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# *Journal*

● of the  
**iaawm**  
international alliance for women in music



## In this issue:

Julie Ayer  
Olga de Blanck  
Martha Castellón  
Madeleine Dring  
Paul L. Dunkel  
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Ro Hancock-Child  
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Linda W. Ostrander  
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## Reports and Announcements

Reports, announcements, and other information should be sent to the Editor, Eve R. Meyer, by e-mail at [evemeyer@spotcat.com](mailto:evemeyer@spotcat.com).

## Deadline

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## PUBLICATION

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## INTERVIEW

# An Interview with Tamar Muskal

PAUL L. DUNKEL

*Israeli-American composer Tamar Muskal was the recipient of a 2009 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship. To honor her achievement, the Journal invited Paul Dunkel to interview her about her life and music.*

**Paul L. Dunkel:** *Let's start with the present. What are you doing now and what are your plans?*

**Tamar Muskal:** I am currently in the process of recording *Mar de Leche* (Sea of Milk), a work for cello, oud, and two percussionists based on a well-known Ladino folksong. Ladino is an ancient language, a mixture of Spanish and Hebrew that was spoken by the Sephardic Jews who lived peacefully in Spain under Moorish rulers between 711 and 1492. I wrote the work for cellist Maya Baiser, who performed it at Carnegie Hall in New York this past October. *Mar de Leche* blends Jewish and Arabic melodies, harmonies, and rhythms and is organized into eight sections. I introduce the original song in the beginning and then use the material from it in the remainder of the work. Some of the sections are closer to Ladino music and others to Arabic. When the piece was completed, I was quite surprised that the "Jewish" sections and the "Arabic" sections are quite similar in style and not only because they share the same material. When the Jews and the Arabs lived together in Spain, they naturally were influenced by one another. As an Israeli, I had always been more aware of the differences, but now, having written this piece, I realize how alike they can be both melodically and rhythmically.

The cello and oud parts are completely written out and even the smallest details are pre-composed, but the percussion parts are almost bare, since they are mainly improvised. I discussed the music with the percussionists and, due to their experience with Middle Eastern music and instruments, they knew best how to accompany the other performers. The piece is very focused in its expression and in the direction each section takes, but at the same time, it has a liberating feeling due to the improvisation. Toward the end of the piece, the oud player is given total freedom of expression, and he improvises on a repeated melodic pattern that I pre-composed for the cello. My only requirement for the oud player was that he improvise on two specific Arabic scales: *hijaz* (1/2 11/2 1/2 1 1/2 11/2 1/2) and *rast* (1 3/4 3/4 1 1 3/4 3/4).

In addition to the *Mar de Leche* disc, I am recording music that I wrote to accompany two short films from the early twentieth century by the French director Alice Guy Blaché. The music was commissioned by the Whitney Museum in New York. Allan Kozinn of the *New York Times* wrote that "of all the composers, she [Muskal] went furthest

to reach Blaché's turf, providing gracefully melodic, neo-Romantic scores for the sentimental 'Falling Leaves' (1912) and 'Roads Lead Home' (1913)."

Plans for the future? My big dream is to compose an opera, and I would like to have David Grossman (one of Israel's most important writers) write the libretto.

**PLD:** *Has most of your music had ethnic roots?*

**TM:** Lately, it might seem that way. I do intentionally bring sounds and rhythms from the Middle East to my compositions. Nine years ago I wrote *Dmamah* (Total Silence) for the Music From Copland House ensemble, which premiered it at Merkin Hall in New York. The piece, for flute, cello and piano, was part of a concert named "Old Testament in the New World." *Dmamah* was greatly influenced by the rhythms and tonality of Israeli and Jewish music on the one hand and church bells on the other. Those are the sounds



Tamar Muskal

that I remember from my childhood in Jerusalem. The piece received a very good review by Bernard Holland of the *New York Times*: "One of the fresher voices on Wednesday was Tamar Muskal and her 'Dmamah' for four instruments. Beneath are a series of ostinato repetitions. Above, Ms. Muskal overhears an

Israeli urban scene: an elaborate cantorial cello solo from Wilhelmina Smith, off-kilter interjections played against the repetitions, and finally crashing piano chords as church bells. 'Dmamah' has color and life." Later, the work was awarded prizes in the Left Coast Chamber Ensemble Competition (2002), the Tampa Bay Composer's Forum Competition (2003), and the Third Millennium Ensemble Composition Competition (2007).

In 2005 I wrote an orchestral piece, *The Yellow Wind*, based on the book of the same name by David Grossman. The book describes the experiences of both Israelis and Palestinians in West Bank settlements and camps. When Grossman wrote the book in 1997, the Israeli people had a very positive feeling that peace was near, but the following year, when the book was published, he described an entirely different future and the book was very controversial. I

composed *The Yellow Wind* seventeen years later, and by then, the conflict had gotten much worse. I also incorporated poems by important Israeli poets: Shaul Tchernihovsky, Natan Alterman, and Natan Yonatan, and the greatest Palestinian Arab poet: Mahmoud Darwish. The piece is for two vocalists: an Israeli who sings in Hebrew and an Arab who sings in Arabic, plus a ney (Arabic flute), a narrator (at the premiere, Brian Lehrer of WNYC), and orchestra. I hoped that through the songs in both languages I could present an apolitical and balanced work that would connect the conflicting sides.

In order to represent the Arab people properly, I studied Arabic music with Bassam Saba, who later played the ney in the performances. Most of the Arabic scales (maqams) are combinations of half, whole, and quarters tones. The quarter tones have a completely different role than the quarter tones that are used in computer music. After weeks of listening to Arabic music and composing short melodies in different scales, I started to hear the amazing power of those quarter tones; they created a whole new expression for me, and for just a while, western music sounded dull. I was amazed at how a simple ascending line of the first four notes of the rast and bayati scales, for example, could be so powerful.

In the piece, each singer sings two solos in her own language, and they join for two duets near the end. In the first duet, they sing a Yom Kippur prayer asking God for forgiveness for their sins. The singers sing the same text in unison but in their own languages. For the second duet, I chose a poem in Arabic by Mahmoud Darwish and intertwined it with a poem in Hebrew by Natan Yonatan. At the beginning, the parts contrast with each other. The Hebrew is very rhythmic, articulated, and loud; the harmonies hardly change and the vocal line consists of a few ascending repeated notes. The Arabic part is very lyric, soft, and free in its meter and unpredictable in its vocal line. Because each singer is in her own world there is no feeling of tension, but as the duet progresses, their phrases become increasingly shorter and the tension (representing the tension between the Israelis and Arabs) intensifies until the climax when they join together in unison on a long note.

Since I neither speak nor understand Arabic, my first encounter with the poems in Arabic was through their Hebrew translation. After I made my selections, I searched for the poems in their original language, which was not an easy task. I met with Mansour Ajami, a Lebanese poet who works as a translator at the UN, and recorded him reading the poems with their natural intonation and accents. I listened to the recording many times, and only when I could read them myself absolutely fluently, with the right accents within each word and sentence, did I attempt to set them to music. Once the songs were completed, I checked them with Bassam Saba to be sure the music fit the language one hundred percent.

The reaction at the performances was overwhelming for me. There was a standing ovation and huge excitement in the music hall. I felt that I had “reached” people in a way that music does not always choose to do. People were crying and Grossman was very happy with the result. In a letter that

he later wrote to the Israel Festival, he said (translated from Hebrew):

In my opinion, this is a very moving piece, a smart adaptation filled with warmth and humanity towards the book, which I thought is impossible to adapt because of its documentary nature. The combination between the parts of the narration, the playing, and the singing in Hebrew and Arabic, brings to life wonderfully the book’s spirit and the human drama that it asked to describe. The contact that was created between the text and the music, between songs by Israeli and Palestinian poets, between the sister languages—Hebrew and the Arabic, turns Ms. Muskal’s piece into a one of a kind artistic, political and human encounter point. I hope that the piece will be heard in the upcoming Israel Festival. The “encounter point” that she offers is more essential today than it was at the time I wrote the book.

The work received rave reviews in the *New York Times* and elsewhere, but it was not performed at the festival—the text was still considered too controversial. A few months after its premiere, the piece was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, and in 2007, it won the Theodore Front Prize from the International Alliance for Women in Music.

Another piece with ethnic roots is *Tzafuf Bazug* (Crowded in the Couple), a song cycle for soprano, violin, viola, cello, and piano, based upon a set of six unpublished beautiful love poems (in Hebrew), and once again the text is by David Grossman. The poems deal with love relationships later in life. The first song shows a couple in disharmony, their relationship is stormy and full of tension: “A dust storm, your throat is choking,” Grossman writes, and later he adds: “The house walls quivered.” The couple does not have the “space” they require and even though it is just the two of them, their lives are too “crowded” (see Example 1). In this song cycle, there is a constant “flirting” between tonality and atonality within the songs themselves and from one song to another. Since I felt deeply connected to the text, writing the music came easily to me. When it was performed at the Salt Bay Chamber Music Festival, it received a standing ovation, and at the end of the concert, many in the audience congratulated me with tears in their eyes. Sara Hotchkis, a Maine resident who attended the premiere, wrote in a letter to me: “[I] wish I could articulate my feelings about this work to you because I want you to know what an incredible talent you have. Everything about *Tzafuf Bazug* was extraordinary and I feel like I will never be the same again. I was in tears by the end.”

So yes, you can say that recently, most of my music has ethnic roots, although the next two pieces that I am about to write will have nothing to do with that.

**PLD:** *When did you start studying music?*

**TM:** When I was four I played songs by ear at the piano and created my first original song. Our family had visited the city of Nahariya in the North of Israel, where the numerous carriages made a great impression on me. I wrote a song called “Two Horses, Not Horses”; the carriage was pulled by one horse, and on top of the carriage were two wooden horses that could hold children. At age nine I started taking piano lessons and was accepted as a student by Louisa Yofe, who taught only the most gifted performers.

**PLD:** *Were you now on a fast track to go on to college or the conservatory?*

**TM:** In Israel one must serve in the army for two years before entering college or conservatory. I served as a social worker, and it was my duty to visit the soldiers’ houses and talk to their families. The job was not very time consuming, and I decided to enroll in the Rubin Academy of Music.

**PLD:** *The Israeli Army seemed to have a very liberal policy in allowing you to continue your education.*

**TM:** Oh no! If they found out, I would have been thrown in jail. Eventually, I realized I couldn’t do both—there were too many scheduling conflicts. Instead, I studied privately in Tel Aviv with Yoni Rechter, one of Israel’s greatest song writers, and improvisation with Guri Agmon, an excellent saxophonist and composer. I did this for almost two years, throughout my service in the army, but I was always afraid the army police would catch me in Tel Aviv, while I was supposed to be working in Jerusalem. After my service was completed, I enrolled in the Rubin Academy again and studied with Mark Kopytman, an incredible composer and teacher.

**PLD:** *I would imagine such a degree would be quite an asset and many doors opened for you?*

**TM:** Israel is a very small country with many composers and several good orchestras but with limited opportunities to get one’s music played. Most of the composers who graduated with me left to pursue graduate studies elsewhere. I stayed on and earned an artist diploma at the Academy. Then, for almost four years (1990-1994), I composed nothing. I took care of animals, stray dogs and stray cats. Although animals were important to me, and at home we always had pets, I cannot explain this development. It was an obsession. I finally realized that if I wanted to compose, I needed to leave the country. I was married and my husband, Daniel Rozin, specialized in multimedia. We both decided to move to the United States.

**PLD:** *And New York City was an obvious choice?*

**TM:** Yes, for both of us. Daniel studied multimedia at New York University, and I prepared a new portfolio for my applications to graduate school. I had not composed a piece of music for four years. In 1995 I was accepted at the Yale School of Music, and I looked forward to studying with Jacob Druckman, who was a great inspiration. He gave me free access to his studio, and I worked there non-stop every

day until very late at night. Unfortunately, Druckman got sick after the first semester, and stopped teaching; he passed away that summer. I continued my studies with Martin Bresnick, an incredible teacher who writes very interesting and smart music; the harmonic language in his music is unique with fascinating interval combinations. In my first lesson, Bresnick called me a “stubborn woman,” but soon afterward, we developed a strong mutual appreciation. I made rapid progress and won four awards for my compositions. After graduation, I waited two years to begin a doctoral program at CUNY, where I worked with Tania León and David Del Tredici. Tania insisted that I write vocal music, and I am glad I listened to her. Martin Bresnick had also encouraged me to write for the voice; he told me many times that I have special talent for theater and vocal music. I didn’t like vocal music at that time because the singers’ tone production didn’t sound natural to me, and everything sounded too dramatic. But now, I am in love with it and enjoy writing for voice, and as I mentioned before, I hope to write an opera one day.

**PLD:** *How does New York City compare to Israel?*

**TM:** It is very different. Israel is a small country, and even though there are many musical activities relative to its size, there are just a few orchestras and ensembles. To get your music played you have to be quite aggressive. Also, there is very little funding for music, and sometimes musicians must wait a long time before they are paid for their services. I am very fortunate because this year *Tzafuf Bazug* will be performed at the Jerusalem International Chamber Music Festival produced by Elena Bashkistrova Barenboim (Daniel Barenboim’s wife). She is a wonderful pianist, and as the festival’s artistic director, she brings together the best musicians from Europe with the best Israelis. I am very excited. I cannot wait to hear the piece in front of a Hebrew-speaking audience in this beautiful hall in Jerusalem, the city where I was born and raised. The last work of mine that was played in Israel was my first String Quartet, performed by the Colorado String Quartet seven years ago at the Contemporary Music Festival in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Many of my former teachers came to the performance and remarked about how much progress I had made—once you are someone’s student in Israel, you are that person’s student for life.

In New York City I met remarkable players who can play all styles and types of music. The musical life in the city is so rich: every other night, three or four concerts are scheduled. I feel compulsive about attending concerts because they are so stimulating. In Israel, if a major concert is announced, you had better attend because that opportunity may not repeat itself.

**PLD:** *As a performer myself, I miss the pleasure (agony) of hearing my own performances. How do you generally react to performances of your music?*

**TM:** When I finish composing a piece, even though it is difficult, I am able to let it go, and pass it on to the performers. I also tend to get ill right after I finish because I usually spend the final ten days enduring many sleepless nights. I

like going to the rehearsals—of course, it depends on the number of rehearsals—but I try not to go to the first one. First rehearsals are usually for the performers' purposes—to get a first taste of the piece, to get the general idea of what it is about. It is nice to see the progress that is made from one rehearsal to another. Since I usually complete a piece in a relatively short time before its premiere, I clearly remember all the details and therefore I notice every little detail that does not come out just right at the premiere. That is why I like listening to the recording weeks after the premiere, when my mind is already invested in the next project and I do not give as much weight to each minute detail.

**PLD:** *Paul Hindemith said that it was important to consider the temperament of the player who was commissioning the music. Any comment?*

**TM:** It is very important for me to know for whom I am writing. In my piece for Maya Baiser, while composing I could actually visualize her gestures, the physical way she would play. Maya has a very individual and dramatic style, which is very much a part of her musical expression. The same is true for the pianist Lisa Moore, for whom I am currently composing a solo piano piece. I try to channel my music through the player. This approach doesn't necessarily work for large ensembles.

**PLD:** *What special qualities do you bring to the table?*

**TM:** I always bring the Middle East, even though I often question that. It seems my Middle Eastern roots are always present. I am comfortable in both tonal and atonal

approaches, but when I am composing atonally, I concentrate harder because this music is much more complex. As for twelve tone music, I never particularly liked it, although I do like the music of Berg and Webern very much. Perhaps I am not an intellectual person. I am aware that Webern's music is intellectual, but when I listen to it, I don't perceive it as such. I hear his music as very playful. You can often find playfulness in my music as well.

**Tzafuf Bazug**  
Et Hasalon Hotza Pit'om  
To David Grossman

Tamar Muskal

The musical score is for the piece "Tzafuf Bazug" (Example 1), "Et Hasalon Hotza Pit'om" (2009) by Tamar Muskal. It is a commission for David Grossman. The score is written for Soprano, Violin, Viola, Violoncello, and Piano. The lyrics are in Hebrew. The score is divided into three systems. The first system starts at measure 7, the second at measure 15, and the third at measure 192. The tempo markings are ♩=138, ♩=84 (♩=168), and ♩=192. The dynamics range from *ff* to *p*, with *mf* and *f* also present. There are also markings for *rit.* and *mf cresc.*

Example 1. *Tzafuf Bazug*, "Et Hasalon Hotza Pit'om" (2009)

**PLD:** *Getting back to your husband, the visual artist Daniel Rozin, how do two creative people juggle their careers and manage their egos?*

**TM:** We are not moody artists. We are both quite pragmatic. Last year for the first time we worked on a piece together called *Mirrors*, a commission from Eighth Blackbird ensemble that was performed as part of their annual tour. Daniel gets ideas from my music, and I get ideas from his art. The *Mirrors* project is a twenty-minute original multimedia performance piece with live video processing and projection. The piece incorporates the software mirrors conceived and designed by Daniel. These digital mirrors are comprised of

digital video cameras connected to computers that, via original software written by him, transform the captured image into one of any number of styles. These transformed images are then projected onto a screen on stage. When a performer stands in front of the video camera, his/her image is reflected on the screen after it has been interpreted by the software. The displays change rapidly yielding a smooth transition tightly linked to the movements of the performer. For the best possible artistic results, the players memorize their parts. The projected image appears on a screen that is amongst the performers to facilitate the interaction, and the mirror itself is incorporated into the work to such a degree as

to seem like a member of the ensemble. Amitay Yaish, an Israeli actor and director, came especially from Israel to stage the performers, and in four full and busy days, we put together the premiere. About *Mirrors*, John Von Rhein of the *Chicago Tribune* wrote: "The ripples and shimmers that filled Muskall's post-minimalist score were as evanescent as swirling, digitized visuals—dissolving into one another with kaleidoscopic beauty. *Mirrors* is high-tech music theater at its most inventive and fascinating."

Daniel and I also collaborated on two children, and whoever doesn't have a looming deadline takes care of the children. Our son Yonatan is a marvelous pianist and is now studying jazz improvisation in addition to his classical music studies. His younger sister Yulie reacts very strongly to music and cannot fall asleep unless Bach is played in the background.

**PLD:** *What are your plans for the future?*

**TM:** I feel I have much, much more in me than I



have done thus far. I need to let myself be free to combine all of my loves and strengths. I hope to do this successfully in the piano solo piece I am working on now for Lisa Moore. I don't want to sound as though I am bragging, but when I look back at the awards and grants that I have received in recent years (Guggenheim Fellowship, grants from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard, Meet the Composer, American Composers Forum, American Music Center, and more), I have such a warm feeling of acceptance. As an immigrant, this sense of belonging to the music community is especially significant for me. I also appreciate being accepted into the IAWM community and being honored in the organization's publication in this special way.

*Paul Lustig Dunkel, a conductor and flutist, was music director of the Westchester Philharmonic for twenty-five years and one of the founders and resident conductor of the American Composers Orchestra. He has been a member of Speculum Musicae and the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble. Currently, he is the principal flutist of the New York City Ballet. Tamar Muskal approached him for conducting lessons seven years ago, and he coached her on one of her own compositions. Recognizing her talent, he and his colleagues at Music From Copland House commissioned Dmamah. Dunkel then appointed her as the residence composer for the education division of the Westchester Philharmonic. In that capacity, she wrote three orchestral pieces, Gloss I, Gloss II, and Gloss III, all based on poems and drawings by children. A year later, Dunkel commissioned The Yellow Wind for the Westchester Philharmonic as well as Mechanofin for flute and piano.*

## ARTICLES

### *Criseyde*—A Feminist Opera

ALICE SHIELDS

In 2006 Nancy Dean, former professor of medieval studies at Hunter College and medievalist specializing in Chaucer, commissioned me to write an opera based on Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, one of the greatest of the medieval romances. The same story was told earlier by Boccaccio and others and later by Shakespeare. It is a tale of love and supposed betrayal that takes place during the Trojan War between Troy and Greece.

My opera *Criseyde* is in two acts, for five solo singers, an ensemble of three singers, and fourteen instruments, and it is two hours long. The roles are Criseyde, a young widow and noble lady of Troy (soprano); Troilus, Prince of Troy (lyric baritone); Cassandra, a psychic oracle, sister to Troilus (mezzo-soprano); Pandar, uncle to Criseyde and subordinate of Troilus (basso cantante), who also plays the role of Calkas, father of Criseyde; and Diomedes, a Greek Prince (baritone). The Three Ladies, who sing as an ensemble, are nieces and companions to Criseyde (soprano and two mezzo-sopranos). The orchestra consists of flute/piccolo, oboe, English horn, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, harp, piano, violin 1, violin 2, viola, cello, and contrabass.

For those who need a quick refresher, I am providing just the bare outline of Chaucer's plot. Troilus falls in love with Criseyde (Cressida). Her uncle Pandar, in the absence of her father, controls her economically and socially and forces her to let his boss Troilus visit her. Despite her misgivings, she falls deeply in love with him. They consummate their love and vow to be true to each other in a secret relationship, but Criseyde is exchanged for a valuable Trojan prisoner held by the Greeks. Criseyde, heartbroken, is taken to the Greek camp, but first promises Troilus she will return to Troy. But once she is imprisoned within the camp, she cannot leave, and Diomedes, a Greek Prince in the camp, claims her. Back in Troy, Pandar and Troilus excoriate Criseyde's name, calling her false. When Troilus learns that Criseyde is Diomedes's lover, he goes into battle to kill himself.

Before beginning work on the opera, Dean and I met once a week for about a year to read parts of Chaucer's poem aloud. She tutored me on issues of pronunciation, interpretation, and details of the medieval concept of courtly love relevant to Chaucer's work. I am the composer and dramatist for the opera, and Nancy is the librettist for the new Middle English text, based on Chaucer's romance. I also studied the Boccaccio version and realized that Chaucer omitted some vital lines from his *Troilus and Criseyde*, which is largely a translation he made of Boccaccio's story. As a result, I restored them and included the text in medieval Italian.

Regarding the language, in performance supertitles can be used, and/or a libretto can be handed out with the program. The libretto has the Middle English (or occasionally Boccaccio's medieval Italian) on the left and the modern English translation on the right, so the audience can follow along easily. Example 1 illustrates a scene early in the opera when Pandar pressures his niece Criseyde to let Troilus visit her.

The main difference between the sounds of Chaucer's Middle English and modern English is in the pronunciation of the vowels. This is called the Great Vowel Shift, which occurred after Chaucer and before Shakespeare. In Chaucer's time, vowels were pronounced as in modern continental European languages such as French or Italian. After that, the vowels in English migrated, as it were, towards the front of the mouth. For example, a common word such as "lady" in Chaucer's time was pronounced "lah-dy." Without supertitles or a libretto, the modern English-speaking audience can miss some of the words but can easily understand many others.

Scenes from *Criseyde* have been performed thus far by the New York City Opera at its VOX Festival of contemporary American operas in 2008, by the American Virtuosi Opera Theater at the City University of New York Graduate Center in 2008, and by the Feminist Theory and Music 10 Symposium at the University of North Carolina-

Greensboro in May 2009. I have just now, in February 2010, completed the opera.

As I read Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* over and over with Nancy Dean, I was increasingly outraged at how Chaucer

Example 1: Criseyde, Act I, scene 2, "In Criseyde's Parlor"

---

PANDAR: (*pressuring her still further*)

"Er that age the devoure,  
devoure thi beautee,  
retourne his love!"  
(*spoken*)  
"Go love; for olde,  
ther wol no wight of the!"

"Before age devours you,  
devours your beauty,  
return his love!"

"Go love, for when you're old,  
no one will want you!"

CRISEYDE: (*resisting*)

"What sholden straunge to me doon,  
when he, that for my beste frende I wende,  
ret me to love?"

"What would a stranger do to me,  
when he that I believed to be my best friend,  
advises me to love?"

PANDAR:

"Retourne his love."

"Return his love."

*Criseyde turns away from her uncle and struggles with her thoughts,  
knowing that in the absence of her father, in the end she must obey him.*

***Criseyde Submits To Power***

CRISEYDE: (*lamenting*) [ARIETTA]

"Alas, if I hadde loved,  
loved hym or any mannes creature,  
ye nolde han had no mercy ne mesure,  
no mercy on me,  
but alwey had me in repreve."

"Alas, if I had loved,  
loved him or any other man,  
you would have had no mercy on me,  
no mercy on me,  
but would always have had contempt for me."

PANDAR: (*spoken softly, repeating his most effective ploy*)

"I aske oonly that ye make hym better chiere  
so that hys lyf be saved.  
But if ye late hyme deye,  
bet were I myselven slow."

"I just ask you to act a little friendly toward  
him so that his life is saved.  
But if you cause him to die,  
it would be better if I killed myself."

CRISEYDE: (*speaking, she turns to face him*)

"And if this man sle here hym self, allas,  
in my presence, it wol be no solas.  
And ek myn Emes lif  
is in balaunce!"

"If this man kills himself  
here in front of me, it will be no solace to me.  
And even my Uncle's life  
hangs in the balance!"

*(she continues seamlessly, speaking in rhythm, and then in pitch as well:)*

"But natheles, with goddes governaunce,  
myn honour shal I kepe, and ek his lif.  
Ye seyn ye nothyng elles me requere?"

"But nonetheless, with God's help,  
I will keep my honor, and he his life.  
You say you require nothing else of me?"

LADIES: (*echoing Criseyde*)

"...me requere?"

"... else of me?"

PANDAR: (*now relaxed and casual*)

"No, myn owen Nece dere."

"No, my own niece, dear."

*(she exclaims, with barely suppressed anger:)*

CRISEYDE:

"Ne love a man ne kan I naught  
ne may ayeins my wyl!"

"I will not, may not, cannot love a man  
against my will!"

LADIES: (*echoing Criseyde*)

"...yl."

"...ill."

*Criseyde curtseys sharply to Pandar as he exits.*

was treating his female character, with the abuses he heaped upon her, a bias that is later reflected in Shakespeare's own *Cressida*. I have taken the story by Chaucer and changed it to reflect Criseyde's conscious struggles for survival, autonomy, self-respect, and love within the patriarchal culture into which she was born. Like most women throughout history and even today, Criseyde bargains for her economic status and physical safety with her young woman's body, her only asset. In the opera, she emerges as a heroine in a dramatic retelling of Chaucer's tale from a woman's perspective.

In creating the opera, I kept searching to find my version of the emotional truth of all the characters as they emerged, to let them take on their own life from my psyche. I sought answers from Professor Dean and from the work of other scholars as to why Chaucer's Criseyde was—in my opinion—so vacuous and indistinct in personality and inscrutable in some of her actions.

The character of Criseyde has been much maligned over the centuries. I believe this occurred in part because the motivations of the female character were barely sketched out by Chaucer, in contrast to the sheer quantity of thoughts and exquisite sensitivities he attributed to his male character. Chaucer fully develops the character and suffering of Prince Troilus. We hear much of Troilus' highly nuanced feelings and perceptions, but we hear hardly anything of the female character Criseyde's thoughts or feelings. What accounts for this discrepancy between Chaucer's many and rich descriptions of Troilus' inner life and his infrequent and rather bland descriptions of Criseyde's inner life?

Chaucer, who died in 1400, translated much of his tale, word for word, from his older contemporary Giovanni Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato* (He Who Is Prostrated by Love). However, Chaucer chose to leave out many actions and speeches that make Boccaccio's Criseida a much stronger and more distinct personality. Earlier versions of the Troilus and Criseyde story by the medieval French author Benoît de Sainte Maure (d.1173), and even precursors by Homer in the *Iliad*, also contain strong images and speeches by the Criseyde character that are not present in Chaucer's *Criseyde*.

By omitting many of Boccaccio's lines about Criseyde, Chaucer made his Criseyde character more opaque, irrational, and trivial. As I mentioned above, I have re-inserted some of Criseyde's speeches and actions in Boccaccio's medieval Italian. By doing so, I hope to give the audience a fuller understanding of my character's motivations. The following is a translation of an excerpt from the libretto in medieval Italian. It is from the opera's Double Death Scene in Act II, in which Troilus, thinking Criseyde has died, prepares to kill himself to join her in death. At this point Criseyde awakens and Troilus tells her why he loves her: "O most beautiful lady, Beauty drove me not to love thee; high birth drove me not to love thee; nor yet adornments, nor wealth; but thy proud and noble bearing, thy high worth and courtly speech, thy manners courteous and thy charming womanly score by which every vulgar appetite and deed appeared vile in thy

eyes. These filled my mind with love for thee. Such art thou to me, O lady mine!"

But why did Chaucer choose to do this, to omit these strong lines about Criseyde? Why did he not defend her from injustice? Why did he (often by faint praise) condemn her as faithless, despite her not being permitted to make decisions on her fate that differed from what her male relatives wanted?

Professor David R. Carlson of the University of Ottawa is author of *Chaucer's Jobs* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004). His publisher provides the following summary:

Geoffrey Chaucer was not a writer, primarily, but a privileged official placeholder. Prone to violence, including rape, assault, and extortion, the poet was employed first at domestic personal service and subsequently at police work of various sorts, protecting the established order during a period of massive social upset. *Chaucer's Jobs* shows that the servile and disciplinary nature of the daily work Chaucer did was repeated in his poetry, which by turns flatters his aristocratic betters and deals out discipline to malcontent others. Carlson contends that it was this social and political quality of Chaucer's writings, rather than artistic merit, that made him the "Father of English Poetry."

This, in my opinion, is why Chaucer condemned his female character Criseyde and made her motivations seem small-minded, inscrutable, and amoral: Chaucer's worldly success depended on surviving through multiple violent autocratic changes of government, and this survival required kissing up to persons of power, supporting the oppressive power structure, and not rocking the boat to defend the less powerful and the oppressed, such as women, who must be kept in line and completely controlled by whatever autocrat was in power.

Thus Chaucer paints a beautiful portrait of the crazily noble Troilus and his exquisite feelings and nuanced thoughts in contrast to the—I have to say—marginally human intelligence of his Criseyde character. The message is: men must maintain absolute power over females, and even when a female does not have the capability or power to fulfill that man's desires, and is under threat of violence and forced to do something else, she is still held responsible for not fulfilling the man's needs and desires.

This is, of course, outrageous when seen through my twenty-first-century woman's eyes. Therefore my Criseyde resists to the extent she can. And my Troilus goes against the grain of patriarchy and, knowing she is not responsible for being incarcerated in a Greek military camp, attempts her rescue. He and Criseyde kill her oppressors, although he dies in the process.

Given that my story is that of Criseyde, and not only of Troilus, I have used Dean's adaptation of Chaucer's Middle English where I could, and here and there asked her for new lines in Middle English in Chaucer's own dialect to flesh out Criseyde's feelings and thoughts. Chaucer, like other men of his time, did not seem to attribute refined feelings and thoughts to women, however magnificent his consciousness and writing was in other respects.

I made no attempt to keep the scansion of Chaucer's poetry, which he composed in rime royal, a seven-line stanza rhyming ababbcc. His subtle, elegant use (some say invention) of this poetic form throughout his long poem, were it set to musical rhythm, would turn a subtle background poetic effect into a tedious foreground musical effect. Besides which, the opera uses excerpts from Chaucer's work, not often whole stanzas. And of course, when words are set to the singing voice, the duration of each word or phrase is much longer than when the same line is spoken. Thus no poetic metre can be effectively maintained, unless the expressivity of the melodic line is radically constrained by rhythm. That would be perhaps Spoken Word, a form that is word- and rhythm-based, rather than Opera, which, in my view, is a form that is emotion- and melody-based, and requires the melodic techniques, power, and range of the Western classical singing voice.

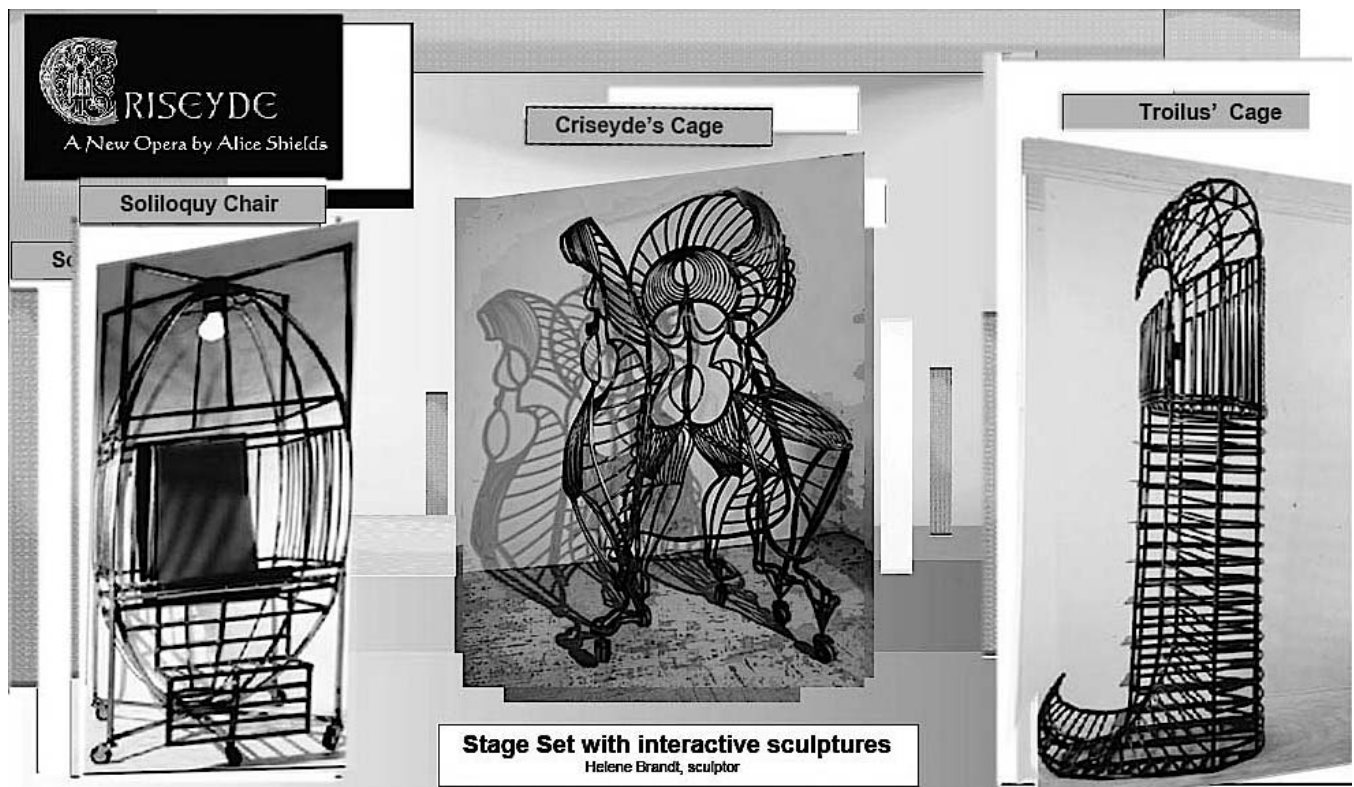
Regarding the stage setting and costumes I envision for *Criseyde*, my concept is Space-age Meets Medieval, in a World of Shadows. The time portrayed can morph between the fourteenth century, the present, and the future. Costumes can be medieval bodices, gloves, and armor, in space-age

metallic and transparent materials, reflecting the social and psychological cages each one of us is born into. Multimedia technology can be used to project the light patterns cast off by the cage-like structures with which the singers interact.

I am collaborating with sculptor Helene Brandt and computer artist-electrical engineer Spencer Russell to design the multimedia onstage effects that can be offered to opera companies as options to consider. In the next presentation of new music from *Criseyde* I hope to display for the first time Brandt's cage sculptures with Russell's computer lighting effects.

Three of Brandt's theatrical cage sculptures, Olympia, Throne, and Condor, all of black welded steel, can be used onstage. There need be little scenery other than the curved and straight bars of these ominous black steel cages, dramatically lit, which are entered and used by the performers in various ways in the course of the drama. The computer-controlled and manipulated light patterns cast by the cages respond to the music in real time. This technology, being invented by Russell, is brand new and will be offered as open-source technology to the theater world.

If used by the singers onstage during *Criseyde*, Helene Brandt's cages represent the societal roles which restrict women's freedom, as well as the refuge, shelter, and protection from utter degradation that these restricted roles offer women. In my opera, the character Criseyde struggles between trying to maintain the shelter of the restrictive role assigned by her culture, while simultaneously trying to act in secret outside of that restrictive role. Example 2 illustrates what the stage set might look like with Brandt's sculptures.



Example 2 (© copyright 2009 Helene Brandt All Rights Reserved).

Visually and musically, the opera bridges different times and cultures, combining European classical music with Indian classical music, medieval language with new digital technology and steel sculpture, welded into a work of art about the ongoing need for the empowerment and emancipation of women. I am interested in the visuals also evoking through costume present-day cultures that heavily oppress women—Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan come to mind and various countries in Africa.

*Criseyde* contains Gregorian chant, quotes from Monteverdi, a Hildegard von Bingen chant, raga techniques adapted for Western notation, and actual settings of some Hindustani melodies I learned during the 1990s while I was studying and performing Indian classical music. The flow of melodic change in the opera is gradual, from modal to raga, from chromatic harmony to atonality and back in different scenes, depending upon the emotion and mood needed by the progress of the drama. As an example of the influence of medieval music on the opera, I modeled *Criseyde's* recurring Arietta, a lament that occurs three times in the opera, directly on Hildegard's *O Virtus Sapientiae* (see Example 3).

*Criseyde* is intensely lyrical, due in part to the influence of the melodies of North India, along with the influence of Western medieval chant and opera plus my own work. I have tried to combine the austere beauty of medieval chant and the vocal techniques of Western opera with the elegant melodies of Hindustani classical vocal music. I was drawn to the study of Indian classical music primarily because of the amazing structure and expressivity of its melodies. Western art music no longer has a developed expressive use of melody, and I have felt this to be a great deficit in contemporary music. I was thus drawn to Indian music to learn from their melodic raga system as well as their rhythmic tala system, which are far more developed and systematically codified than melody or rhythm ever were in Western art music.

In terms of Indian music, most intriguing to

me was Bharata Natyam, classical Indian dance-drama. In ancient times (circa 500-250 B.C.E.), Sanskrit treatises say that the dancers in this ancient form actually sang. No doubt they were able to sing and dance at the same time because they sang simpler music and danced simpler dance than evolved in Bharata Natyam in India over the next two thousand years.

I spent the 1990s studying and performing Bharata Natyam, sacred South Indian classical dance-drama, with Ms. Swati Bhise and her Bharata Natyam troupe of Indian musicians and dancers. After a few years of study, during which Ms. Bhise put me on stage as a dancer playing the parts that were too tall for many of the usually female Indian dancers, like the Dying King in the *Mahabharata* ("trouser" roles like those I sang as a mezzo-soprano in opera). I learned enough of the music to perform with her musicians doing *Nattuvangam*—rhythmic recitation of the choreographic syllables for the drummer and the lead dancer. I then studied North Indian (Hindustani) raga singing with the Bangladeshi singer Marina Ahmed Alam, a senior disciple of the world-renowned Pandit Jasraj. For the next ten years I struggled to

**from *O Virtus Sapientiae***  
--Hildegard von Bingen

partial transcription by Alice Shields

**from *Criseyde's Lament* (CRISEYDE Act 1, scene 2)**  
--Alice Shields

Middle English text by Geoffrey Chaucer

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Example 3

notate some of the melodic beauty of Hindustani ragas with enough simplicity so that Western musicians could read them and not be turned off by the very complex notation required to actually represent Hindustani melodic phrases.

With *Criseyde*, I feel I have found a way to notate enough of the raga elements to preserve some of the suppleness of Hindustani melody and its ornaments, without overburdening the Western professional instrumentalist or singer. I was pleased when the New York City Opera orchestra, in their rehearsal for the VOX performance of scenes from *Criseyde*, read the music well. I felt then that I had at least partially succeeded in bridging the cultural gap back into Western classical music.

Regarding structural elements in the opera *Criseyde*, I refer back to Bharata Natyam, which has three distinct dramatic categories: *natya*, *nritya*, and *nritya*. These categories were helpful to me in sorting through the different ways in which vocal music, instrumental music, text, movement, and visual elements can be contrasted and combined onstage and written into the dramatic progression and impact of an opera.

In the three categories of Bharata Natyam, *Natya* is a traditional story with actors using speech, along with music and movement. *Nritya* is mime, interpretative movement performed without rhythm, along with song and music. This is dance which is related to feeling (*rasa*) and psychological states (*bhaava*). *Nritya* is pure movement performed rhythmically, in which the movements of the body do not convey any mood or meaning, but create beauty through pattern and line, along with song and music. It is basic in Bharata Natyam to know whether a scene is *nritya* or *nritya*. And I appreciate the ancient tendency of Indian cultures to categorize and organize and theorize about such things. Similarly, it seems important when creating an opera to know what dramatic or vocal or visual or movement category you are using at a particular point, and to keep the others out at all costs, lest the dramatic impact be watered down.

To that end, in constructing *Criseyde* I have used forms of vocal production as structural units. These range from full classical singing, arioso, recitative, speaking on pitch, speaking in rhythm, and straight speech, in addition to sighs. I reserve straight speech, as in traditional opera, to relay only plot-clarifying text that must be clearly heard by the audience.

In *Criseyde*, for example, I have inserted Boccaccio's words often as straight speech, framing these words with silence or sustained sound, so

that the audience will clearly hear the shift from medieval English to medieval Italian, and even without supertitles or a libretto be aware that something supportive of Criseyde is at that moment being presented. For example, at the end of Criseyde's aria in Act One, I inserted a speech in medieval Italian from Boccaccio's character Criseida to show Criseyde's excitement and passion. By contrast, in the previous Middle English line of the libretto excerpt, you may sense the tone of Chaucer's character, who is more cautious and timid.

From Chaucer in Middle English (spoken): "Although I first feared to begin loving him, now I understand well there is no danger in it!"

From Boccaccio in medieval Italian (excited now, she tells herself, almost incoherently): "Therefore eagerly welcome your sweet lover whose coming has surely been ordained for you by God, and satisfy his hot desire."

In the following excerpt from earlier in Criseyde's aria, she is not speaking but singing in soft bel canto line, which means highly focused but with a gentle and gradual release of breath. Here her words in Middle English show another side of her character: gentle and loving. Note that the words themselves, if merely spoken, would not necessarily seem gentle and loving, but at least to me, her actual emotional state appears somewhat unclear. The words are Chaucer's, and he is masterful in his ability to present a somewhat dim, weak, and confused character by such subtle means. But the way I set those same words—in a high register, soft, sustained—further brings out or identifies her emotional state. In addition, she is singing my variation on a powerfully peaceful Hindustani song that Marina Alam taught me:

*from Criseyde's Aria (CRISEYDE Act One Scene 3 No.2)*  
(partly based on Hindustani melody "Sumirana kareley")

CRISEYDE

$\text{♩} = 102$  *p*

It were ho - - - - - nour,  
It would be an ho - - - - - nor,

(winds, harp, piano, strings)

with pleye, and with glad - - - - - nesse,  
with a - mus - ment, and with en - joy - - ment, -

*p* *mp*

Example 4

“Sumirana kareley.” In addition to the range, slow tempo, and soft volume, the use of such a melody for these words offers some emotional clarity not present in the words alone (see Example 4).

Other than Criseyde herself, I have changed Chaucer’s characters in significant ways. Troilus threatens suicide many times during the opera; I somewhat enlarged this tendency in Chaucer’s character and put back into the story Boccaccio’s exciting scene in which his Troilo really does try to kill himself, and Pandar struggles with him and finally takes the knife away from him. This violent suicide attempt occurs in *Criseyde* in Act I, Scene 6, No. 1; the mirror of this scene in Act I occurs symmetrically at the end of the Tent Scene, in Act II, Scene 6, with the violent sword fight which results in the death of all the men on stage. (Note that in contrast to many operas, in which the lead woman dies at the end, in *Criseyde* all the men die and all the woman are left alive. This wasn’t deliberate on my part, but nevertheless I did it.)

Chaucer’s character Pandar is a charmer, a sociopath who commits abuse while he tells jokes. In order to see what was actually going on in Chaucer’s beautiful and—to me—disturbingly flawed story, I took out the humor, and just left in the actual deeds Chaucer had Pandar commit. Plus I hiked up his envy and voyeurism and put a spotlight on his inappropriate touching and incestuous behavior and shocking indifference to Criseyde’s welfare. Chaucer has Pandar stay in the room while Troilus and Criseyde are making love, pretending to go to sleep. I have him pull a chair right up to the bed and watch. At dawn, after Troilus has left their first love-making and Criseyde lies nude, Pandar approaches the bed. She hides her body and face under the covers, and Chaucer has Pandar (scholars argue about the meaning of this scene) presumably “peer” under the sheet and kiss her. I have Pandar ripping the sheet off Criseyde’s nude body and kissing her.

Chaucer’s character Cassandra, Troilus’ sister, is the seer described by the ancient Greek playwrights: a beautiful princess who can see the future, and when she warns people, they don’t believe her. Chaucer has his Troilus verbally abuse his sister whom he has just asked to interpret his dream; she leaves the scene without a word. In my opera, I have increased her presence and impact: Cassandra appears locked in a jail onstage and is brought out of her jail at various points by members of the cast, when they need some advice. Her body and her long blond hair are covered with blood, as she was in Aeschylus’ *Oresteia* when she was murdered by Clytemnestra as her husband Agamemnon’s enslaved concubine after the Greeks sacked Troy. In my opera, Cassandra interprets Criseyde’s dream of love in the first act, and Troilus’ dream of betrayal in the second act. She accompanies Criseyde and tries to defend her from harm. She is ever present on stage as a symbol of the way women’s minds and bodies were and frequently still are brutalized.

Chaucer somewhat satirizes his character Prince Diomedes as being “of loud voice and square limbs.” I have intensified his crudeness in my opera in order to clarify what Criseyde, incarcerated in the Greek military camp, has lost in

the noble and sensitive Troilus, and her powerlessness to reject Diomedes.

And finally, in the opera, I have created my Three Ladies as constant companions to Criseyde, who react to all that happens to her and reflect on Criseyde’s decisions and emotions. They are based on the theatrically very useful Three Ladies in Mozart’s *Magic Flute*. In Chaucer’s story, they occasionally appear in the background, in Criseyde’s parlor or garden; in the opera, they are very active, opening and closing scenes, serving as a kind of Greek chorus, and so forth.

I have structured the entire opera in what I call situational modules of both music and text. These are larger units than Wagner’s *Leitmotiven*; in fact, they are often full musical scenes that may reappear later in the opera with quite different results. Each situational module can be, to some extent, rotated separately. That is, the music can repeat with different, contrasting text, or the text can be sung in repeated musical scenes by a different character with a very different dramatic and emotional result.

Each of the opera’s two acts consists of seven scenes. Act One closes with the Consummation Scene, in which Criseyde and Troilus make love for the first time, full of passion and delight. Very similar music (i.e. a module) is heard at the end of Act Two. This is the Tent Scene, in which Criseyde has been exiled to a Greek military camp and is being threatened by rape. The music begins similarly to the module in the Consummation Scene, with the evocation of sensuality—but the speeches begin to be inverted and used in different contexts, which eventually become frightening instead of sexy and joyful, and the line that Troilus as lover sang in the Consummation Scene is now sung in weird intervals by two men together: the Greek Prince Diomedes and Calkas, Criseyde’s father (played by her uncle Pandar). The denouement occurs at the climax of the Tent Scene, when, at the last moment, Troilus enters and saves Criseyde from violation, although he dies in the process. Troilus’ entry music here is the same module as his earlier music in the opera, in which he again attempts heroic solutions, when, as earlier, he believes Criseyde to have died, but this time fully sacrifices himself.

The opera is written in three parts. Parts 1 and 2 are in Act One, and Part 3 is Act Two. In each of the three parts there is a typical progression of the scenes; for example, the first scene in each part is a soliloquy for one of the three main characters: Pandar in part 1, Troilus in part 2, and Criseyde in part 3. Or, as in the second scene of each part, in which Criseyde is being forced to do something.

All this is to say that there are layers upon layers of cross-referencing, interacting drama, and music in this piece. Part of the influence for this kind of organization comes, as I have said, from my experience of performing Bharata Natyam dance-drama and being exposed to Sanskrit and other Indian poetry, in which several poems, completely different, are going on at the same time. But another influence is literature, particularly Flan O’Brien’s *The Third Policeman* and *At Swim-Two-Birds*.

I have asked myself why I wrote the opera in this fiendishly organized way, with such structural ties-ins. It is because the story, when I read it in Chaucer, deeply touched me, and intense emotions need carefully constructed electrical cords to flow through, or the lights don't turn on—particularly over the flow of two hours.

I loved working on this piece and am seeking a premiere. I thank Nancy Dean for approaching me to write the work. More information on the opera *Criseyde* can be found on hyperlinks “<http://www.aliceshields.com>” [www.aliceshields.com](http://www.aliceshields.com) or “<http://www.criseyde.com>” [www.criseyde.com](http://www.criseyde.com).

### Biographical Background

One of the first woman composers in electronic music, Alice Shields earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in composition from Columbia University in 1975, studying primarily with Vladimir Ussachevsky and Jack Beeson. She has been Director of Development of the Columbia University Computer Music Center and Associate Director of the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center, has taught the psychology of music at NYU and Rutgers, and has lectured on nonverbal communication in sound for the Santa Fe Opera, CUNY Center for Developmental Neuroscience, International Society for Research on Emotion, and the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis.

Recent compositions include *Kyrielle* (2005) for violin and “tape” for violinist Airi Yoshioka, and *The River of Memory* (2008) and *Mioritza—Requiem for Rachel Corrie* (2004) for trombone and tape for trombonist Monique Buzzarté. The computer piece *Dust* (2001) for Dance Alloy of

Pittsburgh and Arangham Dance Theatre of Madras, India premiered in Pittsburgh and toured India in 2002. Shields' operas include *Apocalypse* (1994, New World Records); *Mass for the Dead* (1993, American Chamber Opera Co.); *Shaman* (1987, American Chamber Opera Co.); and *Shivatanz* (1993, Akademie der Künste, Berlin). Her compositions are recorded on Koch International Classics, New World, CRI, and Albany Records.

Shields sang operatic roles at the New York City Opera (Monteverdi), Washington National Opera (Wagner), Clarion Opera Society in Italy (Cavalli), Connecticut Grand Opera (Wagner), Wolf Trap Opera (Mozart), Rochester Opera (Verdi), and Yale-at-Norfolk Festival (R. Strauss). Performances in contemporary operas included David Amram's *Twelfth Night*, Richard Foreman/Stanley Silverman's *Elephant Steps*, Eric Stokes' *Horspfall*, Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti*, and Maurice Ohana's *Syllabaire Pour Phedre*, and Virgil Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts* at the Metropolitan Opera-at-the-Forum.

Some of the roles she sang in operas have been very influential in her own compositions. One of them was the role of Medea, which she sang in Cavalli's *Giasone* with the Clarion Opera Society around Venice after Yale musicologist and Cavalli expert Ellen Rosand created an edition of the score in 1976. Until then, it had not been performed since the seventeenth century.

All of Shields' compositions since 1993 reflect her immersion in raga, tala, and the formal structures of Indian classical music and dance. For more information, please see [www.aliceshields.com](http://www.aliceshields.com).

## Eroding the Stereotypes: the Journey of a “Silent Generation” Composer

MARGARET SHELTON MEIER

“Oh (pause). Women have written some wonderful children's piano pieces and a few nice little songs.” This came from the lips of one of the two other students in our graduate composition seminar at California State University at Los Angeles, as he glanced in my direction on our first day. It had no preface and no follow-up. Apparently, he had satisfied himself as to the reason a woman would be taking the class, and it was only upon later reflection that I realized it was a put-down. The year was 1968 and this should have been a wake-up call for me, announcing that becoming a serious composer was not stereotypical women's behavior.

By 1972, the above-mentioned student had dropped out of the master's program, and I had won the university's orchestral composition competition with a set of orchestral variations and received my first orchestral premiere. (*Chalk one up for stereotype erosion!*) The composition amazed me, my professor, and the male compositions students who had entered the contest. One was kind enough to say, sincerely, “After looking at your score I realized that I had

no chance of winning.” Winning also opened a new world to me: perhaps I should not confine my composing efforts to writing only Christian choral music, as I had first envisioned.

This was also my first awareness that I desired to link my compositional power to women. Searching for a title after the piece was written, my first idea was to name each variation for a woman who had a particular strength, but the variations did not lend themselves to that concept. Eventually, seeking alliteration and a word to describe women that would give them greater wholeness than most descriptive words, I named each variation for a muse and titled the composition *Mythical Muliebrity*. After a long bout with my thesaurus and dictionary, I unearthed “muliebrity”: “the correlative of virility.” I choose to understand it as connoting female strength, life-energy, and sexuality in their most inclusive and positive forms.

My journey as a composer was more of an evolution than a revolution, and so I believe that I have never exploded stereotypes of women or women composers, but rather that



I have eroded them. This was the thesis of a presentation I gave in October of 1995 for the Scripps Symposium on Women in Music entitled “American Muses: Women Making Music/Exploding the Stereotypes.” I titled my presentation “**Eroding** the Stereotypes: the Story of a ‘Silent Generation’ Composer.” It was autobiographical and included some audio, video, and live performance examples of my music. I am using the thesis and title of that presentation as the foundation for this article, updated with new insights from the past fifteen years.

I speak not as a musicologist or a feminist music critic but as a composer telling her story. It is the story of one woman, but it is also the story of four significant decades in the history of composition. I feel very privileged to have lived and written during this time, but I have made no loud noises, created no explosions. I believe, however, that my presence and my music have contributed to the gradual erosion of stereotypes of women.

My generation, often labeled the “Silent Generation,” people born between 1924 and 1942, sandwiched between the generation that fought in World War II and the Baby Boomer or Hippie generation that protested the Vietnam War and racial discrimination, is often characterized as passive and compliant. Our elders assured us that they had saved the world for peace and democracy and that we could now go forth and prosper. We were grateful to be out from under the cloud of war and fear that surrounded our childhood and eager to move forward in the new light of peace and prosperity. We had heard of enough explosions and were not eager to create any ourselves.

Anyone born after 1965 would probably find it difficult to imagine turning on the TV or radio and seeing or hearing only male commentators and program hosts. “Silent Generation” women were encouraged to attend college, with the implicit footnote that this should be within the limitations society found appropriate for women. The explanation was often, “Having a profession as a teacher or nurse will make your life easier if you become a widow.” I was not only content with the vision, I embraced it because it fit well with my sense of “calling” to teach music. After graduating from Eastman School of Music in 1958 I moved to Southern California to establish a music program at the Pasadena Christian School, where I had excellent students and opportunities to develop award-winning elementary school choirs, to arrange simple music for a budding orchestra, and to see to it that every child in the school could carry a tune. After teaching for ten years, I was ready to move forward professionally. I enjoyed the bit of composing I had done up to that point, so in 1968 I decided to study for a master’s degree with a major in composition because, though I thoroughly enjoyed teaching, I found educational methodology banal and boring. Once I began the master’s program I discovered that I did not have just an interest in composing, I had a passion for composing.

In 1975 I began work on a doctorate at UCLA, and in 1983 I was the first woman to earn a Ph.D. in composition from that institution. (*Chalk up two for eroded stereotypes!*) The depart-

ment had one female professor. Only one other woman was enrolled in the composition program during the seven years it took me to work two part-time jobs, raise two sons, run a household, be a supportive and non-threatening wife, and finish the degree. When I handed my approved dissertation to the library, the woman who received it said, “The music department! We don’t get many of these. That is known here as the most misogynist department on campus.” (Perhaps I should *chalk up one “erosion point”* for every class I attended and continued to be that novelty—a woman composer.)

No one was ever openly hostile or overtly misogynist toward me, although I had a few experiences that today would fall in the category of “sexual harassment.” At times, it seemed that I was an enigma to some of my professors, and at times, I was an enigma to myself. On the one hand, I was very independent, very clear that I could compose, and I was certain that I had the talent and ability to do what most other musical women did not. On the other hand, when it came to the details of my compositions, I was non-assertive, seeking to please, willing to believe anyone who said, “No. Don’t do it this way. You must change it.” A number of people, with and without doctorates, have said to me, “It is not the degree that matters.” For me, it did matter; having the Ph.D. emboldened me to speak up and to say, “I do know! I have something worth saying!” (*“About time!” you say.*)



Margaret Shelton Meier  
(courtesy of Olan Mills Co.)

The following story indicates how much I needed support to do this. In 1976 I wrote a song cycle, *The Catherine Wheel*. The text, by Annette Lynch, is from a cycle of fifty poems that she wrote while working through her feelings when her husband of twenty-five years left her for a younger woman named Catherine. I was having difficulties in my own marriage at the time and could empathize with Annette. Two male professors worked with me briefly on the piece, but I wrote large portions without supervision. Both men were very impressed with the song cycle, yet on separate occasions, using different terminology, each conveyed the idea, “This composition really works. This piece moves me; however, the harmonic and formal structures of this piece are not immediately apparent to me. *Why don’t you analyze it and present your analysis to me so that I can feel comfortable about liking it.*” The italicized portions are my perception of their unspoken agenda. The men needed the piece to be “Schenkerized” before they could feel secure about giving it their full stamp of approval.

When the committee assembled to approve my dissertation proposal, I played three sections of *The Catherine Wheel* for them as a sample of my work. The chair of the dance department, Allegra Fuller Snyder (Buckminster Fuller's daughter), was on the committee, and her instant response was intense, warm, and positive. Her comment was something to the effect of, "You understand these poems deeply and have communicated them musically with clarity and passion. Have you the intensity of commitment to your dissertation text that will enable you to interact with it as profoundly? If so, you will have an outstanding composition." She offered the kind of intuitive assurance, after one hearing, that reached out and both embraced and challenged me.

In 1976 Tommie Carl came to Southern California from Washington, D.C. and invited a number of women composers to join a new organization, American Women Composers, Inc. During our meeting she asked, "How many women composers can you name?" Amy Beach was the only woman I knew who fit the "dead composer of serious music" category. I suddenly realized that I was attempting to compose without any female role models. This marked the beginning of my awareness that women were taking action on behalf of living women composers and were meeting together for support. Soon after, I joined AWC, the International League of Women Composers, and the International Congress on Women in Music.

In 1982 I attended my first ICWM Congress in Southern California and saw Jeannie Pool's marvelous slide show and lecture about the women composers who were being discovered. I was excited to know that we had predecessors, in spite of the fact that the study of women composers was not yet accepted as an academic discipline by musicological societies or graduate schools. At that same Congress, Marshall Bailowsky, who later placed my compositions on several NACUSA concerts, introduced me to Aaron Cohen, who was writing his enormous volume, the *International Encyclopedia of Women Composers*, in which I was eventually included.

My compositions became my voice for my own brand of feminism. Because I regard the union of words and music to be the highest art form, it was natural to want to express my thoughts and ideas about women in this way. I searched for poetry by women and composed a number of song cycles. In seeking a text for my dissertation composition, I read every poem by a woman in the UCLA library and finally selected *The Spanish Gypsy*, an epic poem by George Eliot, with which few people are familiar. My cantata for mezzo soprano and orchestra tells the story of a woman who chooses to become the leader of her gypsy people rather than the wife of a wealthy Spanish Don.

The years 1982 to 1984 were exhausting and yet forward moving. I earned my Ph.D. in 1983 and my divorce was final in 1984. I was free at last from the strictures of a resentful, demeaning husband and an academic community with its special requirements. I began to write whatever I desired. When I could not find suitable words for a topic, I wrote my own. The following quote is from my text for the SSAA piece which focuses on women composers, *LISTEN! to the Women*

*who Wrote the Music!* It was awarded third place in the 1994 Denver Women's Chorus biannual competition, and it expresses my passion at that time.

And yet they continued, for some things just cannot be stopped: the depths of a soul filled with music will flow, and strength from a mind filled with music will rise to create works of power, to lift and inspire, to speak of our passion and love, of peace to restore and refresh us, to challenge our intellect, move us to action, fascinate, stimulate, free us to dream....

The subject of how woman is viewed, of woman as protagonist, is addressed in my one act opera, *On the Edges of Calm*, about Louisa May Alcott. It is not the story of *Little Women*; for me, it is *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman*. Alcott tells part of her story as Jo in *Little Women*, but her additional writings indicate that there was more to her story and her struggle, which I have addressed in the opera. I was intrigued by this woman who became famous almost literally overnight by writing a book about the quintessential "American family," yet who pseudonymously wrote short stories about women who were neither "good" nor "little." I read portions of her diaries and those of her father and mother and found myself identifying with her in a number of areas.

Probably the strongest identification with Alcott relates to my being a member of the "Silent Generation," the generation that didn't make waves. Although Alcott lived in a time of abolitionist protest and believed in the cause, she was not politically active. She was a private woman who did not profess to be a significant presence in the field of literature, but her pen was always in hand and was her way of coming to terms with her own life and with life as a larger philosophical concept. She was a small rebel in her own nature and her personal life, yet she always felt guilt about those independent and assertive aspects of her personality. I use dancers throughout the opera to represent the two aspects of Alcott's personality: "the good little woman" and the "rebellious, passionate woman."

### The Fourth International Conference of Women Composers

The Fourth International Conference of Women Composers will be held September 22-26, 2010 in Poços de Caldas, Minas Gerais, Brazil. The events will include lectures, workshops, and concerts. Patricia Adkins Chiti (Italy), Nancy Van de Vate (Austria), Anna Rubin (USA), Graciela Paraskevaidis (Argentina), Alda de Jesus Oliveira (BA), Denise Garcia (SP), Ilza Nogueira (PB), Marisa Rezende (RJ), and Silvia de Lucca (SP) are among the many composers who will be participating. For information, please contact Daniel Palmeira at [danielpalmeira2004@yahoo.com.br](mailto:danielpalmeira2004@yahoo.com.br).

Writing words is more difficult for me than writing music, so the libretto took a long time. Many of the words are taken directly from the Alcotts' own writings. I would not have dared to write such pompous affectations for Bronson Alcott, nor such bitter sarcasm for Abigail Alcott, for fear I would be accused of making them caricatures. In November of 1987, thanks to the willingness of Jack Wilson to take a chance on producing a not quite completed opera, the University of Redlands' opera department, with Jack Wilson conducting, gave two fully staged workshop performances of *On the Edges of Calm*. (I suspect that attending and enjoying an opera written by a woman may have *eroded* a bit more of the *woman stereotype* for those who were present.) The opera had good audiences and was well received. I devised a questionnaire that enabled people to give input on their impressions and at one performance we had a post-performance forum in which the entire cast, directors, and composer sat on stage and answered audience questions. This was helpful, insightful, and interesting.

Another area in which I continually rubbed away at the stereotype of women was church music. I have been involved in this field for years: in six churches, encompassing four denominations. In the mid-1900s, women had already established themselves as composers of church anthems with some success, so I focused more on the area of inclusive language. Anthem by anthem I had choir members get out their pencils, cross out every male pronoun referring to God, and replace it with the noun "God." I also composed music that related to worship on every level of difficulty ranging from a very simple infant baptism song, to short choral responses, through Sunday anthems of varying degrees of difficulty, to works such as an inclusive language *Te Deum* in English for choir and brass quintet. I wrote the words for most of the works myself, and all of them use inclusive language.

Thanks to Nancy Van de Vate's interest in my orchestral music and the willingness of Vienna Modern Masters to produce several of them on compact discs, I have been able to participate in another *stereotype eroding venture*. My orchestral composing has been encouraged and supported by my local Claremont Symphony Orchestra, which will give

its fourth premiere of one of my works in June of 2010. Its conductor, James Fahringer, is open to new music and gave one of the early performances of a composition by Eleanor Remick Warren. It is worth mentioning here, and perhaps you have already noticed, that I have received help and support from many men in my career as a composer.

Most of the elements of my journey, my experiences as a woman, my concern for women's issues, my faith in God, and my desire and determination to express all of these as a composer, came together in my forty-minute cantata for chorus and orchestra, *A SOCSA Quilt*. (This was reviewed as part of my CD "*—but Joy Comes in the Morning*" in the *Journal of the IAWM*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2009.) SOCSA is an acronym for Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse. My intention was to create a composition that, through the unique power of music and words combined, would allow those lovers of classical music who have never experienced childhood sexual abuse to empathize with those who have. The cantata was premiered in Olomouc, Czech Republic. The CD, produced by Albany Records, has received a number of excellent reviews and has been used to stimulate group discussions about childhood sexual abuse.

In 1986 I had my first flashback or PTSD memories of being sexually abused by three men, in three entirely different venues, when I was a child. In the early 1990s, well into my emotional recovery, I began writing the text for a work that alternates words of my own, the "quilt blocks"—scenes of abuse and healing using a variety of musical styles—with the "connective quilt fabric" that holds them together and uses Biblical texts set to variations on a single musical theme. These form a kind of "Greek chorus" commentary on each quilt scene. The cantata's first section, "Horror and Heartache," is not based entirely on my experience; it combines the stories of dozens of sexual abuse survivors that I listened to during six years of attending support groups. Its second half, "Healing and Hope," celebrates the strength and courage of women supporting one another in their efforts to recover and become whole. The title of the album comes from the words of the final chorus, "Weeping may last through the night, *—but Joy Comes in the Morning.*"

Currently, I feel that my burning need to communicate through composition was satisfied with *A SOCSA Quilt*, but composing is a very personally integrating process for me, so I do not think I will ever stop composing. During the last three months of 2009, I felt fragmented as I tried to accomplish too many things simultaneously. I gradually realized I needed the calm and focus that occurs for me when I am composing. What a relief it was when I finally sat down to continue work on my new orchestral suite. As always, it became a sort of meditation process and a place of peace, even when I was struggling with my themes. What a joy and privilege it is to do this, which is so very precious to me.

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## Voices of Tomorrow

Hildegard Publishing Company proudly announces a new series, *Voices of Tomorrow*. This is a premiere series of publications highlighting compositions of the most gifted and promising young women under the age of 21. You can read more about this new series at [http://www.hildegard.com/resources/voices\\_of\\_tomorrow.php](http://www.hildegard.com/resources/voices_of_tomorrow.php). The first title in this series is *Psalm of Thanksgiving* by Karen E. Christianson. Hildegard Publishing is seeking other compositions by talented young women. If you are a teacher, please encourage your promising young students to submit works to our editorial committee for consideration in this series.

# “Don’t Stop Up the Sink”: the Life and Music of Madeleine Dring

RO HANCOCK-CHILD

*Madeleine is lively-minded to a high degree. But she’s not for the beaten track ways.* (Report by her composition tutor, composer Herbert Howells, in 1941)

Madeleine Dring (1923–1977) was a British composer, pianist, singer, performer, lyricist, comedienne, satirist, cartoonist, psychic, and musical superstar. I first came across Dring’s music in the 1990s, when my husband (a professional singer) and I (a concert pianist) were looking for recital material. We contacted the owner of Thames Publishing, John Bishop, who specialized in promoting lesser known English music. Previously, Roger Lord (Dring’s husband) had also contacted Bishop because he wanted his late wife’s music to be better known. Thames was in the process of publishing the first available books of Dring’s art songs, and Bishop gave us copies—we looked, we sang, we liked.

Almost no one knew that Dring had written approximately sixty art songs, and almost all were still unpublished; furthermore, none of the material she had written for shows and revues was available. This was a challenge! I, too, enjoy promoting lesser-known but beautiful English music, and here was an opportunity to perform some fine music that was unheard and unrecognized.

Bishop put me in touch with Roger Lord and that marked the start of a glorious friendship that has lasted for the past fifteen years. What I did not know at the time is that Lord himself is famous; he is a retired Principal Oboe of the London Symphony Orchestra in which he played for over thirty years, and he is a world-class performer. I would never have guessed because he is quite shy and never promotes himself.

I started my investigation of Dring by transcribing her youthful diaries, which contain very amusing accounts of her studies at school in London in the 1940s, and hilarious reports about her antics at the Royal College of Music in London, where Vaughan Williams and Herbert Howells were among her tutors. It was obvious, right from the very beginning, that she was a remarkable woman—intelligent, witty, observant, perceptive, interested in people and in the mysteries of life—and she was outspoken. She said exactly what she thought, no matter who was listening. I liked this.

She was also a very fine and able musician; she had perfect pitch and started composing music instinctively as a child. She continued to compose until her death in her early fifties. She hated qualifications and rules and conventions, and she was a free spirit in every sense of the word. Many people called her an “old spirit” because she believed in reincarnation and claimed that she had been on earth before. There was also a streak of something very unusual running through her writings and her compositions—humor. She liked to have fun! I suggest that this is most extraordinary in a musical context, where we are traditionally expected to be very serious and earnest in our performances and our

interpretations, and to treat the works of the great masters with due respect and deference. Dring, however, did not. I felt particularly close to her because I, too, am a rule-breaker, a pusher of boundaries, a seeker of change, a defier of convention, a possessor of a very wacky and anarchic sense of humor, a musical maverick. I decided that if I wrote about Dring, it would almost be like writing about myself.

After I published my transcription of the Dring diaries, Roger Lord asked if I would be willing to write a biography. Here was my chance to put into the public domain the life of an extraordinary human being. I published the biography in 2000, and in 2009 I issued a second edition, updating the material and including

new discoveries. I am sure that some biographers have great difficulty in obtaining information about their subject, but I did not. Roger let me into his life, invited me to his home, wrote to me in his beautiful script, and even sent me gifts of chocolates. He gave me boxes crammed with materials and allowed me to keep many Dring original manuscripts, including all of Dring’s piano



Madeleine Dring

music and songs from her childhood, many of them autographed. A photograph of her sits on my piano, and it reminds me every day of what a woman is capable of accomplishing. I have been very lucky in my association with Roger, and I am grateful.

My husband and I, along with a British soprano, made commercial compact disc recordings of her piano music and a large number of songs. In February 2010, we recorded another complete disc of Dring’s songs and piano and oboe music, which will be considered by Chandos, the major UK record company for English music.

## Biographical Background

Madeleine Dring was born in London in 1923, on the same day as another amazingly strong woman, Queen Elizabeth I (1533). Her father was an architect and surveyor, and her mother was an excellent singer; she had one brother, who went missing while fighting in World War II. The Dring family was cultured and they held open house in London to a wide range of creative people. She attended a French convent school in London, which she hated, and at the age of ten she won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music.

She was extremely happy there and continued her studies in violin, piano, and composition at the RCM until her late teens.

Roger Lord was also a student at the RCM and was looking for an accompanist for an exam—a musical partnership was made. They married in 1947 and their only child, a son born in 1950, is an inventor working with color and light. Dring struggled with the frustrations and responsibilities of motherhood, but she managed to continue composing and performing.

Many of Dring's compositions were published during her lifetime. She wrote what she knew best. Since she was a very fine pianist, violinist, and singer, and her husband a first-rate oboist, she specialized in small-scale pieces for piano, two pianos, violin, oboe, and voice. She did not write large-scale works such as a symphony, oratorio, or mass—instead, she worked on exquisitely crafted miniatures—music that was accessible and approachable. She composed one small, humorous opera that even has a part for a corpse. She also wrote educational music intended for beginners and children. Her music is wonderfully personal and she performed much of it herself, which is not always the case with composers.

The critics found her to be a very original thinker and fine musician, and they especially warmed to her sense of humor, which was unexpected and novel. She wanted to popularize music, to tap into new trends, to shock people and shake up the Establishment—but all within the framework of the tonal system. Her melodies, harmonies, and rhythms are traditional, never atonal or “hyper-modern.” She found much modern music (even Bartok) to be aurally incoherent. Her side-splitting words to her original song, “I Hate Music” (which is much funnier than Leonard Bernstein’s composition of the same name), underscores how strongly she felt about so much that was written in the 1960s and 70s. In her opinion, the music had a “neurotic” quality that “was never there before.” She couched her attack in the form of humor, which makes the song all the more effective. (We try to perform this work in public, but we usually can’t stop laughing! I’m certain she would have approved.)

The works she wrote for her shows and reviews offer excellent examples of her humor (and we receive many requests for copies of them). *Torch Song*, for which she wrote both music and lyrics, is a special favorite. In the first stanza she states that there is just one thing that she deplors about the man she loves. The words of the second stanza are below.

Take me unawares, Kick me down the stairs  
Deceive me and leave me on the brink!  
But DARLING since you say you love me  
Don’t stop up the sink!  
When I’m admired Tell me I look tired  
(Thanks)  
Abuse me and trample on my mink!  
But Baby if you want your honey  
Don’t stop up the sink!

She was the enemy of stuffiness, especially in the arts (and there is a great deal of stuffiness out there). She also believed that one should be fully engaged in every

activity—she never held back for a moment. “It is a terrible thing to be TEPID,” she observed. It is surprising that, in spite of being intensely sociable and extremely likeable, she was, for most of her life, incredibly lonely. She failed to meet many people who understood her; she found herself to be very different and, in the later part of her life at least, she felt isolated and apart.

She worked hard and quickly. Despite her responsibilities at home, her production rate was astonishing, and the quality of her work never dimmed. I have sung and played my way through every piece of hers that I have been able to locate—and we are talking about many hundreds—and every one of them is musically coherent, structurally valid, and technically very fine. There is nothing I would consign to the “Could Do Better” pile. Even pieces composed in her schooldays are commendable, and I have recorded some of them on my “Red Glory” 2009 CD.

Given her superb musical talent and huge productivity, we wonder why her work is not better known.

The Secretary of the British Music Society believes that very few Society members know about her; I am currently writing a major article for the *BMS Journal* to introduce them to Dring. Her music is now being broadcast in Canada and Europe, and many classical musicians who have recently discovered her compositions are including them on their own commercial recordings. Almost all of her music has now been published and is available worldwide via the Internet. In addition to my Dring biography, Websites are devoted to her.

If there is an answer as to why she still remains relatively unknown, perhaps the reason is multifaceted: (1) She was working at a time when the recording industry was not as active as it is now. (2) Many of her compositions were published during her lifetime, but they have since gone out of print, or the publishing firms are no longer in existence. (3) She often worked in the ephemeral genre of the intimate review; items were written for a particular performance or limited run, then discarded, forgotten, and lost forever. (4) She composed small-scale pieces, which many people unaccountably find less important than large-scale musical items: I suggest that less, however, can be more. (5) And mostly because she was a woman. In many circles, women are not supposed to be educated, clever, able, versatile, the equal to (and certainly not the superior of) their male counterparts. A woman composer was considered an oddity, and this is still the case today (at least in the UK). Dring



Ro Hancock-Child

spoke out, she made fun of convention. She openly and publicly criticized things and people. Back in the 1950s, 60s, 70s many believed that it was not a woman's place to do so and still don't. (This is true in the UK in 2010!)

### The American Connections

Roger Lord toured the world with the London Symphony, but Dring did not often go with him. In the 1960s, however, she and their teenage son joined him in Daytona Beach, Florida for a series of concerts directed by André Previn. Dring and Previn met and he played the piano part in a public performance of her newly-composed Trio for flute, oboe, and piano. Dring made many transatlantic friendships, which continued for some decades. After the US visit, her music began to take on a more American flavor (see the very attractive "Romance" from her *Three Piece Suite*). Jazz pianist and composer Leigh Kaplan (Cambria publications), who lives in California, has very ably recorded some of Dring's piano pieces. The fine American singer Wanda Brister performs Dring's songs very well and has produced some informative articles on her music.

Many inquiries that we receive about Dring's music now come from the States, and I would say that her music is currently more popular in America than in the UK. (What this says about the state of the English and their attitude toward home-grown English music, I would not like to hazard!) Dring would have been thrilled to learn that there is interest from the US because she loved her trip and loved the people she met. She corresponded for a long time with American composer Eugene Hemmer, and I have seen many of their letters.

### How to Promote Dring's Music

Over the past ten years interest in Dring has increased enormously, and she is beginning to be recognized for her great musical talent, but more needs to be done to promote her music. For a start, we can supply information. I have published the story of her life and a catalogue of her musical compositions. We can encourage students and professionals to refer to these sources. Secondly, we can publish any pieces

## Times Change

Madeleine Dring

**Allegro**

Piano *legato*

5

9

13 *mf*

16 *poco* *a*

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MPS2004

Madeleine Dring, *Times Change*

that are still in manuscript. When I was working on my Dring biography in the late 1990s, I came across an enormous amount of manuscript material that had never been published. I collected everything I could find, and my husband and I started a publishing operation that we call Micropress (**Michael + Ro**). We published all of the Dring manuscripts that I had found before 2000, and these included pieces for piano and voice, both art songs and show songs, and some instrumental pieces. I put out a plea for people to contact me if they discovered among their possessions any of the material from the shows for which Dring wrote music, and some of these have appeared. It is always very exciting when someone finds new work, as in the fall of 2009. We immediately included the piece in a public concert, and the audience smiled at the humor.

One of our most popular pieces is *Times Change* for solo piano (see Example 1). I rescued the undated manuscript from the bottom of a cardboard box; it was in bits and pieces and written in purple ink. Dring apparently intended to break new ground. The work begins in a mock-serious manner but then bursts forth in a way that is so typical of her style. We published it at Micropress in 2000 and I recorded it

We encourage you to perform her music. We asked some famous classical musicians to include works by Dring in their concerts, and they did. We asked a foremost oboist who had won the young Musician of the Year (UK) competition to record one of the items I had found and published, and he did. If anyone is interested in recording any Dring items, we can supply the music. The songs can be transposed into a wide range of keys, and many of her pieces can also be arranged for other musical combinations. If you are interested, please contact me.

Roger Lord has been asked to give talks on his late wife's music, and he does. I have been asked to speak about Dring to the British Music Society, and I will.

This morning, when checking our Dring Website, I found some orders for her music from Canada, San Francisco, Australia, and London—this is excellent. A world-famous organist has asked me for a copy of a Dring manuscript so that he can arrange it for organ and perform it. A BBC classical music presenter has just purchased the Dring biography and has shown great interest in her music. I have recently arranged a two-piano Dring piece for oboe and piano and am submitting it for inclusion on a London music exam syllabus.

I would like to think that future music students are taught her fine works as a matter of course, that her name becomes represented on our exam syllabi, and that her pieces are included in more and more professional concerts and recorded on many more compact discs. There is no reason this cannot happen. The music is high quality and accessible and much of it is fun to hear and perform. All sorts of things can be done that will make a difference. Little by little progress can very quickly become BIG progress.

## Selected Musical Compositions

Below is a short list of compositions that readers might wish to investigate. They are the ones most regularly performed and recorded and for which we receive the most requests.

### Chamber works

*Trio for flute, oboe and piano* (1968)

*Trio for oboe, bassoon and piano* (1971/2)

*Harmonica Suite* (pub. in 1984) in its original version for harmonica and piano (I have the manuscript and can copy) and also as *Three Piece Suite* for oboe and piano (adapted by Roger Lord)

*Italian Dance* (1960) for oboe and piano

*Idyll* (1948) for oboe and piano

### Solo piano pieces

*American Dance; Caribbean Dance; Colour Suite; Moto Perpetuo; Nightfall; Prelude and Toccata* (1976); *Spring; West Indian Dance*

### Songs

Five Betjeman Songs (including *Song of a Nightclub Proprietress*)

Song-cycle: *Love and Time*

Four *Night Songs*

Three *Shakespeare Songs*

The above and any of Micropress's other Dring publications are available through the Website at [www.micropressmusic.com](http://www.micropressmusic.com). I also have many Dring manuscripts, which I have permission to copy if they are not yet published. I can point you toward anything and everything connected with Dring, and will readily do so, please just ask: Ro Hancock-Child; The Blue House; 14 Brooksmead; Bognor Regis; West Sussex, UK. E-mail: [rosemary.hancockchild@btinternet.com](mailto:rosemary.hancockchild@btinternet.com)

### Recommended Sources

Brister, Wanda. "The Songs of Madeleine Dring." *Journal of Singing* (2008).

Fisher, Alistair. "The Songs of Madeleine Dring and the Evolution of Her Compositional Style." Thesis, University of Hull, UK (2000).

Hancock-Child, Ro. *Madeleine Dring: Her Music, Her Life*, 2nd edition. West Sussex, UK: Micropressbiography, 2009. [www.madeleinedring.com](http://www.madeleinedring.com) or [www.micropressmusic.com](http://www.micropressmusic.com)

### Compact Discs

*Leigh Kaplan plays Madeleine Dring*. Instrumental and piano music. Cambria 1084 (1996)

*Love and Time*. Ro Hancock-Child, piano; Michael Hancock-Child, baritone; Luise Horrocks, soprano. Songs and piano music by Madeleine Dring. Dinmore Records, UK, DRD032

*Red Glory*. Ro Hancock-Child, piano. Piano music by Madeleine Dring. Chandos download

*Ro Hancock-Child is a British classical concert pianist, composer, biographer, music researcher, and artist.*

# Women Composers' Motivation and Productivity: An Update

LINDA W. OSTRANDER

She began her career as a composer and educator after graduation from Oberlin Conservatory. One of two female and twenty-three male composers invited to participate in a prestigious Seminar in Advanced Musical Studies, she commuted sixty miles to the seminar every day of that hot, humid summer session, five months pregnant. At an evening party for participants a young man tried "to lead her down the garden path"; another asked, "Wouldn't you be happier at home in the kitchen?" "No," she replied indignantly to both, and quickly ran back to her husband, who had accompanied her to the final celebration.

Such negative experiences were reported by sixty women who responded to my questionnaire in an international study of Women Composers' Motivation and Productivity. I wanted to know what motivated them, kept them composing, and helped them advance in this competitive environment. Subsequently, I wrote a series of articles (published in the winter, spring and fall 1988 issues of the *ILWC Newsletter*) and presented a paper at the Fifth International Congress on Women in Music in Heidelberg, Germany. The current article is an update of that study.

As a returning IAWM member I was interested to read in volume 15, no. 1 of the *Journal of the IAWM* that some women composers are still asking some of the same questions that I posed in my study. Michelle Nagai, a young mother, wrote that she hopes to discover through her research at Princeton how parenting responsibility "shapes, shifts, supports or suppresses the work of female composers and music scholars." Rain Worthington, in her article, "Charting a Path or What's next...next...next?" addressed many related questions: "What route leads to concert performances? Where are the thoroughfares that reach the communities of colleagues including orchestra composers, women in music, or adventurous conductors? Where is the road to commercial recordings? Or radio play?" The following offers a brief summary of my study with some personal reflections.

My original purpose was to (1) describe the conditions that increase and decrease the motivation and productivity of women composers and (2) synthesize relevant research, which will help women composers better understand their motivation and productivity. I realize that male composers have some of the same problems, but women composers have many more due to their roles and society's expectations.

I began my research by reading about motivation, the creative process, and the conditions that are said to promote creativity, such as exposure to cultural stimuli, rewards, and incentives, and time to develop talent. Most psychologists agree that motivation is both personally and socially determined. In order to ascertain composers' attitudes towards motivation, I asked them to identify any or all of the following motivating factors that contributed to their productivity:

- intense imagination,
- the need to express feelings and ideas,
- the need for interactions, and
- the need to contribute to society.

With these conditions and motivators in mind, I then developed a questionnaire consisting of nine questions.

1. Do you perceive your culture as one based on inequality? If so, how do these inequities manifest themselves in your experience as a composer?

2. How do negative experiences affect your motivation and productivity?

3. Have you experienced economic hardship? Has this seriously affected your development or career?

4. Have you felt isolated because you are a woman composer?

5. Were your opportunities for interaction with other composers, musicians and artists limited? If so, how do you think this affected your creative life?

6. Have you frequently been confused, angry, resentful or depressed because of lack of opportunities and support? How do you deal with this?

7. What, if any, factors in your personal life (socialization, influence of parents, marriage, family, ethnic background) have influenced your development as a composer and your motivation and productivity?

8. What conditions promoted your creativity?

9. Can you point to any other factors in your life related to race, gender or class which may have contributed to or inhibited your development as a composer?

The participants were sixty women, ranging in age from twenty-six to eighty and representing various ethnic and socio-economic groups, from the U.S., Canada, Germany, England, Poland, Holland, New Zealand, and Australia. All were highly educated, with 94% holding at least a bachelor's degree and many holding doctoral degrees. Economic hardship played a large part in the lives of many of these women. Few enjoyed the luxury of being "full-time, professional composers." Seventy-seven percent held full- or part-time arts-related positions. Fifty-eight percent married before the age of twenty-five and attempted to maintain a career and marriage.

Many were unprepared for the harsh realities of the music business. One young woman wrote: "When a leading publisher asked me for one thousand dollars to publish my concerto, it seemed like a fortune. It was out of the question and yet it could have established me as a serious composer. I was insulted to have to pay for publication. I have learned since then that this is the way it often works."

Some had no expectations of making a living as a composer. A thirty-year-old woman commented: "I walked into composing knowing and assuming that most likely I would not be able to support myself in music. My mind is always fresh because my job is non-related...but lately I am begin-



ning to have more resentment about the whole situation.” Another explained, “It’s up to the composer to make contacts and be active in the community...of music.”

Their primary motivators were intense imagination and the need to express feelings. These are motivators that I categorized as intrinsic and personal, not social. The need to contribute to society and the need for interactions with other artists were not selected frequently (perhaps because of a lack of understanding of their significance). Although not identified as most important by the majority, social motivators were often selected by frequently performed composers. This is interesting because it seems to me that these motivators would promote creativity, and they are instrumental to the composing/performing cycle. In my experience, meeting certain performers certainly motivated me to write something special for them and resulted in performances.

Family and teachers provided the needed support in the lives of many of the composers. One woman said, “The fact that my parents, although they were not musical, accepted my preoccupation with music and gave me freedom to follow a musical career, influenced me much. But my marriage to an author, a creative and exceptional man, brought my productivity and level of composing to a high peak by his enthusiasm for my work, his understanding of the creative process and his inspiration.”

Negative influences from family also sometimes diminished motivation and productivity. Said one respondent, “The joy of marriage strengthened my motivation and productivity; the problems of marriage have stopped both.” Another revealed, “A lack of support from those close to me in a period of creative block seems to have effectively stopped me composing altogether.” “It’s the support (financial, emotional, professional, personal) that is not there that is the most depressing to me....The choice has been either to go ahead and do it with compromises, just so I can produce something close to what I had in mind, or not do it at all. As I get older, I have less and less motivation to produce my music under these circumstances.”

Problems often arise when there is no time to compose. Again and again I heard from women musicians: “When will there be time for me?” “The very freedom within the house that being a housewife entails also tends to isolate one. If you arrange housework and child minding so that you can have spare time to compose, you have no time to go out and meet people.” Because of their lifestyles, multiple commitments, and discrimination, many women in this study had little time for these important aspects of a composer’s life—time for self-development, contemplation, exploration, composing, practicing, listening, attending concerts, and meeting other musicians—and were forced to deal with a limited range of interaction, isolation, and the resulting frustrations.

Race, ethnic background, and religion were sources of inspiration and at times huge deterrents. “All of my music stems from my experience, both negative and positive, as a Black woman. My choice of subject matter is influenced by my culture. On the positive side, my teacher (a Black man) was very supportive and toughened me up.” A few noted

the impact of political power and ethnic discrimination. A single word expressed the reaction of one respondent to this question: “Hitler.” Another confided, “When I graduated from college I was nominated for a music fraternity. Before the formal invitation was sent I received a call, asking me for my religion. When I answered ‘Jewish,’ I was informed that the nomination would be cancelled.”

Gender bias had a profound effect on career decisions. Some women chose academic careers, which provided them not only financial stability but access to performers, facilities and professional encouragement. One graduate student had the courage to disregard her advisor’s counsel: “Had I been male, I think some of my teachers would have pushed me towards more awards and grants. Instead, many of my teachers thought of me as pursuing a teaching job...whereas, I won the composer’s award, and should have been encouraged to stay totally with writing. As it is now, I left academic employment in order to compose full-time.”

### Interpretation

For most of these women the personal rewards of composing far outweighed their frustrations and stresses. Although some composers reported negative experiences, most spoke about their love of composing and their determination. “Creativity is not turned on by money or time. It is a matter of the heart and it requires love and a mind uncluttered by emotional problems. More important than anything else are the love of those close to one and their understanding of your mission!”

Many participants spoke of the understanding and support they had received from professional organizations. A very successful woman composer wrote: “Belonging to a professional organization is...a marvelous opportunity. So many composers of my generation have mentioned the isolation and loneliness they have experienced in not having the opportunities to engage in dialogue with other composers. By working together you can pool information, resources, create opportunities to present concerts with others.”

Conditions in a composer’s life can be improved through interactions with other artists and organizations. Cultural resources, rewards, and incentives become more available, and the composer encounters divergent views, opportunities for feedback, and consensual validation. As interactions become more frequent and the composer establishes an identity in the professional community, motivation may shift from the independent and personal category to the social and collaborative. Interactions with other artists and musicians frequently give impetus to new works, and the discovery of performance opportunities, commissions, or awards. In other words, as they say today in the business world, we can create our own “opportunity environment.”

Many women mentioned the importance of state of mind—how to maintain some balance in their lives and still focus on their goals. Eighty-five percent of the subjects indicated a high level of satisfaction in their lifestyles and artistic status. They regularly set conscious goals. This goal-setting ability is viewed by some theorists as a necessity for self-esteem.

We need to remind ourselves that to achieve “we must demand much of ourselves.”<sup>1</sup> We all strive for that feeling, when the creative process is effortless and spontaneous, and it seems more like play than work. When the process is functioning well the artist has what Maslow described as “a peak experience.” When we experience “the B values,” which include, among other things, wholeness, perfection, completion, effortlessness, and playfulness—we are on a path towards self-actualization. The composer has to continue to be productive in order to experience these rewards.<sup>2</sup>

I believe a composer’s motivational life is unique because it is so dependent upon the total professional experience, which includes not only composing but finding opportunities for performance as well as publishing and recording. Many authors have said, and participants in this study have confirmed, that certain environments promote creativity while others destroy it. I have concluded that motivation is highly dependent upon the environment, which today, more than previously, the composer can help define.

Since this was a qualitative study I focused more on the participants’ attitudes and descriptions of their work. However, I did look at resumes and lists of works to ascertain whether a composer was productive and active (performed on a regular basis). The most successful composers have always had or worked hard at establishing contacts in the field.

#### Personal Reflections: Looking Forward, Looking Back

I began my study at a time when, due to the extraordinary efforts of a few individuals, a sense of community was developing in women’s music. I was active in the International Congress on Women in Music, the International League of Women Composers, and the American Women Composers, to mention a few organizations which provided support and new opportunities for professional contacts. Now, twenty-five years later, with digital expansion, our “opportunity environment” has become even wider. Returning to IAWM in 2009, I was impressed and inspired by what I saw in the *Journal* and on the website. I am grateful to all of you who take the time to document your journey and share your experiences.

For years I taught my adult students how to document their learning from work experience in a portfolio. Every composer should create a digital portfolio to document her work; IAWM will publish the link! Publishing your portfolio on the Internet connects you to the world! It says, “I am here. Come and see what I have created. I don’t want to be isolated and alone (only some of the time, when I compose).” I am excited and more optimistic now because I have recently created my own digital portfolio, my musical website, and I am reaching out to composers, performers, and teachers through the Internet, trying to establish a more public and current professional presence. This work is important psychologically, strategically and historically for all of us. Each of us needs to document women composers’ contributions so that the history of music will no longer be so one-sided.

As I reflect on my dual career as a professor and composer, I wish I had been better prepared for life as a composer. Very

little in my formal education prepared me to conduct the business of music. (Why don’t colleges and universities do more to prepare their composition and performance majors for the real world of music?) I believe that the quality of my more than one hundred works helped me obtain many performances, but I have had few publications or recordings. Much of what I accomplished with my compositions was the result of chance meetings and support from my husband, family, friends, performers, and conductors who believed in me.

Life has a way of interrupting creative endeavors, and, like many women musicians of my age, I married young, raised a family, and, because of necessity, earned a living as a professor and administrator in several colleges and universities. Often I was too busy or too tired to compose. Finding time to make new contacts in the music community as we moved from place to place was also difficult. I am proud of my academic career, but now, as I gradually cut back on teaching, I am happy to have more time to compose, write, and seek new opportunities through networking.



Linda W. Ostrander

I have come to believe that we must chart new paths, not only as individuals, but as an organization. I have written this article for all women composers and musicians, hoping that we will find and share some insights and strategies to help us “chart new paths”—whether it is from the garden, the kitchen, or academia—to more frequent and successful music venues.

I would like to hear from readers who are interested in responding to my questions or to any of the ideas I have presented. We could focus our discussion on my first three questions:

1. What motivates you?
2. What keeps you composing?
3. What has helped you advance as a composer?

This is an opportunity to share what you have learned from your experience as a composer. I will write another update for the *Journal* summarizing your comments. If you wish to remain anonymous please indicate that in your response. Please label your response IAWM and send it to [liostra@aol.com](mailto:liostra@aol.com). Thank you.

#### NOTES

1. John Gardner, *Excellence: Can We Be Equal and Excellent Too?* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), 136.
2. Abraham Maslow, *Dominance, Self-Esteem, Self-Actualization: General Papers of A. H. Maslow* (Monterey, CA: Wadsworth, 1973), 54.

*Linda Ostrander completed a bachelor of music in composition at Oberlin Conservatory, a master of arts in composition at Smith College, a year of doctoral study at the University of Illinois, a D.M.A. in composition at Boston University, and a Ph.D. in cultural studies at the Union Institute. She has taught at many colleges and universities and has many compositions and performances to her credit. Please visit her Website at [www.lindaostrander.com](http://www.lindaostrander.com).*

# An Endearing Legacy

JULIE AYER

My mother, Evelyn Ayer, and sister, Jane Ayer Blegen, were members of the violin section of the Spokane Symphony for many years. Their careers overlapped for twelve of the fifty-plus years that at least one of them was a member of the orchestra. Evelyn was one of the founding members of the Spokane Philharmonic, as it was known in 1945. She sat in the fourth chair of the first violin section until she retired in 1984. Jane joined the Spokane Symphony in 1972, and after her mother's retirement, she moved to the same chair her mother had occupied. Anyone who knew them experienced their enthusiasm and love for the orchestra, the musical family, and the friendships that developed over many years. They were truly peas in a pod, with similar mannerisms, appearance, and sense of humor, and they were even roommates on orchestra tours.

Jane died at age fifty-eight on May 18, 2002 of melanoma cancer. One of the cancer treatments required hours in the hospital for blood transfusions. Never wanting to waste a minute, Jane, the queen-of-multi-taskers, practiced during the transfusions, much to the delight and amazement of the hospital staff. Her last performance was in March of 2002 with the Spokane String Quartet, of which she was second violinist for many years. When she became too weak to play, she reluctantly put her violin away for the last time. Until Evelyn was diagnosed with Alzheimer's at age ninety, playing her violin sustained her and brought her great joy. She died August 6, 2008 at the age of ninety-eight.

In the late summer of 2002, the idea for an endowed chair in both names was discussed with the Spokane Symphony. It was quickly approved and followed by an overwhelming response from the public to the announcement of the Ayer-Blegen Endowed Chair. By the end of November 2003, the SSO had received gifts and pledges from 167 donors totaling almost \$65,000, with \$100,000 the eventual goal. This goal was reached in July of 2009, and much credit and appreciation goes to the generosity of so many.

Women have always been accepted in, and perhaps even formed the backbone of, amateur and semiprofessional orchestras in the United States. In an interview in the local newspaper in 1949, my mother stated,

As a member of the Spokane Philharmonic Orchestra for the last four years, my greatest pleasure and benefit has been in learning and playing the works of great composers. Most housewives need and maintain an interest outside of home and daily duties and participation in the Philharmonic is, to me, a very happy diversion, and makes possible my greater enjoyment of the fine symphonic music presented over the radio networks by the great orchestras of the country.

Usually offering part-time work and paying "per-service" rather than on a seasonal basis, such orchestras continue to play important roles in the lives of their communities. The number of women in smaller-budget orchestras has always been higher than in the major orchestras, averaging between forty-two to forty-six percent. Gender discrimination of the "other half of humanity" was never an issue as it was in major symphony orchestras for many decades.

Sir Henry Wood, conductor of the London Queen's Hall Orchestra, claimed to be the first conductor to admit women into a professional orchestra. In a 1913 letter to the *Times* of London, the famed British composer, Ethel Smyth, pointed out that "the inclusion of women in a first-class orchestra [was]... a privilege till now restricted, for some mysterious reason, to harpists." From the early nineteenth century until the 1960s, symphony orchestra membership was strictly controlled by invitation of the conductor or manager, and few women had the opportunity even to audition for a position in a major orchestra in the United States and Canada. Some conductors, however, hired the best player, even if she also happened to be a woman. Leopold Stokowski, for example, hired Elsa Hilger as a cellist in the Philadelphia Orchestra in the mid 1930s, and the next conductor, Eugene Ormandy, appointed her assistant principal but never principal, despite her ability. In her words, "I would have been principal but my pants weren't long enough."

As early as 1903, the American Federation of Labor required that the musicians union not discriminate against women. (It was not until 1953, however, that the musicians union was desegregated.) In the spring of 1938, the 150 female members of the Musicians Local 802 of New York met together to discuss their mutual problems. With the outbreak of World War II, men left their professions faster than the vacancies could be filled. In their places, women flew airplanes, towed targets, worked rigorously in factories and defense-related positions—and filled men's chairs in major American orchestras. At war's end, many of these women were expected to give up their jobs to returning soldiers. Not all of them did so, and their stories open a window on a generation of women who changed American society by securing a place for themselves in the workplace, the newsroom, the battlefield—and on the concert stage.

An October 1944 article in the *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune* notes the presence of four women in the Minneapolis Symphony. "Two of the players are symphony wives," Dorothy Riley wrote, adding that "one of them wants to return to her role as house wife as soon as the war is over...the engagement with the symphony is definitely a wartime measure." That same year the Boston Symphony Orchestra held a fund-raising meeting attended mostly by women. Music critic Alan Rich reported that the orchestra's president announced that if not enough money was raised,

the orchestra would have to reduce the number of players and length of its season and “lower its standards” by hiring women. Just eight years later, in 1952, the Boston Symphony hired Doriot Anthony Dwyer as principal flute. The headline in the Boston Herald read: “Woman Crashes Boston Symphony.”

In 1960, no US orchestra paid its musicians a full-time salary. Sixteen years later, in 1976, eleven US orchestras paid all of their musicians on a fifty-two-week basis, and the proportion of women increased from eighteen percent in the early 1960s to an average of twenty-five percent just ten years later. Finally, the possibilities for women to have full-time careers of any kind, including an orchestra career, were becoming realized. Women’s issues and problems escalated in almost direct proportion to their finding orchestra jobs. The same year Congress passed the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, in 1978, the following language was issued in the personal contracts of a major American orchestra: “If a female becomes pregnant between the time she signs this contract and the opening of the season, this contract will be void. A musician who becomes pregnant during the season will be paid only for all services rendered up to the time she stops performing with the orchestra. Such musician will notify the employer of pregnancy and misrepresentation of condition relieves the employer of any liability.”

The important terms of today’s master agreements in major symphony orchestras, such as contract ratification, lawyer representation, players committees, pension, sick leave, maternity and paternity leave, insurance, working conditions, and tour provisions were the result of a labor struggle unique in labor history. The symphony musicians’

historic grassroots movement that became ICSOM in 1962, the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians, transformed labor relations and the professional lives of US and Canadian musicians. Before ICSOM, the conductor held all the power to hire and fire, with no recourse for the musician. Symphony musicians are now universally protected against discrimination on the basis of sex, race, age, and union activity.

In 1980, for the first time, forty-two years after the 150 female musicians of the New York Local met for a relatively inconsequential discussion, the women representatives of ICSOM began to discuss issues specifically related to their professional lives and their status as symphony musicians, including pregnancy leave, tours, auditions, committees, and ICSOM representation. They also addressed the woefully inadequate or non-existent dressing rooms for both men and women.

In 1984, musicians of the regional orchestras—who define themselves as those with budgets lower than the major orchestras—found they needed to network among themselves to address their own problems and issues, just as the major orchestras had done in 1962. Established as a communication organization for regional orchestras, the Regional Orchestras Players’ Association, or ROPA, was formed in 1984. There are currently seventy-nine member orchestras, whose annual budgets range from associate members with budgets below \$600,000 to larger orchestras with budgets approaching \$9 million (with the exception of the Pacific Symphony, with a \$15+ million budget).

The Spokane Symphony, a ROPA orchestra, presents about 180 services per season, including ten classical



The first concert of the Spokane Philharmonic in December 1945, with a substantial number of women in the orchestra. (Courtesy of the Spokane Symphony Orchestra archives)

concerts, six pops concerts, three chamber soirees, three chamber orchestra concerts, and a number of educational and outreach concerts and activities. Since its founding as the Spokane Philharmonic in 1945, the number of women has remained between twenty-five and thirty, typical of most orchestras of this size. Of the sixty-seven members of the orchestra, Tier 1 is a core of thirty-six contracted musicians who play all 180 services. Tier 2 comprises sixteen more players contracted for 125 services, and Tier 3 contains an additional fifteen musicians guaranteed eighty-seven

services per season. It is all the more extraordinary that in these difficult economic times the loyalty and devotion to the Spokane Symphony is exemplified in the achievement of the \$100,000 goal for the Ayer-Blegen Endowed Chair.

*Julie Ayer is a violinist in the Minnesota Orchestra and author of More Than Meets the Ear: How Symphony Musicians Made Labor History (Syren Book Co., 2005, ISBN 092963640). The book was reviewed by Cynthia Carr in the Journal of the IAWM (vol. 12, no. 1, 2006). Please visit Julie's Website at [www.julieayer.com](http://www.julieayer.com).*

## My Residency at the Civitella Ranieri Castle

LI YIDING (translated by Li Yixiong)

The Civitella Ranieri Foundation, a non-profit corporation with offices in New York City, offers a six-week residency in the Civitella Ranieri Castle for gifted musicians, visual artists, and writers who demonstrate exceptional talent and an enduring commitment to their disciplines, and grants diplomas to the fellows to encourage them to continue devoting themselves to artistic creation. The fifteenth-century castle is in the picturesque Umbria region of central Italy. Ursula Corning (1903-2002), who established the Foundation, began renting the castle in 1968 and often invited her international artist friends to visit. The atmosphere of the ancient castle and the quiet and beautiful scenery of the countryside inspired her guests to express themselves through poetry, music and paintings. Starting in 1995, the Foundation began to seek creative artists from around the world, and by 2005, two hundred artists from various countries had been invited to the Civitella Ranieri Center, including a number of Chinese composers such as Chen Yi and Qu Xiaosong as well as several well-known writers and painters



Li Yiding in the Library  
at the Civitella Ranieri Castle

such as Xi Chuan, Bei Dao, and Zhai Yongming.

In 2007, Chen Yi and Zhou Long recommended me, and after a lengthy waiting period (the fellowships are selected by an international jury of peers), I was awarded a fellowship for June of 2009. Eleven of us—three composers, four art-

ists, and four writers—were chosen from 200 candidates. We were from eight countries: the United States, South Africa, Vietnam, Russia, the Philippines, Canada, Sri Lanka, and China. Every Civitella fellow was expected to create a certain number of new works, and before leaving, everyone had to submit an article, score, or painting and explain his or her work and creative experience.

On the second day after I arrived, I visited the ancient castle with its high walls, bell tower, small family chapel, and portraits of the noble family on the walls. The library on the second floor is open twenty-four hours a day and holds a collection of works and recordings by artists of all periods. Every fellow is invited to donate works to the library, and I donated two of my CD albums and a number of my scores.

We had dinner each evening in the garden of the castle. The pavilion is covered with carpet-like grass and small white flowers which are wild but so delicate. We enjoyed the pure atmosphere and the beautiful silence of nature. Tall oleanders were in full blossom—white, pink and peach—and on the surrounding lawn, a variety of wild flowers were also in full bloom: red poppy, purple lavender, and blue cornflower. The castle is surrounded by trees—pine, chinar, palm, and laurel trees—that have grown for centuries and now serve as barriers. As we dined, the air was filled with the fragrance of the wild flowers and grass, and the gentle breezes blowing sweet, moist air intoxicated everybody.

In the kitchen, two women chefs were busy cooking. The breezes brought us their soft Italian voices mixed with the thud of cutting vegetables and it sounded like music. The Italian home cooking was delicious and we had few duplicate dishes. To express our gratitude to the cooks, every evening all the fellows would applaud. Supper was at 8 pm and I often watched the sunset as the sunglow reddened the horizon, little by little. To enjoy the marvelous Italian cuisine in the cool evening sunset while chatting with other artists was an especially pleasant experience.

Some studios and bedrooms are in the castle and others are in houses on the grounds. I was in a small independent two-story house 500 meters from the castle. Every house has a name—mine was called “tobacco” but I do not know the reason. My studio had a Steinway grand piano, a computer, some audio equipment, scores, and books on two long

tables. The room also had a fireplace, sofas, benches, a refrigerator, bathroom, and simple kitchen. I had six very large, heavy keys that jingled in my pocket. They were, no doubt, just like this hundreds of years ago. Sometimes the artists visited each other's studios, and since my studio was the largest and rather far from the castle, it interested them.

The Canadian woman composer's studio was on the second floor of the castle. Her rooms were very large and the walls were covered with huge portraits of the princesses and dukes of the fifteenth-century family. It looked like a movie set in a dark house with dim old chandeliers, a big old sofa, a giant candelabra, and an old-fashioned piano on which I played an Italian song, *My Sun*, and received much applause. The American composer's house was in a separate cottage outside the castle gate, where he had a studio, an electro-acoustic equipment room, a bedroom, a kitchen, and a bathroom. His house, called "Pizza Hut," was shaded by thick trees covered with bright red cherries. Every painter had his own studio, and white canvases with new works hung from the walls.

The old wooden windows of my studio overlooked an orchard with plum, fig, and apple trees that hung low with fruit. The ripe plums were juicy and so delicious. Sometimes squirrels and small cats wandered under trees and at other times a bird with a yellow crown stood singing on a fruit tree under the blue sky. Since we had our lunch and dinner in the castle, I walked back and forth on the gravel path at least twice a day, often humming a song: "Look at the fields, look at the wilderness, beautiful scenery...." Tall trees lined the roadside and golden sunflowers, green stalks of corn, and purple alfalfa could be seen in the distance. I completely melted in the joys of nature. No one and nothing could bother me here. I was completely at ease, and I had a profound sense of serenity. I had been looking forward to such state of mind in such a creative environment for many years, and now I found them at the Civitella Ranieri Center.

In my studio, I listened to the music I had composed in the past, and I recalled my twenty years as a composer. My



Courtyard at the Civitella Ranieri Castle

Chinese music sounded so pleasant and lovely in this castle in the mountains of central Italy. Some of my compositions, particularly the theme song and episodes for the drama *Princess Wencheng* sung by Tan Jing and Dai Yuqiang, seemed very attractive. I had never thought so when I was in China. But the music sounded so exceptionally beautiful here that it moved me profoundly. As I have become more experienced, I have come to the realization that as a Chinese composer I have had a distinct advantage from the traditional Chinese culture that has existed for thousands of years. Chinese music is unique in its character, and as a result of my experience in Civitella, I have developed much greater self-confidence as a Chinese composer. I expect to recommend other Chinese composers for fellowships here, and I hope they will be as inspired as I have been to compose beautiful music.

*Li Yiding is a senior composer at China Central Television (CCTV) in Beijing and IAWM advisor. After her experience in Italy, she was inspired to compose the song "Smiling Flower," commissioned by the Chaoyang Primary School of Beijing Normal University and performed in October 2009. Li Yixiong (Li Yiding's sister) is professor of English at Shenyang Conservatory of Music.*

# Olga de Blanck, Cuban Musician

MAGALY RUIZ AND MARTHA CASTELLÓN

Olga de Blanck (1916-1998) was one of Cuba's most outstanding musicians of the twentieth century. She was a singer, pianist, and guitarist in her early years, and later she became a successful and influential composer, music educator, and editor who did much to further the development of music in her country. She came from a family of musicians. Her father, Hubert de Blank (born in the Netherlands), was an eminent pianist who toured widely; after marrying a Cuban woman, he settled in Havana and was active in promoting music. He was founder of the Society of Classical Concerts (chamber music) and the Conservatory of Music and Declamation, and he initiated three musical magazines: *La Propaganda Musical*, *Cuba Musical*, and *Correo Musical*. Most important was his establishment of the National Conservatory of Music, which evolved into a prestigious institution with high standards. He was also a noted composer. Other members of the de Blanck family were well-known musicians, too. Olga's sister, Margot de Blanck, was an excellent pianist and teacher as was her mother, Pilar Martín de Blanck.

No doubt the musical environment in her home strongly influenced Olga de Blanck's vocation. She began her studies with her father and continued at the Municipal Conservatory of Havana with Amadeo Roldán and Pedro San Juan. She later studied in New York with the eminent Brazilian composer, conductor, and pianist, Burle Marx, and in Mexico with Julian Carrillo and Carlos Jimenez. In her musical compositions she utilized the rhythms of Cuban music and based her work on popular genres such as the habañera, bolero, son, punto, and guajira.

De Blanck was a prolific composer of vocal music, particularly songs in the Cuban style such as *Mi guitarra guajira* (My country guitar), a "punto cubano" for voice and piano which won the National Prize in the Contest of Cuban Songs of 1948. She made important use of Cuban percussion instruments in the accompaniment of many of



Olga de Blanck

her songs, as for example in *Triptico* (three songs for voice and Cuban percussion instruments, with text by Mirta Aguirre). *El agua lenta del río* (The slow river's water), in the style of a bolero, uses a guiro (a hollow gourd played by scraping a stick along cut-in grooves) in addition to the piano. *Yo no me quejo, no* (I don't complain, no), on a text by José Martí, is scored for voice, piano, and claves (a pair of short, thick, polished dowels). Generally, de Blanck based her works on the best Cuban poets, such as José Martí (a Cuban national hero), Nicolás Guillén (National Poet), and Mirta Aguirre.

De Blanck is especially known for her music for children. In 1966, for example, she received awards for every song she submitted to the contest of the Union of Cuban Pioneers. Her extensive experience as a teacher is reflected in both the music and the text, and some of her works show the influence of the Orff Method. Beginning in 1938, she was a teacher in her father's conservatory and assistant director, and when her mother, who was director, died, de Blanck was appointed director. She not only published volumes of her own songs for children, for example *Mi patria cubana* (My Cuban Fatherland) in 1977, but she also contributed to anthologies such as *Cantemos y Jugemos en el Circulo Infantil* (Let's sing and play in the children's circle) in 1981. The melodies are simple and can be easily memorized by the children, the rhythms are clear, and the vocal range is suitable for young voices. Most of the texts are didactic and aid in teaching numbers, colors, and so forth; many songs extol patriotism and love of family.

Two of her best known piano works are *Portocromia* (1981), inspired by the paintings of the Cuban artist René Portocarrero, and *Pentasilabico* (Five syllables) (1972), a virtuosic work that has an especially striking instrumental accompaniment: guiro, claves graves, tumbadoras (conga drums in three different sizes), and quijada de burro (donkey's jaw hit on the side to produce a sustained rattle sound). Among her other works are *Villancicos Cubanos y Latinoamericanos* (Cuban and Latin American Christmas Carols) for choir; two musical comedies: *Vivimos hoy* (We live today) in 1943, and *Cuento de Navidad* (Christmas Tale) in 1950; *Bohio* (the typical rural Cuban house) for orchestra, in 1967; *Cantata guajira* (Rustic Cantata) in 1967; and *Décimas Guerreras* (War Poetry) in 1979. The latter two are scored for soloist, choir, and orchestra.

With her collaborator and friend, Gisela Hernández, de Blanck founded Ediciones de Blanck (de Blank Editions) for the publication of works for piano, voice, and choir by Cuban composers. Their pedagogical books were used in the conservatory and elsewhere and included de Blanck's book on harmony and an edition she and Hernández prepared of *New School for Piano by Hubert de Blanck*. They also published Cuban music for children including works by de Blanck. One of their most important publications was *Cuarenta*

## In Memoriam: Marian Mapes-Bouck (1929-2009)

IAWM member Marian Mapes-Bouck passed away on November 1, 2009 at the age of 80. She was host of "Klassics for KMUD, from Bach to Bouck" at Radio Station KMUD-FM in Redway, California. The program aired on Tuesday mornings from 6 to 9 a.m. She was active in promoting works by women composers and frequently programmed recordings of compositions by IAWM members.



*Danzas* (Forty Dances) by Ignacio Cervantes in 1959 to commemorate the tenth anniversary of de Blank Editions. This book is still in print, and the music is included in every Cuban pianist's repertoire.

Those who knew Olga de Blanck remember her as a very pleasant person, always smiling and ready to cooperate in any cultural project. During the 1960s, she participated in the creation of the School of Art Instructors and in the establishment of the Cuban National Library for the publication of music by Cuban composers of the nineteenth century. She was involved in the creation of the Music Education Career Department of the Ministry of Education in Cuba, and she collaborated on the magazine *Simientes* (Seeds), published by the Children's Institute of Cuba. She served as a special-

ist in children's music on radio programs sponsored by the national schools of Cuba. In each of the areas in which she worked, she made remarkable contributions to the field, and she will long be remembered for her accomplishments.

*Magaly Ruiz Lastres's compositions have been performed in many national and international festivals, and several of her works are included in the curriculum of leading music education institutions in Cuba. She has received several medals and honors, including the National Award of Cuban Culture, National Award of the Ministry of Higher Education, and the National Award of Composition given by the National Union of Cuban Writers and Artists (UNEAC). Marta Castellón is one of Cuba's most outstanding teachers of music history, and she has taught in a number of music institutions with great success.*

## In Memoriam: Mary Gardiner (1932–2010)

PATRICIA MOREHEAD

The much admired Canadian composer Mary Gardiner passed away on January 31, 1932 at the age of 77. She began her musical studies as a pianist and pursued a career as a recitalist, accompanist, educator, and composer. The Canadian Music Centre (CMC) has praised her "lasting influence on Canadians' awareness of their own musical heritage. Whether it was as a teacher, adjudicator, workshop clinician or composer of educational music, she made a significant and generous commitment to both students and educators, having shared with them an awareness and appreciation of Canadian composers' music....Now, it is our responsibility not only to remember all that was good about Mary, but to carry forward her hopes in our own work. In this way we can ensure that her achievements continue to be felt in the present and by future generations." In addition to her activities for Canadian Music, she was wife of John Gardiner, the mother of two with one grandson, and the director of the choir at her church.

Mary Gardiner and I met while studying composition with Dr. Samuel Dolin at the Royal Toronto Conservatory of Music. She was a true friend for thirty years and a wonderful supporter of my adventures in composition. When I visited Toronto we would always get together for a wonderful lunch at her house with delicious home-made soup, other goodies, and of course tea.

For many Canadian composers Mary's achievements have been very significant. With her efforts as president for at least fifteen years of ACNMP (Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects), she organized and raised money for Canadian composers to be commissioned to write new music suitable for young students in many different genres and at many different levels of difficulty from elementary to very advanced. These pieces are performed in a weeklong festival, ACNMP's Contemporary Showcase.



Mary Gardiner

This is now a national event and its syllabus provides an invaluable resource for Canadian contemporary music. After stepping down from the presidency of ACNMP, a scholarship was named in her honor.

Mary was a founding member and former Chair of the Association of Canadian Women Composers. She served for several years as Chair on the Council of the Ontario Region of the CMC. In recognition of her exceptional commitment to Canadian music as "a builder of bridges between composers, teachers and students" the CMC and the Canadian League of Composers presented her with the 2003 Friends of Canadian Music Award.

Mary's music is beautifully constructed, with true originality of ideas and sensitive lyrics. To become acquainted with her

music, please visit [www.musiccentre.ca/home.cfm](http://www.musiccentre.ca/home.cfm). Gardiner's work, *Remembered Voices: Song, Elegy, Dance* (2002), recorded on the Carleton Music label, is reviewed elsewhere in this issue of the Journal. For information on Mary Gardiner's life and music, please see Jeannie Gayle Pool's article, "Canadian Composer Mary Gardiner Celebrating Her 75th Year," in the *Journal of the IAWM* (vol. 14/1, 2008, 15-19). Pool notes how unfortunate it is that many people pigeonhole Gardiner as an "educational composer." She composed many fine works for piano, voice, choir, chamber ensemble, and string orchestra, some of which are discussed in the article.

In October 2009 Mary was honored by the Toronto Heliconian Club with a program devoted entirely to her music. A memorial service for her was held on February 28th at Humbercrest United Church with many outstanding Canadian musicians in attendance. It was a beautiful service with several of her pieces as part of the program. The members of the IAWM join Mary Gardiner's many friends and supporters in expressing their sorrow at her passing.



## CONCERT REVIEWS

### IAWM 2009 Annual Concert

University of North Texas in Denton, November 7, 2009

CECILIA HAMILTON

The IAWM annual concert took place on November 7, 2009 in the recital hall of the music building at the University of North Texas in Denton. The concert featured new music from member submissions selected by committee members Linda Dusman, Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner, and Elizabeth McNutt. They did a superb job of choosing pieces that offered great variety. The composers of the selected works, Karen Power (Ireland), Janice Misurell-Mitchell (USA), Peiying Yuan (Singapore/USA), Kari Besharse (USA), Dale Trumbore (USA), and Adriana Isabel Figuera Mañas (Argentina), are representative of IAWM's international membership, and three of the composers, Misurell-Mitchell, Yuan, and Besharse, attended the concert. The performers were members of UNT's NOVA ensemble under the direction of Elizabeth McNutt.

The opening piece, *squeeze birds to improve your garden's plant variety* by Karen Power, was composed for acoustic instruments and tape. For this performance, the instrumentation consisted of tenor saxophone, bass clarinet, two French horns, two violins, viola, and double bass; the composition allows for various other groupings as long as there are two wind and three string instruments without doublings. After staggered entrances, the piece quickly becomes static and dense. The overall harmonic movement of the work is strikingly minimal and dissonant, and the general effect is that of a sound mass with underlying and overlying drones and slow tremolos. Power successfully blends both tape and instruments so that they are indistinguishable from one another. As stated in her notes, her concept was to intertwine two similar yet separately composed ideas. The tension created is like the movement of heavy traffic in which everyone has the same direction as a larger goal yet all vehicles (instruments) move individually, slowly, patiently forward. The forward movement of the music is executed by an expansive, elongated crescendo created from the ascension through each instrument's range. The tape and instruments halt amid the tension and dissonance, and there is no resolution but silence.

Second on the program was Janice Misurell-Mitchell's *On Thin Ice* (1998) for flute and marimba arranged by Dane Richeson of Lawrence University. Some may already know the previous version of the piece for flute and guitar (1988). The placement of *On Thin Ice* could not have been better. If the Power piece is an example of stasis, then Mitchell's *On Thin Ice* might

be considered anti-stasis. Mitchell stated that "the title refers to several aspects of the piece: the risks involved in creating pieces through improvisation; the risks of juxtaposing several ideas in a short time; and the continuous forward motion necessary in skating on thin ice in order to avoid breaking through." After a bold flute introduction, the marimba enters as the flute presents lyrical yet detached lines accompanied and/or punctuated by the constantly moving marimba part. As the conversation flows, the marimba seems to finish thoughts, echoes or sometimes take over when the flute becomes more subdued. Pointillist pentatonic percussive fragments and rapid rhythmic material become more prevalent in both parts in order to build excitement and volume that subside not too gradually into an almost serene, introspective middle section. The piece then becomes reminiscent of the first section in which lyrical bits and percussive fragments were juxtaposed in the flute line and were accompanied, echoed, accented, and answered by the constant marimba. After another great buildup, the piece gradually loses momentum. It tapers once again to the lone flute, but unlike the beginning, it ends delicately, softly. Janice Misurell-Mitchell's expert musical incorporation of extended techniques into the composition is integral rather than decorative. As a flutist listening to a flutist perform music written by a flutist, I must commend Sonia Candelaria (flute) and Hiromi Kamiya (marimba) for their expressive, sensitive performance and excellent use of dynamic contrast. It is always refreshing to hear a flutist who braves the challenge of soft dynamics such as *ppp*, treading on "thin ice" for the audience's sake.



IAWM Annual Meeting Reception: First row L to R: Elizabeth McNutt (Nova Ensemble director), Hsiao-Lan Wang (IAWM president), Meira Warshauer (board member). Second row L to R: Linda Dusman (board member), Janice Misurell-Mitchell (composer), Kari Besharse (composer), Peiying Yuan (composer), Cecilia Hamilton (reviewer and flutist), Julie Cross (treasurer).

Closing the first half of the program was *Five Elements* for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano by Peiyang Yuan. The piece was composed in five continuous, cyclical movements representing wood, fire, earth, metal, and water. The performers chose to begin with metal although the piece allows the performers to select any element as the beginning. In the two previous works, a conductor was necessary to assist with some of the difficulties arising from the complex rhythms; this was the first work to be performed without a conductor. I was immediately struck by the powerful, violent nature

of some of the full ensemble moments. Cellist Esra Celikten played with ferocity and conviction, uninhibitedly. What happens when fire envelops wood or when water quenches fire, etc.? The dual nature of the elements in their various cycles, creation or destruction, lends the piece a substantial amount of imagery. Fire may warm the cold or cause destruction, water is both calm and violent, metal has solid and liquid states, wood is strong yet vulnerable, and earth is multifaceted, sustaining all. Water was the most recognizable and inventive element, with pizzicato droplets, smooth currents and rushes of dense texture where instruments merge with the force of a tsunami. One of the elements, perhaps earth, contained a folk-like melodic section that could have been quoted from previously existing material. If not, the tune evoked a feeling of recognition of something from home (earth). To end the piece, earth was lamenting and calm. Peiyang Yuan's composition is intellectually engaging and passionate. It provided programmatic imagery and moments of extraordinary beauty and fury; it also presented a weighty challenge for the performers. It is a memorable kind of music that speaks to all lovers and performers of new music.

The second half of the concert began with *Omphalos*, an electroacoustic composition by Kari Besharse. The composer stated that the piece explores a search or journey for mental peace that is often made difficult by a conflict between inner and outer worlds. It is mind or "cognitive dissonance" that should smooth the conflict or connect the two worlds, therefore the mind is always active and peace or rest is impossible. The work has sections of near tranquility where the extended material is relatively serene and organic. These episodes are juxtaposed, distorted, and combined with other material to communicate the idea of an "interference pattern," which "perpetually" arises from inner movement outward and outer movement inward. The title makes reference to a line from James Joyce's *Ulysses*.



*Disbelief and Suspensions* by Dale Trumbore. L to R: Andrea Harrell, clarinet; Emily Cole, violin; Alina Vázquez, cello; Nataliya Sukhina, piano.

It might also be related to the ancient Greek idea of an omphalos stone, or perhaps the need for one, that allows direct communication between the soul and the Gods therefore bypassing the outer world.

*Disbelief and Suspensions* by Dale Trumbore was influenced by the concept of "suspension of disbelief," which is better known and more often discussed by visual artists and critics. It is a suspension of judgment and skepticism while experiencing a work of art (or music) in order to temporarily experience the art as reality. The first movement, "disbelief," is appropriately placed since even the most open-minded among art and music connoisseurs cannot admit to a complete suspension of skepticism upon initial interaction with new works. The performance had moments of exceptional beauty along with expert ensemble throughout. Fluid and well organized, the composition began with the rhythmic vigor of the piano and strings. The movements that followed, suspensions one, two, and three, consist of duo and trio fragments, which the composer used to create a gradual transition to "suspension," as if one needs to constantly remind oneself to delay judgment. Pianist Nataliya Sukhina and clarinetist Andrea Harrell were quite stunning during a duet section within one of the suspensions. Suspension four marks the first time all instruments played simultaneously, and it was here that disbelief is either successfully or unsuccessfully suspended depending on the interpretation. For some, judgment remains ever present and is only altered one way or another through experience.

Adriana Isabel Figuero Mañas's *Alucitango*, scored for flute and string quartet, was a perfect close to the program. It was part tango and part hallucination as the title suggests. The opening was full of energy and excitement and included characteristic tango rhythms. The instrumentation was perfectly balanced, and the style was occasionally reminiscent of a jazz ballad, although more dissonant. The tango

transitioned into a more free-sounding, hallucinogenic section in which the cello was the first to come back to reality (tango), and eventually each instrument was pulled back. The piece was a powerful and entertaining treatment of the beloved and ever popular Argentine tango. It was both an audience pleaser and a challenge for the performers, while retaining much depth and originality. This was a premiere performance, and undoubtedly the composer will enjoy many more performances.

Overall, IAWM's annual concert was continuously engaging. Pieces of substance and quality by six incredibly

talented women composers are a credit to the organization and the selection committee for bringing them to our attention. It was a pleasure to hear and reflect on a program with such great stylistic diversity. The members of UNT's NOVA ensemble performed the pieces with a sense of integrity and conviction.

*Cecilia Hamilton is a performer and teacher in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. She teaches flute at Austin College, conducts the Flower Mound Progressive orchestra, and performs with the world/folk/fusion ensemble Tin Roof Tango. She is an enthusiastic supporter and performer of new music.*

## Jennifer Higdon: Piano Concerto

National Symphony Orchestra, Andrew Litton, conductor; Yuja Wang, pianist. December 3, 2009, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

CHRISTINA L. REITZ

On December 3, 2009, Jennifer Higdon's first Piano Concerto was given its world premiere at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC with the National Symphony Orchestra under Andrew Litton's baton and Yuja Wang as the soloist. The work was commissioned by the premiering ensemble with funding from the John and June Hechinger Commissioning Fund for New Orchestral Works, which has the dual missions to foster American composers and to create contemporary symphonic compositions.

After the performance of Rimsky-Korsakov's Suite from *The Snow Maiden*, Litton brought Higdon to the stage for a brief question and answer period about her new work. Trained as a flutist, the composer, in her typical down-to-earth manner, joked that she spent a year being intimidated by the commission and then spent time studying the piano literature

of other composers. (Her program notes mention the significance of Mozart, Beethoven, and Bartok in the history of the genre.) As a point of interest, Higdon also mentioned that in the piano part alone, there are 19,615 notes.

The concerto is cast in a traditional three-movement form, and even though the individual movement titles have no tempo indication, this work continues the custom of spritely outer movements and a lyrical contrasting second movement. The instrumentation mirrors that of a late Romantic orchestra complemented by an extraordinary array of percussive instruments featured prominently in the finale; yet typical of Higdon, these are not scored merely for novelty purposes but to explore the sound and color such timbres provide within the symphonic framework.

The composition opened with a lyrical solo for the piano followed by a chorale-like entrance in the winds. With the aid of piano trills, this section transitioned to virtuosic scale figures and a more dynamic, assertive passage. The movement displayed Higdon's profound skill in writing for the vast range of possibilities inherent with the solo instrument: brilliant, sparkling figurations, energetic octave passages, scalar figures that displayed Wang's impressive technical prowess, contrapuntal dialogue between the hands (masterfully crafted in the cadenza), and elegant, lyrical lines. Following the cadenza, solos for individual string players, a feature of Higdon's orchestral writing, combined with the marimba to end the movement serenely.

The slower second movement commenced with a flute solo accompanied by the first stand string players. While the piano continued to be featured, the concerto exhibited a diversity of orchestral sounds through dialogues between the soloist and varying wind instruments that demonstrated the great musicality of the NSO's wind and string sections.

The highly rhythmic finale continued to explore the symphonic capabilities of the players with extensive focus on the percussion in the opening measures. Throughout the movement, a rhythmic motive, first introduced by the soloist, travels throughout the entire orchestra providing structural unity to the form. The drama and tension continued to build,

### Winnaretta Singer

The last *Journal of the IAWM* (vol. 15, no. 2, 2009) included a book review of Sylvia Kahan's *Music's Modern Muse: A Life of Winnaretta Singer, Princesse de Polignac* by Julie Cross. This was published in 2003 and came out in paperback in 2009 (University of Rochester Press). It sounded intriguing and I bought a copy. I have been enjoying it so much that I want to recommend it to everyone! Winnaretta was an heir to the Singer fortune and she lived in Paris most of her life (1865-1943). She was an excellent musician and artist herself and knew everybody who was anybody in the musical life of that time. Her path crossed with so many interesting people, not just musicians. She also used her money to commission pieces (Stravinsky, Poulenc, Ravel, Smyth, Weill, etc.). And incidentally, she was also the chief contributor to various places of refuge for the homeless and down-and-out (and made sure that the buildings were of the highest standard—commissioned from Corbusier, no less). It is a wonderful book about a wonderful woman's life. *Jenny Fowler*

and the work closed with a bravura display of scales, octaves, and glissandi by the soloist.

The reception from the audience was enthusiastic and the nearly full concert hall provided a standing ovation. As the composer mentioned in her introductory remarks prior to the performance, there is “something magical about music” and indeed, at the premiere of her Piano Concerto, magic was in abundance.

*Christina L. Reitz is assistant professor of music at Western Carolina University. She earned a Ph.D. in musicology from the University of Florida with external cognates in women's studies and piano performance. Her dissertation, "A Comprehensive Analysis of Selected Orchestral Works by Jennifer Higdon," combines her primary research interests: women composers and American music.*

## COMPACT DISC REVIEWS

### Alex Shapiro: *Notes from the Kelp*

Innova 683 (2007)

ANDREW ADAMS

Composer Alex Shapiro enjoys an enormously successful career: the recipient of numerous commissions, fellowships, and awards, she has also produced over a dozen of her own recordings. First released in 2007, *Notes from the Kelp* is a compilation of eight chamber works written between 1996 and 2006. Shapiro wrote of her inspiration, “All of the music...in this collection was composed in Malibu, California, with the Pacific Ocean undulating in the background.” Anchored by three major works and including five shorter pieces, the album displays an extraordinary range of emotional intensity and instrumental color.

The most extended work on the disc, the three-movement *Current Events* for string quintet, is given a moving performance by the artists responsible for its premiere: Miwako Watanabe and Connie Kupka, violins; Victoria Miskolczy and David Walther, violas; and David Speltz, cello. The composer noted that *Current Events* ponders the ocean's tides as well as waves of a more internal, emotional nature.” Though Shapiro frequently makes connections to the ocean in the titles of her pieces and program notes, her work is neither obviously impressionistic nor narrowly programmatic; instead, the listener is free to take his or her own emotional journey through each piece.

The first movement, *Surge*, features the solo cello throughout and favors the lower, darker ranges of all the instruments. The lyrical opening adagio quickly gives way to a central section with fast-paced, jagged dialogue between the players that reaches a frenzied climax. Without pause, the listener enters the troubled yet serenely beautiful second movement, *Ebb*. A yearning restlessness reminiscent of Shostakovich is expressed through a constant stream of melodic suspensions and resolutions punctuated by outbursts from the accompanying instruments. Extraordinarily poignant, *Ebb* is the emotional center of the work and one of the highlights of the disc. The closing allegro, *Rip*, is a nervous, constantly unfolding exchange of staccato notes and syncopated chords that pulls the listener in myriad directions. Growing increasingly turbulent, *Current Events* comes to a sudden, unsettling conclusion.

*At the Abyss*, for piano and percussion ensemble, is the composer's reaction to “threatening and violent events throughout the world.” The first section of the opening

movement features the piano and marimba in unison scale passages that rise threateningly before the listener; a brief lyrical respite leads to a restatement of the troubled first theme that, with its relentless brutality, brings the movement to a chilling end. The otherworldly atmosphere of the second movement, *Reflect*, is evoked through bowed percussion instruments and a wandering, improvisatory piano solo. Stark and chilling, this music invites the audience to do as the composer suggests: “step back to reflect on [the world] in grief.” The closing allegro, *Act*, is a brief scherzo that once again features the piano and marimba in unison riffs accompanied by a jazzy drum set. The piece finishes with the nervous energy of a combo ending a late-night jam session in a smoke-filled club. Shapiro evokes an intriguing array of textures from the small ensemble of instruments, here expertly performed by pianist Teresa McCollough (who commissioned the piece), Thomas Burritt on marimba and vibraphone, and Peggy Benkeser on percussion. Winner of the Best Original Composition Award from Mu Phi Epsilon in 2003, this exciting three-movement work will no doubt find a wide audience in the coming years.

The performance of *Bioplasm* by the Los Angeles Flute Quartet (Colleen Carroll, Eileen Holt Helwig, Lisa-Maree Amos, and Peter Sheridan) is a virtuosic *tour de force* of balance and mood. Written for four performers who collectively play seven instruments and sing, the atmosphere oscillates between driving intensity and chant-like serenity. The composer explains that she wished to “create an organism from the four flutists that oozes across the sonic floor as a unified entity.” Judging by the growing number of performances that *Bioplasm* is receiving around the world, Shapiro has succeeded in creating a living “organism” that is indeed taking on a life of its own.

The reviewer looks forward to experiencing a live performance of *Slipping*, the first track on the disc. This “world tour for anyone with attention deficit disorder” will leave listeners marveling again at Shapiro's ability to conjure an astonishing kaleidoscope of sound from the simplest, most unexpected means. To imagine *Slipping*, picture Zorba the Greek drinking a piña colada and dancing a tango to the accompaniment of a Cuban band in a Japanese restaurant—and for good measure throw in a passing tribute to Elvis! Violinist Robin Lorentz, harpsichordist Kathleen McIntosh, and percussionist Dan Morris perform with obvious relish and somehow manage not to laugh out loud (a reaction Shapiro's riotously eclectic score openly invites).

The shorter pieces on the disc are no less musically substantial than the larger works and would be welcome additions to any concert program. *For My Father*, movingly played by pianist Susanne Kessel, was originally a movement from *Piano Suite No. 1: The Resonance of Childhood*. The composer wrote of the haunting score, "As some notes fall downward and others struggle against the decline, the music reflects my experience of watching a brilliant and beloved parent's irreversible descent into dementia." Though only at the midway point of the recording, the listener may wish to pause the disc after experiencing this austere, deeply personal statement of loss.

*Phos Hilaron*, loosely translated as "Gladdening Light," takes its title from a Christian hymn dating to the third century that was originally sung in early evening when lamps were first lighted. The only section on this recording from the six-movement *Evensong Suite*, the composer notes that this luminous music "celebrates the serenity and beauty of the setting sun." Riding a pulsing wave of piano chords, a trio of wind instruments spins a fabric of meditative sound that culminates in a flash of brilliant color, like a flame coming to vivid life at dusk. Brice Martin, flute; Charles Boito, clarinet; Carolyn Beck, bassoon; and Frank Basile, piano, collectively deliver a sensitive, evocative account.

In *Music for Two Big Instruments*, Shapiro presents the partnership of a tuba player and pianist with "two contrasting themes, one up-tempo and the other nearly a jazz ballad, to showcase how beautiful and diverse this great instrument really is." This highly attractive, compact piece in ABA form is a noteworthy addition to a repertoire sorely in need of serious works for this pairing. Alan Baer's performance on the tuba is

notable for a warm sound and energy to spare in the work's fast sections; pianist Bradley Haag provides lively, solid support.

Finally, Leslie Lashinsky, contrabassoon; Dan Morris, percussion; and Alex Shapiro, electronic track, bring the menacing *Deep* to life. Inspired by "the depths of the translucent sea," the contrabassoon rises out of an ominous pool of threatening sounds like an ancient creature emerging from the depths of the water. In the middle section, flashes from rolled cymbals and high electronic sounds suggest shards of sunlight penetrating the ocean's surface. Despite a momentary ascent, the bassoon finally plunges again into the silence of the darkness and cold. This intriguing soundscape brings the disc to a brooding conclusion.

Considered as a whole, this outstanding recording presents an engaging collection of pieces that consistently demonstrate the composer's expert craftsmanship and clearly defined voice. Never rambling, Shapiro packs telling emotional explorations into concise formal structures that allow the audience to savor every moment. *Notes from the Kelp* is highly recommended not only as an enjoyable and varied listening experience, but also as a source of accessible and important new works by one of the most gifted composers active today.

*Andrew Adams is assistant professor of piano at Western Carolina University in North Carolina. With a doctorate in piano performance from the University of Colorado, he holds a bachelor's in piano from the Kansas City Conservatory and a master's in vocal coaching and accompanying from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Adams serves on the editorial board of The Journal of Singing, the official journal of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, and has also published articles in The Journal of Singing, The American Music Teacher, and The North Carolina Music Educator.*

## New and Recommended Compact Discs

### **Ann Millikan: *Ballad Nocturne***

*Ballad Nocturne, Trilhas De Sombra, Landing Inside the Inside of an Animal*. Bulgarian National Radio Symphony Orchestra, Grigor Palikarov, conductor; Emanuele Arciuli, piano. Innova 713

As a former jazz pianist turned classical composer, Ann Millikan unites these two worlds in the title cut, *Ballad Nocturne*, featuring renowned Italian pianist Emanuele Arciuli: a marriage of jazz ballad and classical nocturne. *Trilhas de Sombra*, based on a story by the composer, is a spirited three-movement work that takes the listener on Kira's journey into another world, the Snow World. Powerful and fierce, *Landing Inside the Inside of an Animal* features lush textures in which a swirling storm dissipates into dark and turbulent layers.

### **Tsippi Fleischer – *Lieder***

*Lieder* and other works in English, German, French, Russian, Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic, and Yiddish. Tölzber Knabenchor, Gerhard Schmidt-Gaden, conductor; Oper Köln. Vienna Modern Masters VMM 1060 (two compact discs).

The album will be reviewed in the fall issue of the *Journal of the IAWM*.

### **VMM Honors Soprano Marni Nixon's 80th Birthday**

*Music from Six Continents*, 2010 Series, VMM 3061

Just in time for the eminent American soprano Marni Nixon's 80th birthday, Vienna Modern Masters announces the release of her recording of Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, op. 21, with conductor Charles Prince. Also on the CD are Gregory Yasinitsky's *Magic* and *Concertino for Flute and Orchestra* with soloist Ann Marie Yasinitsky and Jeffrey Jacob's *Symphony No. 3* performed by the London Symphony orchestra. In addition to dubbing the singing voices of Audrey Hepburn, Deborah Kerr, Natalie Wood, Marilyn Monroe, and many other film stars, Marni Nixon has performed widely in opera, symphony, and oratorio. Her Grammy-nominated recordings include works by Boulez, Villa-Lobos, Ives, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Copland, with conductors such as Von Beinum, Wallenstein, Previn, Mehta, Stravinsky, Stokowski, and Bernstein. In the 66 years of Marni Nixon's singing career, she has touched countless listeners, and brings the same freshness and sensitivity of interpretation to the eerie dreamscapes of *Pierrot* as she once did to the escapades of Eliza Doolittle.

*Moods: Piano Music of American Women Composers*

Music of Marilyn Ziffrin, Elizabeth Bell, Rami Levin, and Rain Worthington. Max Lifchitz, piano.  
North/South Recordings 1049 (2008)

DONNA MOORE KING

*Moods* is a release of first recordings composed (or revised) in the 1990s and during the first decade of the twenty-first century. The voices are contemporary, the styles diverse, the recording thoughtfully arranged, and the playing both energetic and sensitive. The first part of the CD is a series of three multi-movement works—two by Marilyn J. Ziffrin and one by Elizabeth Bell. While each of these pieces has its own character, all are tightly constructed with relatively short movements and accessible melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic figures. The second and slightly longer part of the CD consists of four single-movement works by Rain Worthington which are introspective and often almost improvisatory in character. At the midpoint of the recording is Rami Levin's *Passages*, a single-movement *tour de force* for the piano that is neither as traditionally formed as the short movements of Ziffrin and Bell nor as loosely-constructed as the thoughtful wanderings of Rain Worthington.

Of *Moods*, Ziffrin says that "it is up to the listener to identify his or her mood for each piece" (liner notes). This is a very accessible work, and the listener should have no difficulty responding to her rich vocabulary of melodic and harmonic writing. The first two movements tend toward Romanticism, with the second having an almost Impressionist character. Even in the fast third movement where rhythms seem to dominate, interesting melodic turns (based on a minor third) infuse the writing.

The liner notes (which are quite good) explain that Ziffrin's *Piano Sonata* was a foray into writing longer forms at the encouragement of a colleague. The *Sonata* is not, however, particularly expansive, and with the whole at just under nine minutes, each of the three movements is fairly short and compact. Ziffrin claims "jazz influences" for the second and third movements, and "bluesy" is, in fact, the word that appeared most frequently in my first listening notes for all three movements. The jazz-influenced chords and syncopated rhythms often give this piece a "Gershwin-esque" feel, and I found the slow movement occasionally reminiscent of that composer's second piano *Prelude*. More than the chords and rhythms, however, I was struck by the wonderful lyric writing throughout the work. In both of Ziffrin's works, I was impressed with the composer's ability to merge accessible lyric writing with the language of modern composition.

The final multi-movement work on the disc is Elizabeth Bell's *Aricebo Sonata*, a traditionally structured sonata in four short movements. The composition of this work spans a half-century; Bell notes that the first movement was based on sketches originally made in the 1950s, and the slow second movement was composed when the work was revised in 2005. In spite of the time span, the rhythmic and melodic

writing is coherently structured throughout, and the final movement (*Allegro appassionata*) offers a surprise of satisfying, rich chords. Mr. Lifchitz records it here to honor the composer on her eightieth birthday.

Rami Levin's *Passages* is at the mid-point of the disc; Levin explains that this was a commissioned work surrounding dual events of a child entering the world and a child leaving home. This contrast is echoed in the contrast of the augmented and perfect fourths of the melodic material and in the contrast of lyric and more rhythmic sections. While *Passages* has introspective moments, the intensity of rhythmic patterns, the patterns of repeated notes, and the movement of full chords provide an exciting centerpiece.

Four of Rain Worthington's works conclude the recording, and in many ways, these are the most challenging of the disc. The composer offers insight into each piece in the liner notes. These struck me as very personal, and as I explored Ms. Worthington's website, her approach to offering her works for performance also struck me as very personal. Her

## New and Recommended Book

**Karin Pendle and Melinda Boyd: *Women in Music: A Research and Information Guide***

Routledge, May 2010. Hardback, 912 pages, \$150.  
ISBN: 978-0-415-99420-0

*Women in Music: A Research and Information Guide* is an annotated bibliography emerging from more than twenty-five years of feminist scholarship on music. This book testifies to the great variety of subjects and approaches represented in over two decades of published writings on women, their work, and the important roles that feminist outlooks have played in formerly male-oriented academic scholarship or journalistic musings on women and music. Table of Contents: 1. Reference Works, 2. Music Histories of Women, 3. Collections of Essays, 4. Feminist Methods and Viewpoints in Music, 5. Issues of Sexuality, 6. Music Education and Training, 7. Careers in Music, 8. Women's Financial Support of Music and Musicians, 9. Historical Periods, 10. Ethnomusicology, 11. Countries and Geographical Areas, 12. Music for Stage and Film, 13. Women in Rock and Pop, 14. Women in Blues and Jazz, 15. Women in Country, Folk, and Gospel, 16. Individuals, 17. Two or More Individuals, 18. Introduction to the Indexes, 19. Index of Names, 20. Index of Authors, Editors, and Translators, 21. Index of Subjects.

Karin Pendle has taught at Oberlin College, the University of Western Ontario (London), and the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati, from which she retired in 2004. Melinda Boyd is Assistant Professor of Music History at the University of Northern Iowa. Her research focuses on women composers and performers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

performances in small concert halls, clubs, and arts venues, where she has close relationships with sponsors and audiences might, I suspect, communicate these pieces more intimately and immediately than a recording.

*Hourglass* and *Tangents*, the first two of Worthington's pieces, explore ideas related to the passage of time. For her introspective style, Ms. Worthington seems to favor the exploration of isolated musical elements or patterns. In *Hourglass*, the tritone is prominent, and the movement up an augmented fourth, then down a half-step becomes a unifying element in the composition. *Tangents* has a more consistent rhythm, largely in triple meter, but once again intervallic exploration dominates melodic ideas. Ms. Worthington claims minimalist influences, and the various movements of major, minor, and augmented seconds (or minor thirds) certainly echo the melodic writing of minimalist styles. At more than ten minutes, *Tangents* is the longest single movement on the disc, and I found it the most difficult to follow; however, thinking programmatically, Worthington's lengthy pursuit of rhythmic and melodic ideas with considerable straying from them is perhaps the point.

The last two pieces, *Dark Dreams* and *Always Almost*, become even more introspective. *Dark Dreams* is marked by repeated chords in the left hand—near the beginning almost a pedal point, more intense and ostinato-like toward the end. *Always Almost* provides the most lyric writing of these four pieces; the language is decidedly contemporary, and lovely, long right-hand phrases sing over long, quiet chords in the left-hand accompaniment. After the three challenging works that precede it, *Always Almost* is delightfully accessible and provides a quiet, thoughtful close to a very satisfying disc.

Lifchitz explains in the liner notes that great care has been taken to preserve the ambiance of the concert hall, and he goes so far as to recommend an optimal listening volume (moderate). These are not idle comments. At an appropriately moderate volume for my particular device and speakers, the sound was clear and resonant with a wonderful range of colors. At volumes too low or high, I found the sound alternately thin or abrasive. In short, a few seconds carefully adjusting the volume is time well spent. The sound level is very consistent across the recording, so there is no need to constantly readjust.

A champion of new music, Mr. Lifchitz's playing is clear and vital, and the sound is pleasing throughout. One of his gifts to the project is the attention to each composer's style. In Ziffrin's music, for example, Lifchitz voices melodic elements clearly and shapes them beautifully. To Elizabeth Bell's *Aricebo Sonata*, he brings consistent rhythmic vitality—to the spirited opening movement, the humor of the *Allegretto*, and the great romantic chords of the final *Allegro*. While Lifchitz is obviously attentive to each composer's voice, the elements are never labored or forced, and listening to these pieces is really a pleasure.

*Donna Moore King teaches piano, music in general studies, and freshman writing seminar at Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee. She is also the university carillonneur.*

## *Songs of Forgotten Women*

Songs by Adela Tindal Maddison, Giulia Karin Recli, Mathilde Kralik von Meyrswalden, and Berta Frensel Wegener-Koopman. Julie Cross, mezzo-soprano; Susan McDaniel, piano. Audio for the Arts (2009)

KIMBERLY GREENE

In an unprecedented and decisive *coup de maître*, *Songs of Forgotten Women* (2009) rescues the musical legacy of four exceptional nineteenth- and twentieth-century European women composers from obscurity. The rare musical collaboration of new music champion and assistant professor of voice at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Julie Cross, and pianist Susan McDaniel of Linfield College render a diverse assortment of vocal compositions by the Irish composer Adela Tindal Maddison (1866-1929), the Italian composer Giulia Karin Recli (1890-1970), the Austrian composer Mathilde Kralik von Meyrswalden (1857-1944), and the Dutch composer Berta Frensel Wegener-Koopman (1874-1953). Astutely aware of the historical significance of their work, both artists deliver committed, meticulous, and evocative performances that exemplify the aesthetic character of each composition. *Songs of Forgotten Women* was funded through a 2008-2009 University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Grant for Entrepreneurial Activity and Research.

Steeped in mystery, with reports of the abandonment of two children for a brief, yet tumultuous liaison with Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924), Adela Maddison (née Tindal), frequented the Salons throughout *fin de siècle* Europe, performing her twenty known published songs and *melodies* until the beginning of World War I. Her opera *Talisman* premiered in Leipzig at the Stadttheater in 1890 to wide-spread critical acclaim. Of the seven selections included in this recording, *Hiver* offers a musical correspondence to the images created by French symbolist poet Albert Samain (1858-1900). Suspended by a lyrical barrage of arpeggiated figurations, the vocal line evokes images such as the weeping white tears of snow. Cross's extremely resonant mezzo-soprano voice provides a stark contrast to the chilly scenes that permeate the text, while pianist McDaniel's interpretation becomes deeply embedded in the musical fabric of the setting.

In a brief journey into the then-fashionable French Orientalism, this recording includes the stunning lament *Tears* by Tang Dynasty poet Wang-Seng-Ju (465-522). Integrating a sophisticated *mélange* of pentatonic and chromatic coloring, the song foreshadows techniques yet to be implemented by the avant garde of the coming century. This sorrowful and refined sojourn into the tonal world of Chinese culture stands as one of the composer's finest creations. Although Maddison's compositions reflect the persuasive influence of both Fauré and Claude Debussy in their delicate tonal imagery and the absence of traditional developmental harmonic progressions, her style exceeds their subtlety due to its leaning towards the declamatory and the passionate, a characteristic of late-Romanticism.

The selected song repertoire of Milanese composer and music critic Giulia Karin Recli combines a highly-developed

lyricism with a sense of the dramatic. A student of renowned composer Ildebrando Pizzetti (1880-1968) and recognized operatic conductor Victor Sabata (1892-1967), Recli composed symphonic poems and chamber works, as well as over 200 solo and choral compositions. This recording includes three of Recli's settings to the poetry of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), with another to a text by the modernist poet Alberto Musatti (1882-1960). Although the quiet profundity of the musical vignettes *Canta il Viadante nella Notte* (The Wanderer's Night Song) and *Calma di Mare* (Calm at Sea) are memorable, the luxuriant Italianate style of *Canto di Mari* (Song of the Sea) represents a novel and unexpected approach to Goethe's verses. This lovely strophic song captures the listener with its almost childlike simplicity and its undulating accompaniment. However, it is the character and exuberance of the vocal line that delights and surprises.

Austrian composer Mathilde Kralik von Meyrswalden was fortunate to study piano and counterpoint with Julius Epstein (1832-1926) and Anton Bruckner (1824-1896), respectively. After entering the Vienna Conservatory in 1876, she studied harmony, counterpoint, and composition with Franz Krenn (1816-1897). A prolific composer, Meyrswalden's musical output includes operas, staged choral pieces, sacred compositions for soloist and chorus, chamber and instrumental pieces, as well as lieder settings of the texts of over sixty different poets. The lieder settings to the poems of Irene Zoepf (fl. ca. 1898) are featured in this recording. Meyrswalden imbues her music with appealing gestures that conform to the stylistic characteristics of the late-Romantic *hausmusikalische Lied*. Each selection exudes the longing and near desperation of the era through powerful and dramatic vocal lines, which are proclaimed with an equal passion in the piano. In *Rosen*, the exclamatory musical performances of Cross and McDaniel reach their pinnacle.

The recording closes with the lieder of Dutch composer Berta Frensel Wegener-Koopman (1874-1953). Wegener-Koopman studied piano and composition at the conservatory in Amsterdam and afterwards with composer and conductor Bernard Zweers (1854-1924). During her lifetime, her lieder compositions were regarded as exhibiting the characteristics of the finest *Kunstlieder* of the period. Of the eight lieder presented in this recording, *Das sterbende Kind* depicts a dark excursion into the depths of loss and suffering. The poem by Emanuel von Geibel (1815-1884) portrays a mother as she gazes at her dead child. Gravely, she observes that even in death the child seems to smile. The anguish of the mother is depicted musically through the juxtaposition of declamatory and lyrical vocal treatments which coincide perfectly with the text. A somber and simple chordal accompaniment corresponds both to the tragedy at hand and the youth of the child. Cross's mature performance, coupled with the beauty of her lower register, moves even the most jaded heart.

The merits of *Songs of Forgotten Women* (2009) cannot be overstated. This recording stands as a vital addition to the discipline and as a remarkable resource for performers eager to expand their repertoire beyond the confines of the traditional Western canon.

Kimberly Greene is completing her PhD in musicology at Claremont Graduate University, CA. Currently, she serves as a part-time instructor of music history at California State University, Fullerton and is a recipient of the Walker Parker Memorial Endowment (CGU, 2008). She holds a master's degree in music history and literature from CSUF, with additional degrees in German Studies, French, and Business Administration.

### Music of Betty Beath

Margaret Schindler (soprano), Betty Beath (piano),  
The Camerata of St. John's conducted by Brendan Joyce,  
Susan Lorette Dunn (soprano), Patricia Pollett (viola),  
Colin Spiers (piano), Janet Delpratt (soprano),  
The Queensland Symphony Orchestra conducted by  
Richard Mills. Wirripang, Wirr 024 (2009)

### JULIE CROSS

This recording is an exquisite cameo of Betty Beath's music, with a cornucopia of talented performers born or based in Queensland, Australia. Beath studied at the Queensland and Sydney Conservatoriums, lived in Papua in her early twenties, and later researched the culture of Java and Bali with her husband through a 1974 fellowship from the Australia Council. She considers herself deeply influenced by her homeland as well as her years in Asia. She has taught at St. Margaret's Anglican Girls' School, and later at the Queensland Conservatorium, promoting newly commissioned works of fellow Australian composers through her Festivals of Australian Music in Brisbane.

In the first set, poet Anne Michaels' *Fugitive Pieces* are adapted into a song cycle entitled *Towards the Psalms*, featuring soprano Margaret Schindler with Beath at the piano. Each piece is poignantly portrayed and expertly performed by both the composer and the singer. The vocal line is independent and complex yet accessible, and the piano part maintains a unique voice with textually referential motives.

*Lament for Kosovo*, *Adagio for Strings*, performed and recorded live in 2008 by the Camerata of St. John, is a moving piece that has been widely performed around the world. Originally composed for mandolin ensemble, this edition for string orchestra is especially effective. The *Lament* is full of beauty fraught with dissonance, long phrases and sustained chords, with a coda that resolves on a major chord, offering a sense of hope for the future. Each phrase is beautifully contoured throughout, and the string orchestra performs with near-impeccable balance as if it were one complex instrument.

The delightful song cycle *In This Garden* was written for Beath's teacher, Janet Delpratt, with poetry by Beath's husband, David Cox. Each piece is a vignette of the Beath-Cox garden: "Butterflies," "Spider," "Snail," "Worm" and "Sparrow." Susan Lorette Dunn performs the gentle songs with care and whimsy. The accompaniment alternates between scene-setting independence and right hand unison with the vocal line. Many accented words are "painted" with delicate attention—ascending right hand flourishes at the butterflies' "erratic flight," descending slow fifths as the "snail undulates," and a major-seventh drop in the vocal line followed by piano mimicry for the sparrow, known as "snoopy-



snoop.” This song cycle has a dreamy tone that provides a wonderful contrast to the intensity of the *Lament for Kosovo*.

Violist Patricia Pollett and pianist Colin Spiers recorded *From a Quiet Place* for the Tall Poppies CD, *Still Life*, in 1999. Beath wrote this three-movement piece with an inner intuitive approach, and was influenced by “the vibrating, infinitely sweet, sometimes robust and dynamic sounds” of Nepalese singing bowls. The first movement begins with a slow duet between piano and viola. The singing bowl theme is introduced with a long, emotionally varied second movement, reminiscent of the slow resonance and overtones of the larger bowls. The exuberant third movement’s conclusion incorporates strong overtones with repetitive intervals and a joyful, peppy tempo. The viola and piano blend marvelously, with independent phrasing that highlights each instrument in tandem throughout.

Queensland Conservatorium voice professor Janet Delpratt performed the *River Songs* with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra for an Australian Broadcasting Corporation “Meet the Composer” concert in 1992, and the live performance is included on this CD. Delpratt is a central figure in this recording, as she taught Beath, Schindler, and Dunn in their college years. Delpratt’s exquisite voice is at home in these gorgeous songs, which depict the Brisbane River (poet Jena Woodhouse and Beath live on opposite banks). In “River-Mother, River-Child” and “Boy and the River,” the beautiful sweeping lines and generous phrasing paint the text with accuracy while adding a distinctive musical perspective. Dissonances in the winds set the sinister tone of the “River Nocturne” before the words have begun, and sweeping winds depict the “eye of Cyclops” at the end of the piece. “Swift Tide” completes the cycle with shimmering string motives depicting the waves and smell of the wind. It was a thrill to experience Delpratt’s voice, which maintains impeccable technique through soaring high tessituras. The Queensland Symphony Orchestra supported Delpratt, thanks to Beath’s singer-sensitive compositional style. The balance was perfect, and the texture was not too thick in the lower ranges of Delpratt’s voice. This was a thoroughly impressive performance in every aspect.

Beath performs *Let’s Dance* and *A Loving Embrace* from her *Encounters*, a series of piano solos. *Let’s Dance* is a whimsical flirtation between right and left hands that leaves the listener smiling. Beath describes *A Loving Embrace* as “a suitable postlude.” This stunning and poignant piece was written in memory of Australian musician Miriam Hyde. *Merindu Bali...Bali Yearning* is a piano solo written for the victims of the 2002 terrorist attack in Bali. Beath successfully incorporates harmonies reminiscent of Balinese music in her own cultural idiom with a melancholy but hopeful tone.

The warm soprano voice of Susan Lorette Dunn returns for the final two pieces on the disc, *Nawang Wulan*, *Guardian of Earth and Rice* and *Genesis*. Both feature words by Javanese poet Subagio Sastrowardyo; the first is sung in Javanese and the second in English translation. Beath’s accompaniments mimic traditional Indonesian harmonies reminiscent of a gamelan ensemble, while Dunn’s rendering

of the unique melodies communicate each legend with great effectiveness.

Throughout this delightful disc, instrumental and vocal selections alternate for contrast. Betty Beath’s music is enjoyable and the program she presents is effectively varied.

*Julie Cross is assistant professor of voice at the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater, and serves as treasurer of the IAWM. Two of her recent recitals were featured on Wisconsin Public Radio’s “Sunday Afternoon Live” from the Chazen series. Her newly-released compact disc, “Songs of Forgotten Women,” is reviewed in this issue.*

### *Celestial Dreamscape: A Century of Music for the Clarinet*

Scott Locke, clarinet, with Stephanie Rea, flute.

Produced by Kristine Burns and Colby Leider.

Everglade Records EVG08-04 (2009). This review

focuses on music by Deborah Kavash and Kristine Burns.

The CD also contains *Canyon Music* by John Steffa, *Raga*

*Music* by John Mayer, *Three Pieces* by Igor Stravinsky,

*Reversible Jackets* for clarinet and flute by Dan Welcher,

and *Rhapsody* by Willson Osborne.

PAMELA J. MARSHALL

Soprano and composer Deborah Kavash, Professor of Music Theory/Composition and Voice at California State University, Stanislaus, has done extensive work exploring the musical resources of the human voice and was a founding member of the Extended Vocal Techniques Ensemble in San Diego. Kavash’s *Celestial Dreamscape* (1997), for solo clarinet, has two movements, each “inspired by imagery of heavenly bodies.” The first, “a stillness of moondrift,” begins hauntingly with a cell of notes that morphs into ever-changing phrases. The music has hints of soft multiphonics and moves gently and comfortably through all the clarinet’s registers. The first of clarinetist Scott Locke’s smooth tone-bending occurs midway through the brief movement, as the calm music takes on a knife’s edge of emotion when he crescendos and tugs a shrill high note down a half-step. The second movement, “a sparkle of starlight,” offers a sudden contrast, jarring the listener, a bit rudely, out of the stillness created in movement one. A five-note motive with distinctive articulation becomes a miniature ritornello, giving the fast, frantic music its form. A captivating, memorable moment occurs when the clarinetist alternates between a note and its microtonal inflection in a rhythmic, bending trill. The frantic quality is constant, even though phrases are short, with irregular but rhythmic pauses. As the music approaches the end, a slightly more deliberate pace in an upward swirl of notes signifies the coda. This movement with its irregular rhythms and relentless motion made for breathless listening.

Intermedia artist Kristine H. Burns is an educator and author as well as a composer. Her book, *Women and Music in the US since 1900: An Encyclopedia*, published by Greenwood in 2002, has won recognition and awards as a must-have reference book. Burns’ *Atanos I* (1993) for clarinet and Disklavier is stylistically unique on this CD. The

Disklavier part is dramatic and complex, beyond the capabilities of an individual performer at a piano keyboard. Burns wrote this reply when I asked her about the “playability” of the part:

The instrument [Disklavier] was very new at the time I composed the piece, and I wanted to write something that could be considered idiomatic of that instrument—something largely unplayable by a live human being. There are the equivalent of nine-finger trills, clusters that take up a good bit of the keyboard.... While there are certainly portions that could be played by a single human accompanist, the vast majority of material is playable only through automation.

The electronic edge to the Disklavier’s piano tone blends subtly with the clarinet, creating interesting, complex timbres. In the middle of the piece, the clarinet’s loud sustained flutter-tongued notes take on a machine-like quality, complementing the Disklavier’s sound.

It took a while for this piece to grow on me. It is filled with extreme exclamations, rough gestures, shrill high notes, and great dynamic contrasts. The unnaturally sudden and extreme changes in volume are something the clarinet does better than almost any other instrument, and Locke’s dynamic control was complemented by the same extreme contrasts from the Disklavier. The liner notes describe this piece as an exploration of “the vestigial existence of sonata form in the 20th century.” As a listener, I was unaware of this formal reference; the piece seemed more an intense survey of agitation and outbursts, full of twentieth-century angst. The final shrill high note in the clarinet gives the effect of a cry of triumph against the last keyboard flourish.

Scott Locke’s clarinet playing is agile, expressive, aggressive, and shrill when appropriate, full of contrasts, with adept execution of tone-bending, flutter tonguing, and occasional multiphonics. I have heard recordings in which the clarinet has a more velvety and warmer tone quality, and I sometimes cringed at the shrill, high notes in this performance, but Locke very capably delivered what the composers asked for. I appreciated the occasional rough-edged slur, the aggressively explosive low notes, and the ultra-smooth and intense tone bending. I also appreciated hearing selections representing almost the entire twentieth century. There were more connections and similarities among the selected pieces than stylistic evolution.

*Pamela J. Marshall is an independent composer and horn player in Lexington, MA. She has written for chamber ensembles, orchestra, solo voice, chorus, synthesizers, and mandolin, including commissions from South Beach Chamber Ensemble of Miami, The Master Singers of Lexington, Green Mountain Youth Symphony, and Assabet Valley Mastersingers. She leads composing and improvisation workshops and records concerts and nature soundscapes. Her music is available on the web at Spindrift Music Company ([www.spindrift.com](http://www.spindrift.com)).*

### Lita Grier: *Songs from Spoon River*

Michelle Areyzaga and Elizabeth Norman (soprano); Scott Ramsay (tenor); Alexander Tall, Levi Hernandez, and Robert Sims (baritone); Welz Kauffman and William Billingham (piano); Anne Bach (oboe); Tina Laughlin (percussion); Chicago Children’s Choir, Josephine Lee, conductor. Cedille Records CDL 112 (2009)

JAMIE REIMER

For fans of contemporary American art song, the new recording of songs by Lita Grier is a must-hear. Following a thirty-year hiatus, Grier’s compositional career has blossomed with new life, resulting in no less than five world premiere recordings on this disc. Sung by rising vocalists and accompanied by superb pianists, Grier’s songs come to vibrant life. The Chicago Children’s Choir, conducted by Josephine Lee, performs the final group of songs, *Reflections of a Peacemaker*. This disc is representative of Grier’s ability to create a harmonic environment that enhances the interpretation of the text. Even the most dissonant moments add to the expressive nature of these songs, never detracting from the declamation of the text. Her piano accompaniments are beautifully supportive of the voice, often weaving thoughtful counter melodies around the vocal line.

The set of five *Songs for Children* is first on the disc. Although they were composed over a thirty-seven-year period, they are united by a youthful freshness and lightness of approach. The piano creates an aural environment for each song, from rolling waves in “The Seashell, Someone” to chirping birds in “The Bluebird.” Soprano Michelle Areyzaga quickly substantiates her fine reputation as a song recitalist and chamber musician through a translucent tone that shimmers across the wide range of these songs. She communicates text particularly well in a high tessitura, whether singing over spare accompaniment or at the dramatic climax of the cycle. The tone color is well chosen, reflecting the simplicity of the poetry but not neglecting the lush sounds audiences have come to expect from her singing. Welz Kauffman provides a dramatic and theatrical accompaniment for each song and balances the needs of the voice beautifully.

*Sneezles* (1972) is an innovative chamber work for soprano, oboe, piano, and percussion based on a text from A.A. Milne’s collection *Now We are Six*. It is the only work from Grier’s compositional hiatus. Areyzaga’s characterizations of Christopher Robin and the doctor enhance this charming childhood story. A particularly intriguing element of the work is its use of percussion, admirably performed by Tina Laughlin.

The set of five *Songs from A Shropshire Lad* (1955) is one of Grier’s earliest works, written while still in her teens. Robert Sims’ warm baritone voice is a perfect choice for these songs. Unfortunately, the continuity of the cycle is interrupted by abrupt starts on several tracks, giving the impression that the listener has missed the first one or two notes of the song, and this is not the only time the problem occurs on the disc.

Grier composed two *Songs from Emily Dickinson* during her student days at UCLA. The musical and emotional maturity of these songs presage Grier’s success as a composer

of vocal works. Areyzaga's warm and light approach carries one away into the world of the poet. The climax of "I Cannot Live With You" nearly escapes the soprano, as her emotional portrayal taxes her highest pitches, but that moment does not negate the beauty of the sounds that precede it. Equally dramatic is "I Taste a Liquor Never Brewed," which demands superb musical and technical skill from the singer and the pianist in its watercolor musical context.

The song cycle *Songs from Spoon River* is the centerpiece of this disc and is the product of three separate commissions from Ravinia Festival CEO Welz Kauffman for the Steans Institute for Young Artists. The first four songs and the finale were commissioned in 2004; song five, "Anne Rutledge," was added in 2009 in commemoration of the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth. The cycle requires exceptional singing and characterization from a high soprano, lyric or mezzo-soprano, tenor, and baritone. With poetry from Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*, the listener is introduced to the residents of the cemetery and their stories. Of the ten songs, three stand out as the most effectively communicated: "Sarah Brown," sung by Areyzaga in a lush and haunting performance; "Margaret Fuller Slack," sung bitterly and beautifully by Elizabeth Norman; and "Anne Rutledge," featuring the entire ensemble. As in *A Shropshire Lad*, moments of abrupt transition occur between tracks and disturb the dramatic arc of the cycle.

*Reflections of a Peacemaker* was commissioned by the Chicago Children's Choir to poetry by Mattie J.T. Stepanek. Stepanek's brief life ended in 2004, but his poetry has been celebrated for its wisdom, courage, and beauty. Grier effectively sets these texts with sparkling harmonies and soaring melodies, capturing the excitement and enthusiasm of children while paying homage to the profundity of Stepanek's thoughts. These songs serve as a lovely bookend to a recording that reaches into the depth of human experience as seen by the living and the dead.

*Dr. Jamie Reimer is active in the field of contemporary American art song with performances and publications of the music of African American composer Robert Owens. She is a frequent recitalist and oratorio performer and is a member of the voice faculty at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln.*

### Remembered Voices

Works by Pantcho Vladiguerov, Grigoras Dinicu, Gena Branscombe, Violet Archer, Patrick Cardy, and Mary Gardiner. Ralitsa Tcholakova (violin) and Elaine Keillor (piano). Carleton Music CSCD-1012 (2008)

SCOTT LOCKE

*Remembered Voices*, featuring violinist Ralitsa Tcholakova and pianist Elaine Keillor, presents a somewhat unusual program at first glance, but the liner notes reveal a number of connective threads neatly tying the program and artists together. Tcholakova is a Canadian musician with roots in Bulgaria (she holds a master's degree from the State Academy of Music in Bulgaria). She has performed as soloist with orchestras and at chamber music series throughout the world.

Keillor, also Canadian, is an internationally known concert pianist and a Distinguished Research Professor Emerita of Carleton University, Ottawa with numerous recordings to her credit as both soloist and collaborative pianist. The disc features works by three Canadian-born women composers: Violet Archer, Mary Gardiner, and Gena Branscombe; the latter spent most of her life in the United States. Of the male composers, Patrick Cardy is Canadian.

The disc's opening half features works of a lighter nature in gypsy style, either composed or arranged by Pantcho Vladiguerov (1899-1978). *Chant* is Vladiguerov's own arrangement for violin and piano, taken from his orchestral work *Suite Bulgare* of 1927. This melismatic music clearly wears its heart on its sleeve, alternating between passionate and lyrical statements. The work concludes with the chant melody in the left hand and delicate embroidery in the violin and piano right hand. *Rhapsody Vardar*, written a year later, features Bulgarian-infused idioms, and is named for a region and river no longer a part of Bulgaria. The opening of the work has stately homorhythmic phrases in a three plus two metric grouping, a characteristic rhythmic feature of Bulgarian music, and also features double stops on the violin. Double stops are, in fact, prominent throughout the piece, and are beautifully executed by Tcholakova. This section is followed by a brisk dance in 6/8 interjected with dramatic moments of rubato.

Vladiguerov's *Miniatures* was originally a collection written for solo piano. He arranged the *Humoresque* movement for violin and piano in 1934. This charming and teasing offering features upper register playing in both the violin and piano parts. Perhaps the most famous gypsy music on the disc is Vladiguerov's arrangement of the 1906 composition *Hora Staccato* by Grigoras Dinicu (1889-1949). This swaggering music features motoric patterns which show off the virtuosic skills of the performers.

The next three works are the heart of the disc: Gena Branscombe's (1881-1977) single-movement *Sonata in A minor* (1920) and two works by Violet Archer (1913-2000), *Fantasy* (1946) and *Prelude and Allegro* (1954). Branscombe's work is sectional and offers many mood changes, in part due to the frequent harmonic shifts between major and minor modes. After a rhapsodic introduction, three contrasting theme groups are presented and then repeated, giving the work a strong sense of cohesion. The first section presents a dark theme in the violin but soon shifts to a sunnier mood, while the second, a more stately section, is introduced by the piano and is followed by a noble, song-like melody in the violin. The third dance-like section is suffused with dotted-eighth/sixteenth-note rhythmic patterns.

Archer originally composed her *Fantasy* for clarinet and strings and arranged it for violin and piano in 1946. It begins with music that is at first glance languid, but has an underlying restless quality alluding melodically to Hebrew chanting. This is followed by a fast, canonic section that is more disjunct melodically and more biting harmonically. A climax in the piano featuring a rumbling tremolo in the left hand returns to the freer music of the opening.

Archer's *Prelude and Allegro* begins with a piano melody in the left hand and dissonant seconds in the right. After the dramatic entrance of the violin, the music meanders harmonically through dark territory until the opening of the *Allegro*. This section, in 6/8, is brilliant and features a dialogue of breathless perpetual motion between the two instruments, reminiscent of Quebecois fiddling. A more serious melody interrupts, and after some call-and-response exchanges returns to the original *Allegro* romp and finishes with a dramatic flourish. Both the tonal clashes of seconds in the introduction as well as the perpetual motion of the *Allegro* reflect the influence of Bartok, with whom Archer studied, and who helped to pique her interest in folk music.

The disc at this point takes a turn toward music more recently composed, and includes Patrick Cardy's *Liesel, Suse, Ilse, and Gerda* (1996) and Mary Gardiner's title track, *Remembered Voices: Song, Elegy, Dance* from (2002). Both works are neo-romantic in style and largely elegiac in feeling. Cardy's work is slow throughout and features phrases that are plaintive and haunting, and the concluding statement retreats like a whisper. He took his inspiration for the work from the memoirs of Gerda Weissmann-Klein, the only survivor of four teen-age Jewish friends who were taken prisoner by Nazi SS Guards and marched across Czechoslovakia.

Gardiner's work is based on the Canadian folksong from Newfoundland, "She's Like the Swallow." The open harmonies of violin double stops and piano pedal notes in *Song* evoke a viol consort. *Elegy* portrays unhappy love. A slow

march is presented in the piano while the violin provides commentary with either repeated notes or flurries of disjointed ones. *Dance* evokes a Newfoundland party and is in three-part form. It begins with a piano ostinato and the melodic interest remaining in the violin. In a rather quirky turn, the middle of this section presents music reminiscent of country fiddling. The opening material of *Dance* returns with a final nod to the fiddling music and a shout of "hey" at its conclusion.

Tcholakova and Keiller are wonderful collaborators who perform with sound musical chemistry. They present a polished, single-minded vision of the music and are able to create all the necessary moments of passion, lyricism, austerity, and dramatic climax. Tcholakova's intonation is excellent, and she possesses a rich and vibrant tone in the gypsy music, and one that is more subtle and intensive in the more serious works. Keiller plays with tremendous clarity and taste and never overpowers the violin. Although the program is a most unusual one, as is the cover art by Dimce Isailovski, it all somehow seems to work. These are voices worthy of remembering.

*Scott Locke is associate professor of music at Murray State University where he teaches clarinet, music history, and world music courses. He has just released his first solo CD, Celestial Dreamscape: A Century of Music for Clarinet on the Everglade label featuring two new works by women (reviewed in this issue). He is a member of the Commonwealth Clarinet Quartet and plays principal clarinet in the Paducah Symphony Orchestra.*

## IAWM NEWS

### Message from the President

HSIAO-LAN WANG

This is a great time to be a woman. This is an even better time to be a female musician. Today, we have many talented composers, performers, conductors, and scholars among us. Never before have women been able to join forces and unite as we can today, thanks to the advancement of technology. Never before have women been given the opportunity to have a growing number of role models in virtually every discipline in music. Never before have women been able to share the wealth of knowledge and expertise and networking with other women in a large community of individuals with genuine goodwill. Many of us are inspirational teachers or successful leaders of music organizations, and it is not hard to see how the next generation perceives the gradual change in demography in the music world, even if it takes some time and effort.

We at IAWM recognize the work it requires to promote women's music. The many tireless volunteers at IAWM have been busy at work. They donate their time and inject energy into new and existing projects that we know are important to women's musical life. The advancement of technology has made it possible for us to reach out to more individuals in different ways. In the past year, we have

- initiated an IAWM Facebook Page (currently 700 fans),
- started a blog,
- developed a profile on [www.last.fm](http://www.last.fm) to share recordings of our annual concerts online,
- added a web calendar for users to announce their events.

We know very well the power of the Internet, but we did not forget the importance of concert performances and events for members to interact face to face. The IAWM continues to sponsor a concert of chamber music by our members at the Festival of Women Composers at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, held this year in March.

The 2010 IAWM annual concert will take on a new direction and dimension: we will partner with Grame (centre national de création musicale, musique contemporaine) and the concert will be presented in Lyon, France in October. The same program will then receive multiple performances around the globe as part of our 2010 annual concert events. We are also expecting an exciting 2011 congress in beautiful Flagstaff, Arizona, hosted by Northern Arizona University and Flagstaff Symphony.

All of these activities are the fruit of labor and generosity by our wonderful volunteers and contributors. We could never have accomplished these projects without the support from you. I am extremely proud to be leading a group of selfless women at IAWM. We have big dreams. But we cannot do it without your support. Because you believe in what we do, we are able to spearhead new projects to promote members' music and provide performance and publication opportunities for our members.

Your **contribution** will provide us the financial strength we need to move forward. You may give by visiting [http://](http://www.iawm.org/donate.htm)

[www.iawm.org/donate.htm](http://www.iawm.org/donate.htm) or by sending a check to the following address. Make checks payable to IAWM. IAWM is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization. The full amount of your gift may be deductible for federal income tax purposes to the extent of U.S. laws.

Julie Cross, Treasurer of IAWM  
Music Department, CA2025  
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater  
800 W. Main St.  
Whitewater, WI 53190  
USA

## IAWM 2010 Annual Concert: Call for Works

Receipt Deadline: June 14, 2010

The International Alliance for Women in Music (IAWM) announces the Annual Call for Works by all IAWM members. We decided to focus purely on electronic media this year, and we will make certain the focus of our annual concert in future years covers a wide variety of instrumental forces. The IAWM Annual Concert 2010 will be held on October 22, 2010, 8 p.m., in the Musée des moulages de l'Université de Lyon II, Lyon, France, in conjunction with the Music Season 10/11 of Grame, National Center for Music Creation.

### Rules and Regulations

Entries for the IAWM Annual Concert must be received by 11:59 p.m. of June 14, 2010.

IAWM members (current IAWM members or those joining at the time of submission) of any age or nationality may submit works.

Works should be:

Category I: 2-channel fixed electroacoustic music without soloist or real-time electronics. —OR—

Category II: fixed video with 2-channel fixed electroacoustic music, without soloist or real-time electronics.

Each composer may submit one piece only.

Works must be under 15 minutes.

The results will be announced at the end of July.

The composers whose works have been selected are expected to attend and diffuse their own works in the concert. The rehearsal will be the morning of Friday, October 22, 2010. At this time, IAWM is unable to provide financial assistance for selected composers to attend the annual concert.

Please send the following materials by post to the address below:

1. For Category I, send two copies on playable CDs. For Category II, send two copies of the quicktime video file (DV PAL or H.264 formats, .avi, .mov) on DATA-DVD. Materials must be submitted ANONYMOUSLY. Only the title of the piece may appear on the CD and DVD.

—AND—

2. A sealed envelope containing your information sheet with the work's title, duration, year of composition,

composer's name, address, telephone, e-mail address, composer's nationality, brief bio, and program notes in French or English. On the outside of that envelope write the title of the piece ONLY.

Please submit all program information by e-mail as well to: [annualconcert@iawm.org](mailto:annualconcert@iawm.org).

The identical program of winning pieces will be played at a number of other locations around the globe, after the official 2010 annual concert in Lyon. Individuals interested in participating as one of the hosts for duplicate concerts should contact Annual Concert Chair Tao Yu directly. Concert hosts should have at least a stereo sound system as well as projection system for video works.

Tao Yu, Chair  
IAWM Annual Concert Committee  
31 rue Bouret  
75019  
Paris, France

### Associated Content: an Online Blog Source

I am a featured arts/entertainment contributor to Associated Content, an online blog source, and I am starting a new series on arts and the community. If you have or know of an arts-based charity or community project, please email me a small blurb about it and its website to: [spenayoung@gmail.com](mailto:spenayoung@gmail.com). Good examples could be inner city projects, fundraising concerts, educational projects, artist-in-residency programs, diversity programs, etc. I am especially interested in projects that help the poor and/or have a multicultural focus. The articles will be short and posted on my AC blog. Recent music articles include "A Music Pro's Guide to Managing a Music Career and Family," "Concepts of Time and Space in Relation to Contemporary Multimedia," and "Fun and Free Music and Dance Rhythm Games for the Classroom."  
*Sabrina Peña Young*

# Membership Report

Deborah Hayes, Membership Chair

Welcome to our new members! These forty-eight members joined after the last issue of the *Journal of the IAWM* went to press. Please encourage your colleagues, students, friends, and libraries to join.

Viarengo Alberto - Novara, Italy  
Edith Alonso - Madrid, Spain  
Lori Ardovino - Alabaster, Alabama, USA  
Carol Barnett - Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA  
Ylva Lund Bergner - Copenhagen, Denmark  
Kaja Bjorntvedt - London, England, UK  
Olivia Block - Chicago, Illinois, USA  
Andrea Brachfeld - Kendall Park, New Jersey, USA  
Annette Brosin - Victoria, British Columbia, Canada  
Nan Childress Orchard - Union, New Jersey, USA  
Eve Duncan - Templestowe Melbourne, Australia  
Melody Eötvös - Bloomington, Indiana, USA  
Susan Epstein Garcia - Miami, Florida, USA  
Josefin Falthin - Denton, Texas, USA  
Amy L. Fleming - Wheaton, Illinois, USA  
Christina Fuhrmann - Westfield Center, Ohio, USA  
Vivian Fung - Jackson Heights, New York, USA  
Deborah Greenblatt - Avoca, Nebraska, USA  
Anne Guzzo - Laramie, Wyoming, USA  
Cecilia Hamilton - Dallas, Texas, USA  
Valerie Heydorn - League City, Texas, USA  
Cynthia Hilts - Brooklyn, New York, USA

Micaela Hoppe - Amtervik, Sweden  
Tsai Yun (Judy) Huang - Urbana, Illinois, USA  
Marie Incontrera - Brooklyn, New York, USA  
Naomi L. Kagaya - Stevenson Ranch, California, USA  
Carol Kimball - Henderson, Nevada, USA  
Kari Kraakevik - Boulder, Colorado, USA  
Natalya M. Lainhart - Spokane, Washington, USA  
Lin-Ni Liao - Paris, France  
Miranda Liu - Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, USA  
Shay MacKay - McKinleyville, California, USA  
Sky S. Macklay - Decorah, Iowa, USA  
Jessie Marino - New York City, USA  
Kipyn Martin - Shepherdstown, West Virginia, USA  
Tricia Minty - San Clemente, California, USA  
Mary Moreno - New York City, USA  
Aya Nishina - Brooklyn, New York, USA  
Carolina Noguera Palau - Birmingham, England, UK  
Julia Moreno Perri - Houston, Texas, USA  
Leanna Primiani - Santa Monica, California, USA  
Mimi Rabson - Arlington, Massachusetts, USA  
Stephanie Smith - Stevenson Ranch, California, USA  
Nina Sofo - Brighton, North Melbourne, Victoria, Australia  
Marlise Stroebe - Battle Ground, Washington, USA  
Catherine Sullivan - Melbourne, Victoria, Australia  
Barbara Weber - Long Beach, New York, USA  
Jennifer Wilsey - Santa Rosa, California, USA

## IAWM Announcements

### The IAWM Has a Blog!

Once or twice a week, we will have a new post about women and music. Our inaugural bloggers represent a diverse slice of our membership. They include Jen Baker, a trombonist specializing in new music in New York City, who is writing about her experiences in the classroom; Susan Borwick, a musicologist, theorist, and composer teaching at Wake Forest University, who is writing about teaching “women and music” in a liberal arts setting; Eliška Čířková, a composer from Bratislava, Slovakia, who is writing about her experiences as a student at the Jazz Conservatory in Prague; Julie Cross, a soprano teaching voice, diction, and vocal literature at the University of Wisconsin, who is writing about how performers choose repertoire; Sally Macarthur, a senior lecturer in musicology at the University of Western Sydney, who is writing about feminist and poststructural theories; and Sabrina Peña Young, an intermedia composer teaching at Murray State University, who is writing about how technology impacts the composer.

Stop by the blog, currently at [iawm.wordpress.com](http://iawm.wordpress.com). And if you are interested in contributing a short series of posts to

the blog, please contact Carolyn Bremer, Blog Coordinator, at [cbremer@gmail.com](mailto:cbremer@gmail.com).

### Advertise in the Journal of the IAWM

Linda Dusman, chair

In our board meeting last fall, as we were brainstorming about generating more revenue for IAWM projects, we discussed trying to increase the number of ads in the Journal. As a benefit of membership, you can place an ad at half price! And if you are a member of any organizations that would benefit from the exposure the Journal can provide, please encourage them to take advantage of our inexpensive rates.

#### Guidelines

Ads should be camera-ready, in any kind of graphic file (jpg, tiff), including PDF files. Graphic files should be 300 resolution, saved at the highest quality, and not use rzw compression.

#### Ad sizes:

Full page ad: 7.5 (w) x 9.25 (h)

Half page (vertical): 3.75 (w) x 9.25 (h)

Half page (horizontal): 7.5 (w) x 4.625 (h)  
Quarter page: 3.75 (w) x 4.625 (h)

Ad prices:

Full page \$200 (members \$100)  
Half page \$100 (members \$50)  
Quarter page \$50 (members \$25)

**Deadline for the next issue: September 1, 2010**

## Visit the IAWM Website

We encourage you to visit the IAWM Website often at [www.iawm.org](http://www.iawm.org). You will find information about the organization, how to join or renew your membership, the listserv, concerts, congresses, competitions, opportunities, publications, awards, radio requests, and advocacy work. Under Resources,

you can search the archives for more than 220 articles from the IAWM, ICWM, AWC, and ILWC Journals. The site provides links to members' pages and to the IAWM Facebook. A Calendar of Events (<http://www.iawm.org/calendar.htm>), to which members can add their own events, is now available. If you need assistance, please contact our Webmaster, Stefanie Acevedo, at [stefanie@stefanieacevedo.com](mailto:stefanie@stefanieacevedo.com).

## Join the IAWM

Please encourage your colleagues and students to join the IAWM and ask your university library to subscribe to the *Journal of the IAWM*. To meet the goals of our organization, we need to continue to enlarge and strengthen our membership. For renewals and new memberships, please visit the IAWM Web page at [http://iawm.org/membership\\_joinUs.htm](http://iawm.org/membership_joinUs.htm).

## Members News

### Congratulations to Award Winners

**Judith Cloud**, composer and vocal studies professor at Northern Arizona University, was awarded first prize at the 2009 Sorel Medallion Choral Composition contest. *Anacreontics* (chorus and guitar) was performed by guitarist Ken Meyer and the Voices of Ascension, a premier United States choir. Cloud was one of three women finalists in the competition.

**Barbara Harbach's** *American Solstice* for flute, clarinet, violin, viola, cello, bass and piano was the winner of the Ohio-based Women in Music–Columbus Composition Competition. Visit them at <http://www.womeninmusiccolumbus.com/>. Musicians from the organization will perform the composition on April 18 as part of the Sundays at the Huntington (Recital Hall) series at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio.

### Maud Powell Publication

Violinists now have the opportunity to add considerably to their repertoire with the publication of *Maud Powell Favorites*, a major sheet music edition of forty-three unfamiliar masterworks and transcriptions for the violin plus a history of violin performance in America. Powell pioneered the violin recital in America, championed American composers, including the works of women and African-Americans. She premiered major concertos by Tchaikovsky, Sibelius, and Dvorak in America and left a performance legacy that endures today. Karen Shaffer, Maud Powell biographer and president of The Maud Powell Society for Music and Education, compiled the collection and wrote the introductory notes. She collaborated on the project with the internationally acclaimed violinist Rachel Barton Pine, who served as music advisor and editor. For more information or to order (\$115 plus shipping), visit The Maud Powell Society's website at [www.maudpowell.org](http://www.maudpowell.org).

**Jennifer Higdon's** Percussion Concerto won the 2010 Grammy Award for Best Classical Contemporary Composition. The recording features Colin Currie, percussion, and Marin Alsop conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra. It is available on the London Philharmonic's own label. The twenty-five-minute work was co-commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony, and Dallas Symphony Orchestra. The composer says that her concerto "follows the normal relationship of a dialogue between soloist and orchestra. In this work, however, there is an additional relationship with the soloist interacting extensively with the percussion section. The ability of performers has grown to such an extent that it has become possible to have sections within the orchestra interact at the same level as the soloist."

**Kathryn Mishell**, producer of the radio program "Into the Light," won a Gracie Award for 2010 as "Outstanding Producer—Entertainment"; she also received an "Individual Achievement" Award. The Gracies recognize exemplary programming created for women, by women, and about women in all facets of electronic media, as well as individuals who have made contributions to the industry. The website for "Into the Light" includes a Composer Index and a Broadcast Archives section that lists all the pieces Kathryn has played on her one-hour presentations, beginning in 2000. There are 333 programs thus far! For most of the pieces, there is a downloadable audio file consisting of Kathryn's spoken introduction to the composer and work as well as the beginning of the musical selection.

**Bettie Ross** won two 2009 Just Plain Folks Awards for her album of primarily piano pieces, which she both composed and performed. The album won Best Solo Piano Album for *A Magical Time of Year* and Best Solo Piano Song for *Merry-making*. *A Magical Time of Year* was one of 93 winning albums chosen from a field of over 42,000 albums that were submitted for the 2009 contest.

# Members' News: news of individual members' activities

Compiled by Anita Hanawalt

News items are listed alphabetically by member's name and include recent and forthcoming activities. Submissions are always welcome concerning honors and awards, appointments, commissions, premieres, performances, publications, recordings, and other items. Due to space limitations, news items may be edited. Please send information about your activities to members' news editor Anita Hanawalt at [anita@hanawalthaus.net](mailto:anita@hanawalthaus.net) or by mail to 2451 Third St., LaVerne, CA 91750. The deadline for the next issue is September 7, 2010. Please mark your calendar.

**Adrienne Albert** was composer-in-residence at the California State University Fresno New Music Festival during October of 2009. *Eastern Hymn* (saxophone quartet) and *2 Inventions for 3 Winds* were premiered at the Festival, performed by the ensemble in residence, the Definiens Project. The CSUF Symphony performed *Courage* with two additional performances by the West Covina Symphony and The Bellflower Symphony under the direction of Sylvia Mann. Other fall performances included three concerts of *Doppler Effect* (version for flute, clarinet and piano) in Leeds, London and Tickhill, England by The Sterling Trio, which has just issued a CD including *Doppler Effect*. *Musescapes for piano trio* had three recent performances by the Composers Performance Ensemble of NACUSA in San Francisco, members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra in Glendale, California, and The Newstead Trio in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. A portion of *A Choral Quilt of Hope* (based on the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights), a new work in collaboration with Susan Suntree, was performed in Pasadena, California by The Sounds of Joy Choir and the mayor of Pasadena, Bill Bogaard, who hosted the event on the December 10 anniversary of the Declaration.

**Beth Anderson's** *Dream Song* was premiered by the commissioning choir, Acappellego, at Mayslake Peabody Estate in Oak Brook, Illinois on March 20, 2010 with an additional performance on March 21 at Naperville (Illinois) Congregational Church. *Ancestral Tale* (violin and piano) was premiered by the commissioning artist, Airi Yoshioka (violin), and John Novacek (piano) on the Women's Work series at Greenwich House in New York City on March 24.

**Elizabeth Austin** announces two new recordings: *Spectra, A Concert of Vocal Music by Connecticut Composers, Inc.*, Arizona Re-

cordings (AUR CD 3148), includes *Frauenliebe und -leben* (A Woman's Love and Life) (1999), performed by Eun-Jung Auh, soprano, and Teresa Crane, piano. *Songs and Cycles, Contemporary American Women Composers*, Leonarda Productions (LE 357), includes *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (Barrett Browning) (1987) with Linda McNeil, soprano, and Carolyn True, piano.

**Elaine R. Barkin's** recent music can be heard on Open Space CDs 21 and 24. OS CD 21, celebrating J. K. Randall's 75th birthday, includes *4 Midi Pieces* (composed with Sibelius4) and music by **Judith Shatin** and **Hilary Tann**, among others. OS CD 24 includes *Blanc* for piano, a five-piece *MIDI Suite*, and *Violin Duo* with poet Dorota Czermer reading two of Barkin's poems, *Caves* and *Dunes*. Please see [www.the-open-space.org](http://www.the-open-space.org). Recent texts include "Moving On" (for Ron George) in *The OPEN SPACE Magazine*, issue 10, Fall 2008, and "About Some Music of Thomas Adès" in *Perspectives of New Music*, vol. 47/1, 2009. A review of *post-impressions: a travel book for tragic intellectuals* by Hollis Taylor will appear in issue 12 of *The OPEN SPACE Magazine*. The Rockefeller Foundation has published *Bellagio Center, The First 50 years* including a short text about Barkin's 1980 residency and a recording of *Harp Song*, performed by Ursula Kwasnicka. The two CDs also include music by **Ellen Taaffe Zwilich**, Annea Lockwood, Eve Beglarian, Polly Pen, Laura Andel, and Anne LeBaron.

On December 6, 2009, **Susan Borwick** gave a presentation on pilgrimage and the arts at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

**Jerry Casey's** *O, Death, Rock Me Asleep* was performed by Tamara Seckel (soprano) and Cole Dachenhaus (student violinist) at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio at the January 31, 2010 "A New Millennium of Music: Women in Song" concert featuring Kenyon College adjunct music instructors performing music written since 2000 by living women composers. On February 27, the Otterbein College Concert Choir (Gail Walker, director) premiered *What Shall We Bring?* (SSAATTBB a cappella). On June 5, the Concert Choir will be joined by the Otterbein Orchestra for the premiere of *Yet I Will Rejoice* (SSATB with Baroque Orchestra). The woodwind quintet with narrator, *Gli intrighi d'amore* (The Intrigues of Love), was per-

formed by the Kansas State University Faculty Woodwind Quintet at the Society of Composers, Inc. (SCI) Region VI Conference in Manhattan, Kansas in March. On the Second Women in Music – Columbus Composers Forum of the 2009-2010 season (scheduled for May 1), *November* (poetry of William Cullen Bryant) (soprano and cello quartet) will be premiered by Cynthia Mahaney, soprano, with members of the Columbus Cellos.

**Tamara Cashour** received an ASCAP Plus Award during both 2009 and 2010. In 2009, two of the songs from her eclectic song cycle, *Emily Unleashed* (electro-acoustic song settings of the poems of Emily Dickinson set in various styles including classical art song, cabaret, Protestant church hymn, and choral), were premiered at Symphony Space in New York City. *Pollypiano*, a 25-minute suite for saxophone quartet and piano featuring both solo and ensemble efforts, received its world premiere performance on February 23, 2010 at Citicorp Center in Manhattan, New York. A music theater piece, *Pollypiano* features musicians as actors and singers complete with props and costumes.

Cashour is on the Collaborative Piano Faculty at William Paterson University in Wayne, New Jersey, and was featured in the 2009 Midday Recital Series performing several contemporary works such as Hindemith's Oboe Sonata, Eric Ewazen's Sonata for Trumpet and Piano, Bernhard Heiden's Sonata for Horn and Piano, Ned Rorem's *Picnic on the Marne for Alto Saxophone and Piano*, and Halsey Stevens' Trumpet Sonata. Also active as a soprano, Cashour sang the lead of Regina in Susan Stoderl's new feminist opera, *The Veil Of Forgetfulness*, based on the life of the poet-mystic Marie de France and her theoretical life as the Abbess of Shaftesbury. The staged opera, sung bilingually in Latin and English, with full orchestra, supertitles and costumes, was performed by the Brooklyn Repertory Opera, February 27-March 7 at the Brooklyn Lyceum.

**Kyong Mee Choi's** *To Unformed* (piano and electronics) was selected by the Miami Section of the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) and was performed by the Florida NODUS Group at Florida International University, Miami on January 23, 2010. *To Unformed* was also selected for performance at the SCI Region IV conference held at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro on February 4 with an additional perfor-



mance at the 2010 Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States (SEAMUS) 25th Anniversary National Conference held at St. Cloud (Minnesota) State University on April 10. Choi was the artist-in-residence at the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts, Nebraska City, Nebraska from February 22 to March 5. *Tranquility* (electronics) and *It only needs to be seen* (acoustic guitar and electronics) were performed at the Electronic Music Midwest mini Festival at Lewis University, Romeoville, Illinois on March 11. *It only needs to be seen* was also performed on the Faculty Composer Recital at Roosevelt University, Chicago, Illinois on March 10. *The line we can't cross* (alto-saxophone and electronics) was performed at the New Music Festival at Illinois State University, Normal on March 25. *Gain* (DVD) was presented at Georgia Southern University's Electronic Music concert at Georgia Southern University, Statesboro on April 8. *Track* (flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano and percussion) was selected for performance at the International Conference on Contemporary Music, 2010 at the University of A Coruña (Spain) on April 25. Choi is currently working on a multi-media production funded by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, scheduled for a premiere on October 22, 2010 at Roosevelt University in Chicago, Illinois.

**Judith Cloud**, composer and vocal studies professor at Northern Arizona University, was awarded first prize at the recent 2009 Sorel Medallion Choral Composition contest. *Anacreontics* (chorus and guitar) was performed by guitarist Ken Meyer and the Voices of Ascension, a premier United States choir. Cloud was one of three women finalists in the competition. Cloud is currently involved with a recording project, *Letting Escape A Song* (Summit Records), featuring Cloud and Deborah Raymond, soprano, Ricardo Pereira, tenor, and Rita Borden, piano. The CD is scheduled for a late 2010/early 2011 release. Cloud's cycle *Night Dreams* appears on the Strempele-Beaudette duo CD: *(In)habitation: Settings of Margaret Atwood Poetry by American Women Composers* (Centaur). She has been selected as composer in residence for the Big Bear Lake (California) Song Festival held June 1-4, 2010.

**Emma Lou Diemer** was guest composer at the Women in Music Festival 2010 at the Eastman School of Music in March. A concert of her works included a piece commissioned by the Hanson Institute for American Music, *Quartet on Themes by Howard Hanson* for flute, violin, cello, and piano, to be performed by Ossia, a student-run new

music performance ensemble. (Diemer earned her doctorate at Eastman and was in Hanson's composition class.) New works for carillon include *Canberra Bells*, commissioned by June Catchpoole, for Lyn Fuller, carillonneur at the Canberra (Australia) National Carillon, commemorating the 40th anniversary of the National Carillon. *Fantasy for Carillon*, premiered by Margo Halsted at UCSB in October 2009, will be published by American Carillon Music Editions. A February performance of *Quartet for Trumpet, Horn, Trombone and Piano*, published by Hildegard Publishing Company, took place at Central Washington University's "The Woman's Voice in Music." Recent recordings of Diemer's music include *Poem of Remembrance* with John Russo, clarinet, and the St. Petersburg Orchestra, on CRS Recordings; *Sonata No. 3* played by pianist Roger McVey on album *American Journey*; four songs on the *Songs and Cycles* album (Leonarda) performed by Linda McNeil, soprano, and Carolyn True, piano; *Summer Day, the Complete Works for Violin and Piano* performed by Philip Ficsor and Diemer, now on amazon; *Serenade/Toccata* from *Sonata No. 3* on album *TOUCH, The Toccata Project*, performed by Philip Amalong, piano. (Diemer is the sole female composer among fifteen composers on this disc); and *Fanfare and Variation on Antioch* on the album *Roman Holidays Borealis Brass*, performed by Karen Gustafson, trumpet, Jane Aspnes, horn, and James Bicigo, trombone.

**Nancy Bloomer Deussen's** *Two Pieces for Piano* was performed at a NACUSA concert held at Foothill Presbyterian Church in San Jose, California on April 26, 2009. On April 30, the Orpheus Chamber Ensemble performed *Solstice Circle* (flute, cello and piano) at California State University Fresno. The Mission Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Emily Ray, gave the world premiere of *Trinity Alps* in San Jose on May 3. The Abington Symphony Orchestra performed *Reflections on the Hudson* in Abington, Pennsylvania on May 15. On June 6, Avenue Winds performed *Woodwind Quintet* at a NACUSA concert held at First Presbyterian Church in Portola Valley, California. On September 27, Melissa Smith performed *Amber Waves* on a piano recital held in Menlo Park, California. Holyoke Civic Orchestra gave the East Coast premiere of *Trinity Alps* at Holyoke (Massachusetts) Community College on October 17. It was the winning composition in the Holyoke Orchestra Composition Competition. *Two Songs of Love and Sorrow* was performed on a NACUSA concert held in Portola Valley, California on November 14.

**Lynn Gumert** was selected for an artist residency at the UCross Foundation. *Quem las naves* and *Exile*, for voices, recorders, strings, and percussion, were performed on March 28 in Gettysburg and Lancaster, PA as part of *Migrations: Resistance and Endurance*, a collaboration between Zorzal Music Ensemble and Grant Street Dance Company. *Helen and Teacher*, a new musical with libretto by Susan Russell, was performed as part of the Fringe Festival in Gettysburg, PA.

**Barbara Harbach's** opera *O Pioneers!* was given its world premiere this past October in the Anheuser-Busch Performance Hall of Touhill Performing Arts Center of the University of Missouri-St. Louis. The work was broadcast on December 5 on KUFO Radio in St. Louis. Harbach was composer-in-residence from March 8 through 10, 2010 at Northern Valley Regional High School in Demarest, New Jersey. The centerpiece of the residency was a performance of her *Demarest Suite* for String Orchestra, commissioned by the school. Her new CD *Music of Barbara Harbach*, vol. 6, will be released in late spring on MSR Classics. MSR Classics has released two new CDs: *Toccatas, Flourishes & Fugues, A Celebration of Hymns* (MS1254), in which she performs on the Aeolian-Skinner Organ of Christ Church Cathedral, St Louis, and *Chamber Music II* (MS1255), works for string orchestra and woodwind quintet.

**Jennifer Higdon's** *Percussion Concerto* won a Grammy in the "Best Classical Contemporary Composition" category. The disc containing the premiere recording of her *Dooryard Bloom* (poem by Walt Whitman) also won a Grammy in the "Best Surround Sound" category. Higdon's *Piano Concerto* was premiered by Yuja Wang and National Symphony in December of 2009 at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Hilary Hahn recently performed *Violin Concerto* with the Nashville Symphony and the Detroit Symphony. *Concerto 4-3*, a bluegrass/classical hybrid work written for Time for Three, was performed by the Baltimore Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony (where it was recorded) and Greensboro Symphony. Higdon is doing a residency with the Fort Worth Symphony this season, including a chamber music concert sponsored by the Van Cliburn Foundation at the Modern in Fort Worth. Works to be performed will include *Autumn Reflections* (1994, for flute and piano), *Bentley Roses* (2002, for mezzo-soprano, flute, and piano), *Piano Trio* (2003, for violin, cello, and piano), and *String Poetic* (2006, for violin and piano).

The Four-Hand Piano Duo, **Donna Gross Javel** and Bonnie Anderson, often perform music from the "Living Composers: AnythingPiano Project" (LCAPP) on their programs. The October 2009 Boston Public Library performance included music by **Elizabeth Vercoe**. The University of Massachusetts, Lowell performance in March 2010, "Music on the Merrimack," also included music by Vercoe. The Four-Hand Piano Duo is scheduled to perform in May at the Parish Center for the Arts on "The Piano Heritage Series." Javel's *Fire Dance Duo* will be performed at the Rivers Music School Contemporary Music Festival in the spring of 2010; previously it was selected for performance at the February 2009 New England Conservatory Preparatory School Contemporary Music Festival. Please see [www.AnythingPiano.com](http://www.AnythingPiano.com)

Gloria Cook premiered **Susan Cohn Lackman's** *Ghosts on the Bund* (solo piano) on October 17, 2009 at the American Association of China Scholars Annual Conference held at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida. The Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra premiered *Ma'Oz Tsur* (orchestral arrangement) on November 28.

**Adriana Isabel Figueroa Mañas'** *Dos Hechizos Para Tres Instrumentos* (piano, cello and violin) was premiered in Mendoza, Argentina on November 7, 2009 at a concert featuring local composers. *Tres Piezas Argentinas* (cello and violin) was also performed on the program.

The South Beach Chamber Ensemble premiered **Pamela J. Marshall's** *Quinteto sobre los Poemas de Carlos Pintado* for piano and strings, giving several performances in the Miami area in May 2009 and a performance at the South Beach Up North festival in Wausau, Wisconsin in August. Boston-area soprano Jodi Hitzhusen traveled to FTM10 in North Carolina to sing *Body and Soul Vol. 2* with University of North Carolina at Greenville instrumentalists. The songs are from Marshall's Art-Poem-Music second collaboration with artist Sirarpi Heghinian Walzer and poet Elizabeth Kirschner. Two students at the Rivers Conservatory in Weston, Massachusetts commissioned and premiered *Never Say Nevermore* for horn and piano. In January 2010, at its annual public concert, the Lexington Music Club presented *Dialog Among Tree Frogs Variations*, with horn soloists and an improvising ensemble that doubled as a chorus of frogs, with the composer conducting/guiding the improvisations. Marshall started teaching a free-style improvisation class for classical musicians at Lexington Music School and led several

improvisation jam sessions. *Summer Into Winter* for clarinet was released on the CD *Ghosts* from Beauport Classical with Monica Duncan, clarinetist. *Elusive Sleep*, with Rafael Popper-Keizer, cello, and Carmen Rodriguez-Peralta, piano, was released on the CD *Just In Time Now and Then* from Living Artists. Marshall also produced *Costa Rica Soundscape*, the first of a series of nature soundscapes on her Nachursona label.

**Janice Misurell-Mitchell's** work for solo marimba, *Mamiwata*, was performed by Mike Truesdell at the Zeltsman Marimba Festival at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin in July. *Dark was the Night* (solo guitar) was performed by Maria Vittoria Jedlowski at the festival "Il Mondo della Chitarra" presented at the Conservatorio Guido Cantelli in Novara, Italy, and also by Leopoldo Saracino at the Rebus Festival in Milan. *On Thin Ice* (flute and marimba) was performed at the IAWM Annual Concert at the University of North Texas by Sonia Candelaria, flute, and Hiromi Kamiya, marimba. Misurell-Mitchell played *Blooz Man/Poet Woman*, for flute/voice at the IAWM concert, "Five Midwest Women Composers" in December at the Sherwood Community Music School in Chicago.

During October 2009, **Frances (Frankie) Nobert** participated in a weeklong conference of the Organ Historical Trust of Australia in Adelaide and the Barossa Valley. The conferees heard 35 organs representing builders from the mid-1800s through 2000. Nobert was invited to demonstrate an 1886, two-manual, fourteen-rank mechanical instrument by Fincham and Hobday at Christ Church Anglican Church in Kapunda. Her journey ended with playing ten Sydney area organs, including the instrument in the Opera House.

**Hasu Patel** performed a sitar concert and conducted Music of India Workshops at Shippensburg University on February 21-22 and at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) from March 17-20. She also served as composer-in-residence for the Ninth Festival of Women Composers held at IUP.

*Kuntur* for orchestra by **Marcela Pavia**, commissioned by I Piccoli Pomeriggi Musicali Orchestra in collaboration with Sconfinarte Editions, was premiered at the Concerto di Carnevale III Season of the I Piccoli Pomeriggi Musicali Orchestra on February 20 at the Theatre dal Verme in Milan, Italy.

Music from **Deon Nielsen Price's** CD, *Dancing on the Brink of the World*, recorded by the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine (released in 2009 by Cambria and NAXOS),

was broadcast on programs produced by Marvin Rosen, Kathryn Mishell, and Canary Burton. *Yellow Jade Banquet* was broadcast on December 27 on Classical Discoveries, WPRB, Princeton, New Jersey. *Epitaphs for Fallen Heroes* was broadcast on December 13 on "Into the Light," KMFA, Austin, Texas. *America Themes* and *Gateways* were broadcast on December 8 on "The Latest Score," WOMR, Provincetown, Massachusetts. *States of Mind: Meditation, Troubled Thoughts, Mysterious Dream, Transformation* was broadcast on Tom Quick's "Women in Music" program (CKWR in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada) on January 4, 2010. *If Life Were To Sing* (quintet for five cellos) was premiered February 6, 2010 on the Positive Motions Concert Series in Glendale, California by the Ruslan Biryukov and Friends Cello Ensembles, with an additional performance February 11 on the Mu Phi Epsilon Series in Los Angeles.

Composer **Patsy Rogers** is beginning her second year as conductor of the Recorder Orchestra of New York (RONY). The orchestra, the first of its kind in the United States, has approximately twenty members who play all sizes of recorders from soprano to contrabass. The repertoire ranges from very early music to contemporary, with an occasional swing piece just for fun. RONY's next concerts are in April. Please see [www.RONY.online.org](http://www.RONY.online.org)

**Bettie Ross** won two 2009 Just Plain Folks Awards for her album of primarily piano pieces, performed by the composer. The album won Best Solo Piano Album for *A Magical Time of Year* and Best Solo Piano Song for *Merrymaking*. *A Magical Time of Year* was one of 93 winning albums chosen from a field of over 42,000 albums that were submitted for the 2009 contest.

**Anna Rubin's** computer-generated work *Shards of Sappho* was premiered on January 23 at Roulette in New York City. The piece will be heard at the Women Composers Festival, Indiana University of Pennsylvania on March 18 and the WEALR (part of the 9th Annual New Music Festival at the University of California, Riverside, hosted by Pamela Madsen). The piece is included on a DVD published by Everglade (**Kristine Burns**, co-founder) coming out later in 2010. **Linda Swope** performed *Stolen Gold* (oboe and fixed media) at the Pleasant Valley Church of the Brethren in Weyers Cave, Virginia. Two new pieces inspired by bees have premieres this spring: Airi Yoshioka, violin, and Wendy Salkind, actress, performed *In Praise of the Honeybee* I March 24 at the Greenwich House

in New York City, as part of the Women's Work series. *Honeybee Sketches*, a piano solo performed by **Margaret Lucia**, will be heard April 18 at Shippensburg University. *In Praise of the Honeybee I*, *Honeybee Sketches*, *Shards of Sappho*, *Remembering* (mezzo soprano, piano, and fixed media) and other works will be performed by Janice Jackson, Wendy Salkind, and Airi Yoshioka on April 8 at University of Maryland/Baltimore County. Rubin has been invited to represent United States composers, present compositions, and speak at the Fourth Conference of Women Composers in Poços de Caldas, Brazil in September. Her essay on women pioneers in electroacoustic music is part of a book entitled *Women in the Arts: Eccentric Essays in Music, Visual Arts and Literature*, edited by **Barbara Harbach** and Diane Touliatos, to be published by Cambridge Scholar Press later in 2010.

**Vivian Adelberg Rudow**, ASCAP award winner 2009/2010, announces her new CD, *LOVE, LOSS and LAW, Music Documentaries*, an electroacoustic composition with music and words; it includes international first place winner *WITH LOVE*, + *PORTRAIT OF A FRIEND* + *PORTRAITS OF LAWYERS*. Sound samples are available at <http://www.geareduppublications.com/musichollinspark.html> The radio version of *LOVE, LOSS and LAW* will be aired on the satellite radio program series "The Poet and The Poem," hosted by Grace Cavalieri from the Library of Congress. The program will be available to NPR stations that chose to take it (generally around 30 stations) from March through September 2010. *Juan's Garden* (in memory Juan Blanco) was premiered on March 15 in Havana, Cuba. St. John's Orchestra premiered *Go Green* in Ellicott City, Maryland on April 18.

**Judith Shatin** was awarded a 2010 Fromm Foundation commission to create a piece for amplified string quartet and electronics for the Cassatt Quartet. Recent activities include serving as a judge for the 11th Festival International de Musiques Sacrées in Fribourg, Switzerland. She presented a colloquium on her music as well as composition master classes at Yale University, and gave a virtual talk on her music at the Hartt School of Music. *Rotunda*, a music/video collaboration between Shatin and filmmaker Robert Arnold, was exhibited at the University of Virginia Art Museum from September to December 2009, and was also presented at SEAMUS 2009 in Fort Wayne, Indiana and the Symposium on Jefferson and the Arts at the University of Virginia on November 20, 2009.

The Borup-Ernst Duo performed *Tower of the Eight Winds* (violin/piano) on January 25, 2010 in Roskilde, Denmark. The Dutch Hexagon Ensemble performed *Ockeghem Variations* (wind quintet and piano) in Noorderhagen, the Netherlands on February 4. Madeleine Shapiro performed *For the Birds* at the University of Utah on January 27. The Da Capo Chamber Players performed *Spring Tides* at the University of Connecticut New Technology Symposium on March 6. On March 7, the Virginia Chorale performed *Adonai Ro'i* (SATB) in Williamsburg, Virginia. The Illinois Symphony premiered *Jefferson, In His Own Words* (narrator and orchestra) on March 12-13 with an additional performance by the Charlottesville University and Symphony Orchestra on April 24-25. A co-commission of four orchestras, the piece is scheduled for performances next season by the Richmond and Virginia Symphonies.

**Clare Shore's** *Show Me the Way, Lord* for SATB chorus, solo whistler (or melody instrument) and optional keyboard was recently published by E.C. Schirmer of Boston and was featured in the fall 2009 new issues. For a listening sample, please see [www.clareshore.com/LRoom.htm](http://www.clareshore.com/LRoom.htm). Clarinetist Eugene Jones premiered *Sojourn for B-flat Clarinet* on February 28 at East Tennessee State University. The commissioned work and Shore's participation in multiple media and community events were supported in part by "Meet the Composer" funding. This is the third in Shore's series for solo instruments published by E.C. Schirmer (catalog no. 7550). To listen to excerpts from the first performance, please visit the above website. The first two works in the series are *Sojourn for Trombone* and *Sojourn for Bassoon*.

**Faye-Ellen Silverman's** *In Shadow* was performed by SyZyGy on September 6, 2009 in Nordkraft Aalborg, Denmark. On October 14, 2009, the Corona Guitar Quartet performed *Pregnant Pauses* in Løgumkloster, Denmark. *Protected Sleep* was broadcast on Marvin Rosen's WPRB (Princeton) Classical Discoveries Viva 21st Century (Women Composers Edition) on December 28, 2009. The Ricochet piano/marimba duo performed *Pas de Deux* on March 18, 2010 at the Ninth Festival of Women Composers held at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Allen Won performed the world premiere of *Interval Untamed: Five Miniatures* for "Music Under Construction" at Mannes College, The New School for Music, New York City on March 22. Laura Jordan performed *Memory and Alterations* (marimba) on The Composers Voice series at Jan Huus Church in New York City on March 28. Max Lifschitz performed *Three/Four* (pi-

ano) at the North/South Consonance Concert V Feminine Touches, Piano Music by Women Composers from the Americas, at Christ & St. Stephens Church in New York City on April 18. The Mannes Chorus performed *The Wings of Night* at Mannes Concert Hall in New York City on April 23.

**Evelyn Stroobach's** *Aria for Strings* received its Central Asian premiere on April 17, 2010, performed in Kazakhstan by the Karaganda State Symphony Orchestra. *Aria for Strings* appears on the *Aurora Borealis* CD, available through the Canadian Music Centre Boutique. **Kathryn Mishell** aired *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (SATB chorus and violoncello) recorded by the Kyiv Chorus and the National Opera Chorus in Kiev, Ukraine on December 20 on *Into the Light* (KMFA radio). It is included on *Holidays of the New Era* Volume 1 (<http://cdbaby.com/cd/kpriw>) produced by *Masterworks of the New Era*. The work was also broadcast by **Canary Burton** of WOMR radio, Provincetown, Massachusetts on December 15 and by Tom Quick, producer and host of the radio program *Monday Evening Concert* at CKWR radio, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. Canary Burton aired *Aurora Borealis* from Stroobach's compact disc of the same name on September 22, 2009. It was performed by the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra and conducted by David Currie.

Four concerts of music by **Nancy Van de Vate** were presented in Vienna between May and December 2009. On May 13, the Austrian National Library featured her in its annual series, Musiksalon, devoted to composers in their permanent archives. On October 24, the 125-year-old Club der Wiener Musikerinnen presented a program of her chamber music. On December 21, the Kunstverein Wien presented scenes from her new opera, *Hamlet*, and on the following evening, a retrospective concert, "Music from Six Decades." Her operas *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *Nemo-Jenseits von Vulkania*, and *Where the Cross is Made* were broadcast several times in September and October 2009 by Swiss Radio.

**Persis Parshall Vehar** received her 26th annual ASCAP Award for 2009-2010. The New York State Music Teachers Association has commissioned her to compose a work for the College of St. Rose Camerata in Albany, New York to be premiered on October 16, 2010 at the NYSMTA Conference. Vehar has also been commissioned by the Alden Area Ecumenical Choir to compose a piece for SATB choir and organ to be premiered December 4 and 11, 2010 in Alden, New York. Upcoming

premieres include *Let The Games Begin!* (woodwind trio) by members of the Amberg Quartet at Canisius College in Buffalo, New York on March 23, 2010; *From Catullus With Love* by Valerian Ruminski, bass, and Betty Bullock in Washington, DC on March 28; *In The Palace Of Time* by countertenor Darryl Taylor and pianist Brent McMunn at the University of California at Irvine on May 8; and *Remembering Paris With Nostalgia* by Susanna Perry Gilmore, concert person of the Memphis Symphony at the Belvedere Chamber Music Festival in Memphis on June 23. The Syracuse Society for New Music performed scenes from her fifth opera, *Eleanor Roosevelt*, on March 10 at Utica (New York) College; it will be performed again on May 16 at the Liverpool Library in Liverpool, New York. Vehar has been recommended for the Chair of Excellence at Austin-Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee.

Terry Lynn and Andrew Hudson, duo pianists, performed **Elizabeth Vercoe's** *Umbrian Suite* at the London School of Music in London, England on March 10 with a lecture on March 11. On March 4, **Donna Javel** and Bonnie Thompson, duo pianists, performed *Umbrian Suite* at the University of Massachusetts in Lowell. Jed Hacker, horn, played *Five Inventions for horn and piano* at the New Music Festival at Ohio Wesleyan University held February 18-20.

**Hsiao-Lan Wang's** music for multimedia collaboration *Made in...* was featured in a dance performance, *Das Paradies entsteht aus dem Nichts*, held at the Landes (Germany) Coburg Theater on January 17, 2010. *Made in...* was also included in the Electronic Arts and Music Festival in Miami, Florida on December 4, 2009 and the Music BYTES video concert at Lewis University on October 30. *Transformation* (brass quintet) was performed by the Hoodlebug Brass (faculty ensemble) on the IAWM concert at the Festival of Women Composers held at Indiana University of Pennsylvania on March 20, 2010. The Electric Monster Laptop Ensemble, directed by Wang, has commissioned many works, including a fair number of works by women composers. The ensemble will go on tour to Beijing, China, in May 2010.

**Meira Warshauer's** *Akhat sha'alti* (One thing I ask) for SATB choir and percussion ensemble was given its world premiere performance by The Coastal Carolina University Choirs and the Percussion Ensembles on March 10 at Wheelwright Auditorium of Coastal Carolina University in Conway, South Carolina.

Classical Music Discoveries (classical music international podcast) featured the **Carol Worthey** concert/show through March 2010, receiving 5.38 million downloads worldwide during the first 10 days. The podcast, available at <http://www.carolworthey.com/events.php>, features a concert of Worthey's works, an in-depth interview, and visuals of her artworks. From October to December 2009, violist Karen Elaine, pianist Nadia Shpachenko, soprano Valerie Miller, pianist/harpist Paul Hurst and John Van Houten (tuba) gave world premieres of Worthey's works in the Los Angeles area. During November 2009, pianist Beth Levin premiered *Romanza* in Philadelphia, after which the horn/piano version of *Romanza* was recorded in Florence Italy by Luca Benucci. On February 6, 2010, Ruslan Birykov and Maksim Velushkin premiered eight *Russian Scenes* (cello duo) in Glendale, California. *Faces of Eve* was premiered in Manhattan on March 10. On April 20, Beth Levin and Yuki Numata will premiere the violin/piano version of *Romanza* in a Facebook Friends Concert curated by Douglas Townsend at the Trail Mix Music Festival near Woodstock. Also on April 20, *Sandcastles* (flute, oboe and bassoon), commissioned by flutist Dawn Weiss, will receive its premiere at the University of Southern California by David Weiss (oboe) and the Weiss Family Woodwinds. Worthey continues to paint and exhibit her art. She is currently writing a book based on illustrated talks given at the University of Southern California, the University of California at Los Angeles and California Lutheran University, *Turning Life into Art: How a Composer Works*.

**Rain Worthington's** orchestral composition, *Tracing a Dream*, was recorded in Moscow and is scheduled for 2010 release on PARMA Recordings' Navona label. *Paper Wings for violin* was performed on February 3, 2010 at the American Consulate in Kolkata, India and on February 19 at the Delhi Music Society in New Delhi. Dedicated to the composer's mother, Nancy Bondurant Jones, *Paper Wings* was written for violinist Michael Braudy. The Ricochet Duo performed *On Curious Reflection* at the Ninth Festival of Women Composers, Indiana University of Pennsylvania on March 18, with an additional performance on March 26 at the Women in Music Festival 2010 held at the Eastman School of Music. Commissioned by Englewinds, *Four Scenes on Forest Road* for woodwinds and vibraphone is scheduled for a May premiere at the Puffin Cultural Forum in Teaneck, New Jersey.

**Li Yiding's** *Pakistan Sketch* (solo piano), op. 1, was performed by Ross Carey (New Zealand pianist) in Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Indonesia five times during April of 2009. *Smiling Flower* (song) was commissioned by the Chaoyang Primary School of Beijing Normal University in October of 2009. *Angels in Hoh-xil* (symphonic poem), op. 11, was performed by the Evergreen Symphony Orchestra at Taiwan Hsinchu Performance Hall on November 29 and at the Taipei National Concert Hall on December 1. *I let you sleep* (soprano and chorus) was performed on December 30 in the Zhongshan City of Guangdong Province (Sun Yat-Sen's hometown).

**Sabrina Peña Young** gave birth to Eva Rose (her most amazing masterpiece) on Halloween night, 2009. Young received the Artist Enrichment Grant from the Kentucky Foundation for Women for the premiere of her multimedia oratorio *Creation*. The world premiere of *Creation*, commissioned by the Millikin University Women's Chorus, will be on April 17 in Decatur, Illinois. *Creation*, written in Swahili, Spanish, and English, juxtaposes the story of creation with the miracle of procreation and incorporates traditional Afro-Cuban rhythms with electroacoustic music. The electric laptop MONSTER ensemble will be performing *RE: The Destruction of Planet #61366 (Earth)* during the spring of 2010. Young's writings have recently appeared in *MAG Arts Magazine*, the new IAWM blog, and EasyEarTraining.com, a UK-based website dedicated to aural theory. Young teaches electronic music at Murray State University.

*Zaimont Suite*, four music/art videos pairing **Judith Lang Zaimont's** music with artworks by her husband, Gary Zaimont, was featured at the March 2010 Women in Music Festival held at Indiana State University of Pennsylvania. Created during summer 2009, *Zaimont Suite* was posted worldwide one movement-per-month, June through September, at video Internet sites. The videos have also been posted on other independent sites such as Texas Public Radio's Classical Blog, Sequenza21.com and Pytheas. *Zones – Piano Trio No. 2* was commissioned by the Huntsville (Alabama) Chamber Music Society for its silver anniversary and premiered 15 years ago. The Society revived the piece in a weekend-long festival using the theme of "zones" in sociology, physics, philosophy, and music with lectures, recitals, open rehearsals, and two formal concerts. *Zones* was performed on February 12, 2010 in a program that also included the world premiere of *Serenade* (a new version for violin and piano).



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