](http://www.classicalvocalreprints.com). The recording can be obtained from Calvert Johnson, [calvertjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:calvertjohnson@gmail.com).

#### Deon Nielsen Price: *Accompanying Skills for Pianists*, 2nd ed. (2020)

The text is available as a PDF document or a printed version. To purchase, contact: [culvercrest.com](http://culvercrest.com)

When Robinson is writing freely, her style is engaging and makes for a highly readable narrative. The opening lines of the Introduction are simple and enticing: “Almost all her life Peggy Glanville-Hicks lived near the sea. She loved the sight of the sun glinting...and she loved sailing on it by whatever means.”<sup>7</sup> But once the documentary evidence begins, she introduces a wealth of material, which not only inhibits the narrative flow, but in some cases is confusing, because there are no points of emphasis among the myriad details to suggest their significance to later parts of the story. A more annoying habit is the interjection of Robinson’s suppositions about events or P.G.H.’s thoughts or feelings that may or may not have occurred. These interpolations seem irrelevant and add little to the narrative without suggesting how these insights may have shaped the course of events.<sup>8</sup>

Robinson includes technical descriptions of some of P.G.H.’s music, but in the absence of the actual sound of the music or score excerpts, these analytical remarks do not add anything to the life story. More disappointing is that the term “Melody/Rhythm structure,” an apparently significant compositional process for P.G.H. that is referenced a number of times in the main text,<sup>9</sup> is never given a technical description or examples of how this compositional process plays out in her music. I am still unsure of what this term represents despite searching for it in the index.

## IAWM 2020 Search for New Music Competition: Award Winners

MICHELE CHENG, Chair

The IAWM is thrilled to announce the winners of its 2020 Search for New Music Competition. The competition recognizes the accomplishments of IAWM member composers and fosters IAWM’s goal of increasing awareness of the musical contributions of women. The IAWM hopes that performers around the world will see this music as a resource for their own concert programming. There were 75 submissions from 17 countries. The adjudicators were Patricia Alessandrini, Charlie Beale, Akiko Hatakeyama, Yuan-Chen Li, Sarah MacDonald, Ali Ryerson, Dale Trumbore, and Jasna Velickovic. Special thanks to the adjudicators and the sponsors of the prizes. The winners in the

What I greatly appreciate and believe is the main significance of this book is Robinson’s insights into the day to day activities of a woman composer determined to make composition her daily priority plus the performances and audience reception, including critical reactions to her music. These details include not only those of the “leading lady” of this book, but also other well-known and not so well-known American composers such as John Cage, Virgil Thomson, and numerous others. In some places, it reads like a gossip/society column as it reveals the relationships, the friendships, and fallings-out of these “modernist” music makers.<sup>10</sup> This highly informed and informative contextualization of the times, the men, their music, and their careers adds another dimension to our knowledge of that music.

Overall, despite the criticisms, I was entranced by the book and its materials, and I always looked forward to my next chance to read another chapter. As a composer undertaking a similar life journey, I found it inspirational and thought-provoking. As a feminist musicologist, it is an authoritative, informative, yet incredibly understated, account of a woman who bucked convention and forged a great public career for herself during a time of social conservatism, thus countering the myths and stereotyped responses to her independence of mind and spirit. I thoroughly recommend this book.

## IAWM NEWS

various categories are listed below. The first paragraph provides brief biographical information and the second offers the composer’s description of the music.

**Christine Clark/Theodore Front Prize** (\$500), sponsored by Christine Clark of Theodore Front Musical Literature, Inc., for a large chamber work (for 9+ instruments) and/or orchestral works; may include works featuring a soloist (vocal or instrumental).

**Winner: Qingye Wu, *Dream My Dreams***

Qingye Wu was born into a musical family in China. In 2013, she enrolled in the Cleveland Institute of Music, where she studied composition with Keith Fitch and piano with Daniel Shapiro. In 2018, she enrolled in the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and studied composition with Douglas Knehans and Michael Fiday and harpsichord with Michael Unger. She is currently a DMA student of composition at CCM.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Suzanne Robinson, *Peggy Glanville-Hicks: Composer and Critic* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2019), 2. “Her own identity as a ‘lady composer’ was hidden by the use of her initials for her newspaper reviews and the deliberate omission of her first name on her compositions.”

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>3</sup> Cited in note 20, p. 256.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 260.

<sup>6</sup> Yehudi Menuhin, “Peggy Glanville-Hicks,” *Times* (London), July 4, 1990, p. 16, cited in note 19, p. 256.

<sup>7</sup> Robinson, 1.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 62. The author writes: “Perhaps on the recommendation of...Peggy began copying...” without providing any supporting evidence for this proposition, rather than the simple observation that Peggy began paid work as a copyist. Another example is on p. 126, where the author writes that when Peggy arrived at her summer rental in Jamaica it “..must’ve reminded her of her childhood at Mt Martha....” without citing any evidence or importance for this assertion, instead, continuing on to describe her daily routine of composing and swimming.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 178. In relation to P.G.H.’s highly acclaimed opera *Nausicaa*.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 104ff, for example.

*Dr. Wendy Suiter is an Australian composer who started life wanting to be a protest singer/songwriter but instead studied economics and mathematics. In her mid-thirties, she followed her passion for music through formal study of music composition and earned a PhD degree. She composes music ranging from songs to experimental computer music.*

*Dream My Dreams* for orchestra was inspired by my fantastic dreams that were not related to my real life but instead were adventurous or fanciful. However, when I wanted to share these magical experiences with others, the details were always hard to remember after I awakened. Therefore, in this piece, I drew pictures of two connected dreams in an abstract way in order to remind myself of the feelings that I had while dreaming and also to share the adventures with others.



Qingye Wu

**Miriam Gideon Prize** (\$500), sponsored by Lucille Field Goodman to a composer at least 50 years of age for a work for solo voice and 1 to 5 instruments.

**Winner: Rachael Coleman, *The Witness***

Originally from Atlanta, Georgia, Rachael Coleman is a transgender composer, conductor, comedian, and artist. She taught music composition and theory for 30 years at Hong Kong Baptist University while presenting as male. She is a founding member of People's Liberation Improv, Hong Kong's longest-running comedy improv troupe, and she has performed with them in



Rachael Coleman instrumental solo, fixed media, and voice. Her CD *Multiple Worlds* is published by Ablaze Records, and she is the author of the article "Creativity, Comedy, and Composition."

*The Witness*, for soprano, violin, cello, clarinet/bass clarinet, piano, and percussion, is the central point in my five-song cycle *Disappearances*, on poems by my mother, Mary Ann Coleman. The outer songs are about family, and the second and fourth songs are about my grandmother's madness and my mother's own mental problems. *The Witness*, a love song from my mother to my father, serves as something of an eye of the hurricane, a moment of sweet calm in the center of the ominous tempest: *I turn to you, clothed in my smooth skin,/and feel my breathing tighten;/witness your face that will last in a pattern/meshed in my brain when this furniture has fallen/toward ruin.*

**Libby Larsen Prize** (\$300), sponsored by Libby Larsen, to a composer who is currently enrolled in school for a work in any medium.

#### **Winner: Erin Busch, *words, contained: set ii***

Erin Busch is a composer and cellist residing in Philadelphia, where she is currently pursuing a Ph.D. degree in composition at the University of Pennsylvania. She is the founder and Artistic Director of the Young Women Composers Camp. Her works have been commissioned and performed by the Albany (NY) Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra String Quartet, TAK Ensemble, Philadelphia Charter-A String Theory School, Matthew Levy of the PRISM Quartet, and Network for New Music. Recent projects include a string quartet commission from cellist Yumi Kendall of the Philadelphia Or-

chestra, a commission from the Amorsima Trio, a horn quartet for the 2020 Composers Conference as a Fromm Foundation Composer Fellow, and a multi-movement work for Sō Percussion.

*words, contained: set ii* is the second set of string quartet miniatures that I have composed inspired by words from *The Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows* (with permission). This project by John Koenig attempts to encapsulate familiar but yet unnamed experiences by creating new words to describe them. The four words I chose are: "opia": the ambiguous intensity of looking someone in the eye; "chrysalism": the amniotic tranquility of being indoors during a thunderstorm; "morii": the desire to capture a fleeting experience; and "ambedo": a kind of melancholic trance in which you become completely absorbed in vivid sensory details.

**Pauline Oliveros New Genre Prize** (\$300), sponsored by Claire Chase, for works incorporating innovative form or style, such as improvisation, multimedia, use of non-traditional notation, open instrumentation, or new performance practices.

#### **Winner: Sofía Scheps, *I come from afar***

Uruguayan composer Sofía Scheps graduated from the School of Music, University of the Republic (Uruguay), where she is currently an assistant professor working with the composition and orchestration department chairs. In 2017, she completed a master's degree in Sound Art at the University of Barcelona. She works in the frontiers of experimental music-acoustic, electroacoustic, and mixed me-

dia-and sound art, and has premiered works in concerts and festivals in Latin America, North America, and Europe. She devotes part of her time to sound design, music composition, and audio postproduction for audiovisual pieces and scenic arts.

*I come from afar* (Vengo de lejos) explores the possibility of constructing sound contexts by interweaving simple and limited materials, which develop slowly upon fragile structures associated with the mem-

ory of the performers. The piece brings up questions about how extra-musical cognitive and emotional aspects (the memory or forgetfulness of a close or remote relative) can qualitatively affect the resulting sound, if it does so at all. With a semi-open score, the piece proposes new dynamics and relationships between the performers, bringing memory and listening to the foreground as fundamental tools for sound construction.

#### **Honorable Mention: Aine E. Nakamura, *Circle hasu***

Aine E. Nakamura is a singer, composer, and performing artist. In her composition *Life of A Flower—War and Lullaby*, she performed as a flower that lived during war time. Her other solo performances and installations include A Concert of Electronic Music in honor of Mario Davidovsky, Dias de Música Electroacústica, The Two directed by Dmitry Krymov, and Nakamura-launched Artist-in-Residence in Hospital and Recovery to define her own woman's body. Premieres of her compositions include NYCEMF, October New Music Festival (Finland), and The Unseen World at the Abrons Arts Center. She was winner of the APNM 2019 Electronic Music Competition and the Leo Bronstein Homage Award. She earned a master's degree from New York University.



Aine E. Nakamura

*Circle hasu* is a 26-minute, one-woman performance artwork for voice and body in which I produce sonic and visual space through my idiosyncratic performance grammar. I focus on orality: the nuanced possibilities of my voice from my improvised body movements, which support a storyline about nature, animism, peace, and my woman's body. Hasu means lotus in Japanese. The language expresses some of the ways I feel about my ethnicity and cultural practices, which have been profoundly influenced by the privileges conferred in Japan on elders and men. And yet, I want to explore how I can challenge these traditional power structures that preclude new ways of feeling through my voice and my body.

**PatsyLu Prize** (\$500), sponsored by Patsy Rogers and Lucille Field Goodman, for classical art music in any form by Black women and/or lesbians.

#### **Winner: Melika M. Fitzhugh, *Waiting for the Future***



Sofía Scheps

A native of Stafford, Virginia, Melika M. Fitzhugh (A.B. Harvard - Radcliffe, M.M. Longy School of Music) studied conducting and composition most recently with John Howell Morrison and Osnat Netzer. Her compositions have been commissioned by John Tyson, Catherine E. Reuben, John and Maria Capello, Laura and Geoffrey Schamu, and the Quilisma Consort, and have been performed in the U.S., South America, and Europe by those artists as well as several others. She has composed music for film and stage, was a member of Just In Time Composers and Players, and is currently a member of the world/early music ensemble Urban Myth, in addition to playing bass guitar with acoustic rock singer/songwriter Emmy Cerra, the ambient rock band Rose Cabal, and the Balkan folk dance band Balkan Fields.



Melika M. Fitzhugh

*Waiting for the Future* begins in a fairly stern, somewhat foreboding way before starting to lighten a bit with repeated ascending passages. This gives way to harmonics followed by a flurry of pizzicato, which in turn yields to dance-like sections that evince greater hope and intensity. We can feel any number of ways about the future: excited, hopeful, eager, resigned, fearful. The entire gamut of emotions can be in play. Can we win the struggle? Not entirely. But before closing the piece, the instruments find their way to speak with one voice. Discordant and harsh, clear and confident. The future never arrives, by definition, but we find some clarity of vision.

**Portland Jazz Composers Ensemble Prize** (\$300) for a jazz compositions of any duration for small ensemble to big band (4-17 instruments).

#### **Winner: Jhoe Garay, *Laberinto de Raíces***

Jhoe Garay is a guitarist, composer, and arranger from Mexico City based in

New York since 2014, and she earned a bachelor's degree in jazz studies at The City College of New York. She is a three-time winner of the Latin Grammy Cultural Foundation



Jhoe Garay

scholarship and the recipient of the Austin and Florence Kaye Foundation Scholarship, Hilda Holober Memorial Award, and Repsol Emerging Artist Award. She was selected to participate in the International Workshop for Jazz and Creative Music at The Banff Centre in 2017, she was a beneficiary of the Women in Jazz Organization Mentorship Program in 2019, and she was a Latin Grammy Foundation Ambassador at the Latin Grammy Celebration in 2018 and 2019. She is currently a grantee of the "Young Creators" program 2019-2020 by the National Fund for Culture and the Arts in Mexico.

*Laberinto de Raíces (Roots Labyrinth)* was inspired by the mangrove forests of Mexico, which provide shelter for many species of birds, reptiles, and insects above the water. Below the water, its roots serve as shelter for fishes, turtles, and manatees, among other species. The piece is part of a larger project called *Nichanti Mexiko: Sound Ecosystems*. This project honors natural diversity through music, creating awareness of the importance of natural areas and transmitting a message that encourages the conservation of natural resources.

**Alex Shapiro Prize** (\$500 and mentorship/consultation from Alex Shapiro), sponsored by Alex Shapiro for a work of any duration for large ensemble wind band requiring a conductor, with or without soloist, acoustic or electroacoustic, published or as yet unpublished.

#### **Winner: Wenxin Li, *Wave***

Wenxin Li is a native of Chongqing, China, and is currently pursuing her PhD degree in composition at the University of Iowa, studying with Jean-Francois Charles and Sivan Cohen Elias. Li's music has been featured at the Aspen Music Festival and School, Composers Conference, TURN UP Multimedia Festival, National Student Electronic Music Event, Midwest Graduate Music Consortium, SCI Student National Conference, FSC New Music Festival, Midwest Composers Symposium, and Caroga Lake Music Festival. Her music has also been performed by the JACK Quartet, Accroche Note, Western Percussion Ensemble, and Sound Out Loud Ensemble.



Wenxin Li

From the most traditional music to the most extreme, we almost always include gestures that begin at nothing, gain

*Wave* is inspired by the wave movement of water ripples. Water waves are a mixture of longitudinal and transverse waves. They have various shapes, directions, and dimensions. In this piece, I try to present an auditory illustration of three wave movements and effects, from formation until it fades. In the first section, the wave forms at a single point and starts to disperse and expand to the surrounding area. In the second section, we can see the vertical movements the wave causes in the water, rising from a low point and gradually progressing to a high point and then cycling back. In the final section, after a long time propagating, the energy of the water ripples decreases, and we can barely see the wave, but it is still moving towards a further place.

**Judith Lang Zaimont Prize** (\$400), sponsored by Professor Zaimont, for an extended instrumental composition—large solo or chamber work—by a composer at least 30 years old whose music has not yet been recorded or published.

#### **Winner: Amy Brandon, *threads***

**Composer and guitarist** Amy Brandon's upcoming events include works for the Gaudeamus Festival, KIRKOS Ensemble (Ireland), Exponential Ensemble (NYC), and guitarist Libby Myers, as well as installations and performances at Winnipeg New Music Festival, the Canadian New Music Network, and Women from Space and Sound Symposium. She has received Canadian and international composition awards and honorable mentions from the Leo Brouwer Guitar Composition Competition (Grand Prize 2019), Central European String Quartet ("Most Innovative," 2018), and ArtsNS (Emerging Artist Award, 2019). In addition to performance and composition, she writes and presents academic work concerning music cognition, virtual reality, improvisation, and the guitar. Holding degrees in jazz guitar performance and composition, she is currently completing an interdisciplinary PhD in music cognition at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.



Amy Brandon

From the most traditional music to the most extreme, we almost always include gestures that begin at nothing, gain

prominence, and return to nothing – a “swell.” *Threads* explores this particular gesture in many different dimensions, not just in the dynamic profile of traditional melodic lines, but also through swells of microtonal pitch, white noise, timbre, distortion, pointillistic elements, density, and nothing. The work was commissioned by the Chartreuse Trio and premiered in May 2019 at the Music in Bloom Festival. Creation of the work was generously supported by a grant from ArtsNS (Arts Nova Scotia).

**Choral/Vocal Ensemble Prize** (\$300), compositions of any duration for choral or vocal ensemble.

**Winner: Maja Linderoth, *Sonata form denatured prose***

Maja Linderoth is a Swedish composer based in Oslo, Norway. She earned a bachelor's degree in composition in 2018 at the Norwegian Academy of Music (Oslo) and Universität der Künste (Berlin, Germany). Linderoth also studied, with support from The Ulysses Network in 2018, at IRCAM ManiFeste (Paris, France) and at Composition, Alternative Performance and Performance Art (Snape Maltings, UK). She has collaborated with several renowned ensembles including Faint Noise, the Norwegian Soloists' Choir, the Cikada ensemble, and the Oslo Philharmonic. Her music has been performed in Europe and in the USA.

*Sonata form denatured prose* is on a text by the Swedish poet Gunnar Ekelöf (from *Sent på jorden*, 1932), translated by Robert Bly and Christina Paulston. It reflects on the constituents and the limitations of language, while crushing the alphabet between the teeth: wrestling with its insufficiency and its perfection, the vague and the distinct. An uninhibited flux of vocal sounds and consonants form charged terms. At the same time, the constituents only sound a timbre. “We begin again” is a frustrated attempt to achieve a perfect expression and a phrase with a distinct request.



Maja Linderoth

## Winners of the IAWM 2021 Annual Concert Call for Scores

NATALIA KAZARYAN, Chair

The Annual IAWM Concert Call for Scores competition recognizes the accomplishments of IAWM member composers and fosters IAWM's goal of increasing awareness of the musical contributions of women. The Annual Concert will take place at Howard University in Washington, D.C on April 1, 2021 at 7:30 pm. The winners are:

**Tatev Amiryani: *Praise the LORD***

For information, see Tatev Amiryani, “The Road Home: Musical Memories of Life in Armenia” in this issue.

**Ashi Day: *For Whom the Dog Tolls***

Her vocally-driven works explore unconventional intersections between music and theater and reimagining roles for women. In her ten-minute opera, *For Whom the Dog Tolls*, a soprano plays a deviously victorious hunting dog. Her mini-play for soprano and clarinet, *The Green Child*, casts both performers as characters in a mysterious legend. Ashi has won the following calls for scores: Denison TUTTI, Juventas New Music Ensemble, Calliope's Call, New Music DC, Music by Women, UNC's ROCC, and the Women Composers Festival of Hartford. She co-created works for the NEO Voice Festival, DC's Source Festival, and Capital Fringe, and placed in the 2020 FYFE Choral Composition Competition. Commissions and performances include Metropolitan Master Chorale of LA, Cantate Chamber Singers, PERI Trio, Cantilena, Whistling Hens, and more. Ashi also manages several education programs for the Kennedy Center and sings as a professional church musician and with DC's composer/conductor collaborative, Artifice. Visit: [www.ashi-day.com](http://www.ashi-day.com)

**Anne Hege: *Vocal Fantasy***

She creates musical worlds that invite an awareness of and attention to the body. Her works have been performed by So Percussion, Princeton Laptop Orchestra, Stanford Laptop Orchestra, Google Mobile Devices Ensemble, loadbang, Ensemble Klang, NOW Ensemble, Voce in Tempore, Newspeak, Piedmont East Bay Children's Chorus, San Francisco Girls Chorus, Resound Ensemble, as well as others. From 2008 to 2015, Hege composed musical

scores for Carrie Ahern Dance with over 40 performances of these works in locations including the vaults of a Wall Street Bank, a retired Lyceum, and Dickson's Farmstand. She has received awards and grants including a New Music USA Project Grant, Mark Nelson Fellowship (Princeton University), Composer in Residence (Resound Ensemble), Artist in Residence (CCRMA, Stanford University), Research Affiliate (Princeton University), among other awards. She is currently composing an opera for the Stanford Laptop Orchestra to premiere in 2021. Visit: <https://www.annehege.com/>

**Gyuli Kambarova: *Sonata Concertante***

She is a classically trained pianist and composer who graduated from the prestigious Rostov State Rachmaninov Conservatory, where she earned a double Master of Music degree, with honors in piano and composition. Her career began in Southern Russia, where she composed, performed, and taught. In 2010, she moved to Louisville, Kentucky. Her work in the U.S. includes performances at the University of Louisville School, Youth Performing Arts School, Louisville Academy of Music, and other venues. She has released three CDs: *Dreams* (2014), *My Way* (2016), and *Memories* (2018). Her work has been internationally recognized by several elite organizations. She was a finalist at the prestigious International Antonin Dvorak Composition Competition (Prague). Recent awards include “Fifteen-Minutes-of-Fame: Re-Imagining Shubert” (New York) and Commissioned Composer 2019 by the Kentucky Music Teachers Association. She teaches at the University of Louisville School of Music, the Louisville Academy of Music, and Youth Performing Arts School, and she gives private piano and composition lessons at her own studio. Visit: <https://www.gyulikambarova.com/>

**Bonnie McLarty: *When the Rain Comes***

Her music has been described as “beautifully written, singable, and rewarding.” Her pieces have won several awards, including the 2019 Cincinnati Camerata Composition Award and the 2017 Robert E. Foster Wind Ensemble Prize. Much of her recent work has focused on collaborating with women poets and local artists, particularly her art song folio *Weather-telling* and her dramatic song cycle *Snow Angel*, which was premiered by the Lawrence Opera Theatre in August 2019. She is particularly interested in creating community through

music. Her works often feature musical dialog between performers, extra-musical elements, and significant influences from American vernacular and popular genres. She earned her D.M.A. in composition from the University of Kansas and a master's degree in piano performance from the University of Wyoming. She is currently based in the Kansas City area, where she is an assistant adjunct professor of music theory at UMKC. Visit: [www.bonniemclarty.com](http://www.bonniemclarty.com)

### Catherine Reid: *I'm Falling*

Her compositions include *The Broken Jug*, an opera commissioned by the Indianapolis Opera Company (librettist David Ives), music for *The Bark and the Tree* (playwright Vivian Nesbitt), performed at the United solo Festival, and *The Colossus of Rhodes* (playwright Carey Purloff), which was performed at ACT and the Eugene O'Neill Theater. Her opera *The Yellow Wallpaper* (librettist Judith Lane) received a full production at Peabody Conservatory. Her *Cemetery: The Musical* and her collaborative oratorio, *The Last Call* (poet Paul Pines), were each performed at the Charles Wood Theater. She was commissioned to compose several works in collaboration with the Hyde Collection including *A Collection in Concert* and *Degas: His Love, His Women, His Art*. The piece in this concert, *I'm Falling*, is from her show *Andrew Wyeth in Music, Dance, Imagery, and Poetry* and is from the inside of Andrew Wyeth's mind as he is painting. Visit: <https://reidc1.wixsite.com/website>

### Hannah Selin: *Alf's Labyrinth*

Composer, violist, and vocalist Hannah Selin juxtaposes acoustic instruments and voices with electronics and field recordings to create striking and vibrant sound-spaces. Rooted in the sentience of sounds, her music is characterized by shimmering sound-masses that merge and separate in unexpectedly moving ways. She is a founding member of the band GADADU ([www.gadadu.com](http://www.gadadu.com)) and violist in Xanthoria Quartet ([www.xanthoriaquartet.com](http://www.xanthoriaquartet.com)). She has received commissions and awards from Brooklyn Metro Chamber Orchestra, ASCAP, the IAWM, One Quiet Plunge, Collide-O-Scope Music, inEnsemble, percussionist Lucas Conant, and violinists Karen Ritscher and Kallie Ciechomski. She was selected as a 2018 resident at the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, and her score for the short film "222," directed by Delfine Paolini, was nominated for

the 2018 Peer Raben Music Award at the Soundtrack Cologne Festival. Hannah is currently pursuing her PhD in composition as a University Fellow at Temple University. Visit: [hannahselin.net](http://hannahselin.net)

## Winners of the 2017 Pauline Alderman Awards for Outstanding Scholarship on Women in Music

MONICA BUCKLAND, Chair

The Pauline Alderman Awards were founded in 1985 by the *International Congress on Women in Music* to honor the memory of pioneering musicologist Pauline Alderman, Ph.D. (1893–1983), founder and chair of the Music History Department of the University of Southern California. Past winners include some of the most distinguished scholars writing about women and music.

For the 2017 awards, authors submitted articles and book-length works published in 2015 and 2016 for adjudication by respected scholars. We regret that restructuring within IAWM led to a delay in announcing the award winners. We were very impressed with the overall quality of the submissions. We considered four to be truly outstanding; we have therefore decided, in addition to the book and article prizes, to award two runner-up prizes for a dissertation and a reference work.

### Book Prize:

Laurel Parsons and Brenda Ravenscroft, *Analytical Essays on Music by Women Composers: Concert Music, 1960–2000*, Oxford University Press, April 2016.

This is the first volume of a four-book project, presenting detailed studies of compositions by eight women composers by eight authors: Ursula Mamlok (Joseph N. Straus), Norma Beecroft (Christoph Neidhöfer), Joan Tower (Jonathan Bernard), Sofia Gubaidulina (Judy Lochhead), Chen Yi (Nancy Rao), Kaija Saariaho (John Roeder), Libby Larsen (Brenda Ravenscroft), and Elisabeth Lutyens (Laurel Parsons). An introductory chapter by Parsons and Ravenscroft situates the essays in the contemporary environment of the female composer, examining the representation of her music in creative and scholarly forums.

One adjudicator commented: "I cannot say enough good things about this book. It was a fascinating read, and it is so necessary to our field. It definitely fills in the gaps—there is surprisingly little out there that actually analyzes music by wom-

en composers in a rigorous way. The analyses in this book are absolutely original, and none of them are derivative of each other."

### Article Prize:

Gurminder Kaur Bhogal, "Listening to female voices in Sikh *kirtan*," *Sikh Formations* 13:1-2, 48–77, published online, November 22, 2016.

This article examines sound recordings made in the early twentieth century by Sikh women story tellers (*kirtaniye*) from the Punjab region of India. The essay discusses their traditions and the myriad ways in which they expressed Sikh spirituality and emotion in their singing. The article also focuses on gender issues and the taboos, difficulties, and deprivations that the women faced.

The adjudicator judged this outstanding article to be "extremely valuable to current scholarly discussions concerning the female voice, female embodiment, and larger questions of historiography, specifically how one creates a history from a paucity of documentation." The adjudicator commented that the effectiveness of Bhogal's scholarship and good writing goes beyond the circle of Sikh specialists, for whom it was likely intended, and it "makes an important contribution to the scholarly understanding of women and gender and music."

### Runner-up Prize for Dissertation:

Jessica Rudman, *Common-Tone Preserving Contextual Inversions in the Music of Ellen Taaffe Zwilich*, PhD thesis submitted in 2015 to the City University of New York and published online by CUNY.

Jessica Rudman takes a transformational perspective to approach an understanding of the melodic and harmonic structures of Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's music. She focuses on the transformational aspect, revealing connections overlooked in other types of analysis. She also introduces a generalized theory of common-tone preserving contextual inversions and uses that framework to provide insight into Zwilich's style.

The adjudicator pointed out that the author "is the first theorist to subject Zwilich's music to such detailed analytical scrutiny.... This is not only new research, it is important research. This work achieves many things simultaneously. It is simultaneously synthesizing and original; it is extraordinarily ambitious and wide-ranging and focused; and it sheds light on a composer whose work has not been accorded the kind of analytical scrutiny it deserves, and by doing so elevates the music of all women whose works

have been treated as less worthy of doctoral students' investigations."

#### **Runner-up Prize for Reference Work:**

Judith Barger, *Music in The Girl's Own Paper: An Annotated Catalogue, 1880-1910*, Routledge, September 2016.

Nineteenth-century British periodicals for girls and women offer a wealth of material to understand how girls and women fit into their social and cultural worlds, of which music making was an important part. *The Girl's Own Paper*, first published in 1880, stands out because of its rich musical content: this is a catalogue of the musical content found in the weekly and later monthly issues during the magazine's first thirty years, in music scores, installments of serialized fiction about musicians, music-related nonfiction, poetry with a musical title or theme, illustrations depicting music making, and replies to musical correspondents.

Dear IAWM Members,

We want to recognize and thank our donors for 2020 who have generously given the IAWM over \$5,000 collectively. These funds will help support the IAWM's efforts for future member advocacy and opportunities. Additionally, we are deeply thankful to our sponsors whose support for the Search for New Music and Pauline Alderman Awards never wavered in spite of difficult times.

Too often, we miss the generosity of people right in front of us. I want to acknowledge the board and journal staff members who give not only their time, but often financially as well to help defray the cost of the organization's administrative expenses – postage here, copying costs there – it all adds up, and I am most grateful. Thank you all.

Christina Rusnak, President

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I have built up a good rapport with many of the music directors at the relevant radio stations, and I keep them up-to-date re my new CD releases." In fact, excerpts from Lydia's *Cantica Sacra* were used by the dance troupe The Immortals on the *Britain's Got Talent* television show in November 2019.

#### **Members' News**

##### **ANITA HANAWALT**

News items are listed alphabetically by member's name and include recent and forthcoming activities. Submissions are always welcome concerning appointments, honors, commissions, premieres, performances, and other items. NB: The column does not include radio broadcasts; see Linda Rimel's weekly "Broadcast Updates." Awards and recent publications and recordings are listed in separate columns. Send this information to the editor in chief, Eve R. Meyer, at [evemeyer45@gmail.com](mailto:evemeyer45@gmail.com).

We recommend that you begin with the most significant news first and follow that with an organized presentation of the other information. Due to space limitations, information such as lengthy descriptions, lists of performers, long websites, and reviews may sometimes be edited.

The deadline for the next issue is March 30, 2020. Please send news about your activities to Members' News Editor Anita Hanawalt at [anita@hanawalthaus.net](mailto:anita@hanawalthaus.net). Anita does not monitor announcements sent to the IAWM listserv; be sure to send the information directly to her.

**Chen Yi's Fisherman's Song** for violin and piano was selected by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music to the repertory for Grade 8 examinations, 2020-23. She served as a panelist for Tulsa Chorale's April 21, 2020 virtual panel event, "Finding Our Voices," moderated by Tim Sharp, including six internationally acclaimed United States women composers: Andrea Ramsey, Rosephanye Powell, Chen Yi, Joan Szymko, Jocelyn Hagen, and Patti Drennan. She was one of the Guest Composition Professors at the Mizzou International Composers Festival, July 27-31, 2020, giving virtual lecture and composition lessons to eight other composers.

**J. Michele Edwards** presented "Trauma, Myths, and Images of Women in the Music of Chen Yi" on January 30, 2020 at Composition In Asia – Symposium & Festival, no. 3 held at the University of South Florida, Tampa. Women composers, performers, and presenters were quite well represented at this event.

New compositions by **Juliana Hall** include *Nocturne of Remembered Spring* (extended

#### **Volunteers Around the Globe Promote Broadcasts of Women's Compositions**

LINDA RIMEL

What do composers Tania León, Anahita Abbasi, and Lydia Kavina have in common with Hildegard of Bingen and Clara Schumann?

Answer: All of these composers have had volunteers around the globe, impelled by the IAWM's Radio Requests program, encourage broadcasters to play their music. Every week since 2004, Ursula Rempel has researched and chosen a composer, and every week the identity of the Radio Request composer appears on the IAWM web page and in posts to the IAWM's electronic list. The selections, she explains, "are based on a combination of factors: availability of CDs, geography/nationality, accessibility/appeal of the music for general audiences, and a concern to feature both historical and contemporary women composers." During the winter holidays, she substitutes a list of holiday music composed by women.

To take full advantage of this program, composers and performers, as well as their labels and agents, peruse the Resource Directory of "friendly broadcasters" inclined to play music composed by women and living composers. The Resource Directory, which appears on the IAWM web page and at the foot of every edition of the weekly e-newsletter, *Broadcast Update*, seems to be the only such directory online.

Composers and performers with CDs should let Ursula know and send CDs to the broadcasters appropriate for their recordings. Visitors to the web page, as well as IAWM members, are encouraged to participate in contacting radio and internet stations.

British composer Lydia Kakabadse reports that "all radio stations contacted have asked me to send in my CD's." The result? "Super results—my music is broadcast by radio stations which I would not otherwise have known about and a number of musicians in the USA have contacted me via my website after hearing my music. Over the years

setting for baritone and piano of the poem by Conrad Aiken), *Ahab* (monodrama for bass baritone or baritone, with piano, on a libretto by Caitlin Vincent), *Two Old Crows* (song for soprano and piano on a poem by Vachel Lindsay), *Sentiment* (monodrama for solo mezzo soprano on a libretto by Caitlin Vincent), *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird* (extended setting of the poem by Wallace Stevens for soprano or mezzo soprano, with alto saxophone), and *Bredon Hill* (song for tenor and piano on a poem by A. E. Housman).

Hall was interviewed in several settings, including “Monodramas” with Juliana Hall, Caitlin Vincent, and Zachary James for The Lied Society in Minneapolis, Minnesota on April 11, 2020; “Composers & Cocktails” for the Cincinnati Song Initiative, Cincinnati, Ohio on May 14; Collaborative Piano Institute at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana on June 16; “Make Music Sunday” at East Granby (Connecticut) Congregational Church on June 21, 2020 and “Composers Studio” at WHUP FM, Hillsborough, North Carolina on September 6. Her works were broadcast on radio and the web in numerous locations, including The College Music Society Virtual Conference, also in Switzerland, Princeton, New Jersey, the Netherlands, Hawaii, Minnesota, Canada, Spain, Colorado, California, Ireland, England and New York. Virtual presentations of her works include a doctoral lecture-recital given by soprano Tabitha Burchett at the Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University, Bloomington on October 23, 2019, including *When the South Wind Sings*. A paper, “Night Dances: Bringing Juliana Hall’s Work to Light,” was given by soprano Deborah Popham for the Music by Women Festival held at the Mississippi University for Women, Columbus, on March 6, 2020.

In 2019, **Dayton Kinney** was named an international finalist in the Thailand International Composition Competition and a national finalist in the American Prize for Composition in Chamber Music. Her music has recently been performed in Thailand, Canada, and around the United States. She hopes to reschedule several concerts that were canceled or postponed due to COVID-19, including her Carnegie Hall–Weill debut in New York City. In the upcoming months, she plans to continue finishing her dissertation for a Ph.D. in Music Composition at Duke University. Please see [www.daytonkinney.com](http://www.daytonkinney.com) for more information.

**Lil Lacy**’s debut concert on October 10, 2020 featured the premiere performance of *you’re somehow connected* written for accordionist Bjarke Mogensen and fourteen musicians, electronics, field recordings and five interviews. See <http://www.lillacy.dk/youre-somehow-connected> for more information. Two premieres took place during an October 14–18 tour of the concert “Exploring Plants,” in collaboration with a biologist, three classical musicians, an electronic musician and the international audiovisual artist collective, VERTIGO. Please see <http://www.lillacy.dk/exploring-plants> for more information.

In January 2020, the Zephyr Clarinet Trio gave the live premiere performance of **Jane O’Leary**’s *Winter Reflections* for Clarinet Trio in Galway, Ireland. The Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble gave a live premiere performance of *Beneath the Dark Blue Waves* (bass clarinet, violin, cello, piano) in Belfast, Ireland. In February, the ConTempo Quartet gave the live premiere performance of *forever begin* for string quartet in Galway. The National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Ryan McAdams, and the Ligeti Quartet gave the live premiere performance of *Triptych* for

## AWARDS

The IAWM congratulates the following award winners.

### **Lil Lacy**

Lil was one of the recipients of the Léonie Sonning Talent Prize 2020. The prizes are awarded by the foundation each year to further the artistic talent of young composers, musicians, and singers from Denmark and other Nordic countries. Lil plans to use the funds on study trips to San Diego, New York, and Berlin.

### **Jane O’Leary**

Jane was a winner in the Kaleidoscope MusArt 2020 Call for Scores—“Bagatelles for Beethoven” with her work for piano solo, *Five Bagatelles*. To honor Beethoven’s 250th birth year, Kaleidoscope invited composers from around the world to submit bagatelles for piano solo, piano four hands, violin and piano, and violin-clarinet-cello-piano quartet. Her work was performed by Maria Sumareva in Florida online on October 25, and Jane provided an introduction to the work as part of the livestream. She was one of the 12 award-winning finalists in the Kwidzyn Classical Music Awards competition for works for flute and piano. Her duo *feather-headed, frail, summoning* was scheduled to be performed in the Spring Festival, Kwidzyn, Poland in April 2020. The performance by Iwona Glinka, flute, and Vicky Stylianou, piano, has been postponed.

### **Anna Rubin**

Anna’s proposed work, *Their Own Voices: Stories of Migrant Women*, for soprano, mezzo, piano, and fixed media, has been selected for funding by New Music USA. It will portray stories representative of many immigrant women from Mexico and Central America who have fled their native countries seeking refuge and safety in the U.S. The work was commissioned by the Piano on the Rocks International Festival in Sedona, Arizona, in spring 2021. The additional funding will support the performance and outreach activities in Northern Arizona.

### **Danaë Vlasse**

Danaë’s album *Poème* was awarded five honors at this year’s Indie Music Channel Awards: Best Classical Artist, Best Classical Recording, Best Classical Songwriter, Best Classical Music Video, and Video of the Year (*Rêverie*). *Poème*, subtitled “Songs of Life, Love, and Loss” (MSR Classics), is a collection of nine pieces (piano solos and art-songs) inspired by poetry. It features Grammy-award-winning soprano Hila Plitmann, multi-genre vocal visionary Sangeeta Kaur, internationally acclaimed pianist Robert Thies, and Los Angeles Opera principal cellist John Walz. The award-winning video, *Rêverie*, “La Lune,” is the official music video for the album *Poème*. The performers are soprano Hila Plitmann and pianist Robert Thies. Both the music and the lyrics are by Danaë. The video is available on YouTube: [www.danaevlasse.com/reverie](http://www.danaevlasse.com/reverie)

### **Betty Wishart**

Betty’s *Toccata II* for piano solo was selected as a winning composition in the Neue Musik Frankfurt’s Happy New Sounds Concert Series and was performed by Patrick Sutardjo at Saalbau Frankfurt am Main on December 21, 2019.

string quartet and symphony orchestra in Dublin, Ireland.

Online performances of O’Leary’s works were given during summer 2020 with the Salon Series presented by The Contemporary Music Centre in Ireland, including *a piacere* for bass clarinet with Paul Roe; *as if one* for viola and cello with Andrea Banciu and Adrian Mantu; and *Palette of Preludes* (III) for piano with Xenia Pestova. September and October online performances include *feather-headed, frail, summoning* for flute and piano, performed by Iwona Glinka, flute, and Vicky Stylianou, piano at Spring Festival, Kwidzyn, Poland on September 26; *Five Bagatelles* with Maria Sumareva, piano, presented by Kaleidoscope MusArt in their virtual concert season, “Peeks into the Infinite” on October 24, and an October 25 live performance of *No. 19* for solo viola with Esra Pehlivanli, in Feinsum/Finkum, Netherlands.

**Janice Misurell-Mitchell** performed in several online concerts during spring and summer. In May she performed *Una voce perduta: in memoriam Ted Shen*, for solo alto flute and *Sometimes the City is Silent*, for flute, on the Chicago Flute Club’s Members Showcase. She performed a solo recital on the HotHouse Global series, playing *Amendment Blues No. 1*, for voice/alto flute, *Motel...loneliness*, for voice/flute, *Sub-Music and Song for solo flute*, and *The Light that Burns: in memoriam Gabriel Mitchell* for alto flute/voice. For the summer solstice program of Make Music Chicago, she performed her versions of Hugo Ball’s *Karawane*, and *Gadji beri bimba*, for solo voice. In July her music was performed in the video of 6Degrees Composers appearing on HotHouse Global, featuring *Una voice perduta*, *Sometimes the City is Silent*, and a video of *Vanishing Points/Quantum Leaps I*, with Emily Marlow, clarinet, Ming Huang Xu, violin, Cheng-hou Lee, cello, and Winston Choi, piano, from an earlier 6Degrees concert. In August, she performed as part of an improvisatory dance and music ensemble, Freedom From and Freedom To, at the Elastic Arts Foundation in Chicago. In September she performed her piece, *Blooz Man/Poet Woman*, for flute/voice as part of the online concert, New Music Not at the Green Mill. She has been awarded a commission for a piece on Chicago’s Ear Taxi Festival, now scheduled for October 2021: *Resistant Noise*, for vocal and chamber ensembles and electronics.

**Andrea Reinkemeyer** was awarded tenure and promoted to the rank of Associate

Professor of Music Composition and Theory at Linfield University (Oregon, USA). *Smoulder* for Wind Ensemble was made possible through a thirteen-school consortium commission project and premiered at the Oregon Music Educators Association Conference in January 2020; the work explores the impact of devastating fires caused by climate change. Timothy Oliver and the Arkansas State University Wind Ensemble performed *Dos Danzas* at the Southwest Regional Conference of the College Band Directors National Association in February. *Opening Up* for String Quartet and Narrator was commissioned by Fear No Music for their “Hearings” concert, which contemplated the impact of Christine Blasey Ford’s testimony during the United States Senate Judiciary Hearings. *Wrought Iron* was performed by Third Angle at the Mississippi Women’s University Music by Women Festival, and selected as the first-place award winner for the Flute New Music Consortium Composition Competition in the flute plus one category. Three songs from the in-progress chamber opera, *Triptych: Three Disasters* – written in collaboration with librettist Patrick Wohlmuth and commissioned by Rhymes with Opera – were recorded and presented online during the 2020 “Local Action” New Music Gathering.

**Sharon Guertin Shafer**’s art song, “Crossing” was presented during the live stream celebration of United Nations World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development on May 21, 2020, performed by soprano Liana Valente and pianist Stephanie Dickinson. The event was sponsored by the Federation of World Peace and Love. On February 21, the premiere of *Songs of Farewell*, based on Shafer’s own poems, was presented in Washington, DC during a concert featuring members of the composers group of the Friday Morning Music Club. Soprano Mandy Brown performed the songs with Shafer at the piano.

**Kathleen Shimeta**, along with two colleagues, has created The Gena Branscombe Project (not-for-profit) to promote the performance of Branscombe’s art songs, chamber and choral music, piano music and her 1919 award-winning dramatic oratorio, *Pilgrims of Destiny*. The oratorio score is now available for rental and future public performances. The Gena Branscombe Project is also awarding a yearly scholarship to a student pursuing a career in the fields of composition, conducting and arts administrator. For

more information, find the project on Facebook, TheGenaBranscombeProject.com, You Tube, and #BringingBackBranscombe.

**Elizabeth Start** reports fewer cancellations and postponements along with some new activities. The May 19, 2020 concert, where she was to perform solo and chamber works with other members of the Chicago Composers’ Consortium at the Chicago Cultural Center, presented by New Music Chicago (NMC), was canceled. However, New Music Chicago did present a series of virtual concerts in August in which she participated, including an August 18 performance of Timothy Edwards’ *Cycles* on a program that also featured Thomas Mesa’s YouTube video of Start’s *Echoes in Life*. The September 12, 2020 scheduled premiere of *Traces: Inspired by Strong Women*, commissioned by the Kalamazoo Symphony for their 100th anniversary season was rescheduled for a January 2021 concert. On October 10, she participated in New Music Chicago’s 15th Anniversary celebration, performing *April in New Orleans in April*.

Start was one of eight musicians commissioned for a “Resonance” project by the Connecting Chords Music Festival, for which she created and recorded musical responses to two works of art that will be in the Kalamazoo Institute of Art’s soon-to-open “Unveiling American Genius” exhibit. These works will be available for attendees to download and listen to via earbuds while viewing the exhibit.

During October, Start performed interactively with Beth Bradfish’s sound sculpture, installed at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum as part of the Connecting Chords Music Festival (CCMF), in a new work by Bradfish. This program was a virtual concert, part of the Quarantine Concert series of Chicago’s Experimental Sound Studio (ESS). Prior to this concert, she participated in a virtual “behind the scenes” event, including an interview with Bradfish and footage of experimenting with the interaction of Start’s cello and the sound sculpture of Bradfish. Start plans to participate in many stitched-together isolation ensembles created by the Kalamazoo Symphony.

On August 13, 2020, PARMA Live Stage presented the live-stream world premiere of **Rain Worthington**’s string orchestra piece *Within Deep Currents*, performed by the Moravian Philharmonic with conductor Stanislav Vavřínek in Olomouc, Czech Republic.