

JOURNAL of the

VOLUME 32, NO. 3 • 2026



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR WOMEN IN MUSIC

IN THIS ISSUE:

The Journey of Composing and
Producing an Opera

2026 Annual Concert Winners

Reports

Reviews

Members' News



Eliane Aberdam | Photo: Seth Jacobson



Annual Concert

University At Buffalo

**THE UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO PRESENTS
IAWM'S CONCERT ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2026
LIPPES CONCERT HALL, SLEE HALL**

**FEATURING UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO CHAMBER SINGERS
AND BUFFALO GIRLCHOIR**





INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR WOMEN IN MUSIC

1 Message from IAWM's President

CHRISTINA RUSNAK

IAWM NEWS

3 Call for Contributions to the IAWM Journal**4 New IAWM Board Members**

ARTICLES

6 The Journey of Composing and Producing an Opera: "Frontiers of Sand and Sea"

ELIANE ABERDAM

AWARDS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

15 2026 Annual Concert Winners**18 Bellingham Chamber Music Society's 2026-27 Season to Highlight Women Composers****18 LunART: Call for Scores****18 Her Voice In Motion: Call for Works****19 Pauline Alderman Award: Call for Submissions****20 Music by Women Festival: Call for Participation: Papers, Lecture Recitals, Performances, Scores**

REPORTS

21 Interfaith Center at the Presidio: Unleashing the Power of Interreligious Cooperation

MONA REESE

REVIEWS

RECORDING REVIEWS

22 Viola and Harp Recital: Women Composers by Rachel Talitman and Pierre-Henri Xuereb

KATHRYN FELT

23 Deon Nielson Price: Seven Decades of Composing (1956-2026)

ANNA RUBIN

MEMBERS' NEWS

25 Members' NewsCONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS
AND FESTIVALS**26 October-December 2026 Festivals, Conferences, Conventions**

IAWM Membership Information

IAWM membership includes a subscription to the *Journal of the IAWM* (issued four times a year) plus access to past issues on the IAWM website. Membership offers opportunities for awards in ten categories of composition, as well as music scholarship and programming, an education grant, opportunities to participate in annual concerts and IAWM conferences, and opportunities to present webinars. Membership offers increased visibility through IAWM's social media platforms, website, and optional IAWM Listserv; eligibility to run for and hold board and officer positions within IAWM; and connections with a vibrant community made up of members from 30 countries on five continents, sharing, celebrating, and supporting women in music globally. For information on joining or renewing your membership, visit the IAWM website: www.iawm.org/contact-us/.

We are seeking to better recognize the amazing work women conductors do every day, we're examining how to increase the possible synergy between women composers and women conductors, and reach for greater gender equality in performances.

—CHRISTINA RUSNAK



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR WOMEN IN MUSIC

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

Inquiries

IAWM
2712 NE 13th Ave.
Portland, OR 97212

Payments

IAWM
2712 NE 13th Ave.
Portland, OR 97212
PAYPAL to treasurer@iawm.org
<https://iawm.org/support/>

Support The IAWM

Your donations enable IAWM to fulfill its mission and vision. Our awards, grants, and advocacy efforts bring greater equity and awareness of the contributions of women in music. Any amount helps to fund our concerts, conferences, the *Journal of the IAWM*, grants, and all of our member services. To donate:

www.iawm.org/support/
PAYPAL to treasurer@iawm.org

Visit IAWM Online

 www.iawm.org
 www.instagram.com/iawmcommunity
 www.facebook.com/IAWMusic
 www.youtube.com/@iawmmedia

IAWM Board of Directors

PRESIDENT
Christina Rusnak

VICE PRESIDENT
Leah Reid

TREASURER
Katelyn Halbert

SECRETARY
Melanie Kjellsen

INTERNATIONAL
REPRESENTATIVE
Eline Cote

SUPPORTING MEMBERS

Hope Ayers
Anruo Cheng
Sabrine Clarke
Anna Clifton
Sandra Coursey
Kathryn Felt
Ala Gialla
Lenora Green-Turner
Amy Guffey
Po-Sim Head
Joanna Hersey
Amy Humberd
Rachel Kim
Jennifer Lamont
Susan Miranda
Sofia Moreno
Moon-Sook Park
Mary Schlanger
Colleen White

Staff

OPERATIONS &
JOURNAL ADMINISTRATOR
Meagan Hughes

Journal: Back Issues

Back issues are available for members to download on the website under Journal-archives. If you wish to purchase a back issue, contact membership@iawm.org.

Journal of the IAWM Editors

EDITOR
OPEN

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Elizabeth L. Keathley

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Mary Natvig

ASSISTANT EDITORS
Jesús A. Ramos-Kittrell
Jessie Freyermuth

REVIEW EDITOR
Kathleen Carter Bell

MEMBERS' NEWS EDITOR
Amy Zigler

Submissions

Email to: journal@iawm.org

Copyright © 2026 by the International Alliance for Women in Music. All rights reserved.
ISSN 1082-1872

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without permission. Any author has the right to republish his or her article in whole or in part with permission from the IAWM. Please contact the editor.

The Journal of the IAWM is designed and printed by Cheetah Graphics, Inc. of Sevierville, TN.



Christina Rusnak | Photo: Rachel Hadiasher

Message from IAWM's President

Dear Members,

This time of year, many of us take time away from our classrooms, rehearsal halls and our studios, to go out, to participate and to listen, to celebrate the new music being created, as well as the discoveries of composers and performers whose work was suppressed in the past. Fortunately, 21st century scholars and librarians are digging deep to find and recognize women's role in music that is far more prevalent than we're led to believe in our music history studies.

I am inspired by many of you—my greatest joy in this position—by the tenacity to musically say something, to interpret and comment on the world around us. I admire the fortitude you

show that it still takes for women to be heard. As a composer, I am so grateful to the amazing performers and conductors who so fully realize what I hear in my head via the black marks I put on paper, and digitally of course. As I've stated before, music is crucial in everyone's life.

UPDATES: Awards and More

The University at Buffalo in New York state, is hosting IAWM's 2026 Annual Concert, featuring the Chamber Singers and the Buffalo Girl Choir, nine new vocal and choral works will be performed. We are so excited - our last concert of vocal works was in 2016 at the University of Louisiana. See page 15 for a list of the winners. If your institution and/or ensemble would like to host future concerts, please contact us at president@iawm.org

Thank you to the nearly ninety of you who submitted to the Search for New Music! As an outgrowth of our conference in Columbia in 2025, we added a new category this year, Global Music. The winners are listed on our website and on our social media pages. Profiles of each of the composers and their pieces will be included in Volume 4 of the journal.

In 2026, IAWM is reaching out to conductors. Not only are we seeking to better recognize the amazing work women conductors do every day, we're examining how to increase the possible synergy between women composers and women conductors, and reach for greater gender equality in performances. We want to thank J. Michelle Edwards for sponsoring the IAWM Conductor Award, to be announced in late summer.

The calls for our end-of-year 2026 awards and grants begin September 1, 2026. The Programming Award is open to any solo performers, performance groups, or arts organizations that are members of IAWM.

Do you know a primary or secondary teacher that should be recognized? The Education Grant, also launching September 1st, helps teachers bring a greater focus on women in music to their students through professional development, materials, commissions, guest artists, or other media. We thank the **Athena Brass Band** for their sponsorship.

To celebrate and recognize the scholars that are shining a light on the work of women in music, calls for the biennial Pauline Alderman Award in music begin October 1st.

The Women Who Innovate Grant rewards women and non-binary artists in music whose work reaches beyond category, taking risks and pushing the boundaries in their musical realm. It will launch on November 1st.

People and Communication

IAWM is welcoming eight new board members for 2026-2029. With diverse backgrounds, they have a wealth of talent and experience! Please see page 4 to learn about them.

The theme for the 4th issue of the 2026 Journal of the IAWM is FINDING HER VOICE. Please send us your research, articles, interviews, profiles and reports about women in Music. Also, tell us about your updates: the work you're doing, the pieces you're creating, conducting and/or performing, the books

and more. Submit to journal@iawm.org by August 30, 2026 to get reviewed in time for the November issue.

Connect with us via the website. Help us increase your visibility! Update your image, website information, country, and discipline on the Members page. Log in, and click on the Members page to Member Profile. Click EDIT PROFILE, to add your information

Do you like sharing videos of you and your work? check out our Spotlights and YouTube opportunities!

Mission, Vision and Support

Thank you to everyone who completed IAWM's survey! We really want and need your input as we begin crafting a new strategic plan for 2027-2029. We are looking into the 2030s – the plan is to concretely get us ready. Did you miss the survey window? We still want your input. Contact communications@iawm.org to share your ideas on the direction of IAWM – how we can create greater connection and engagement for women in music as we work to LEAD toward IAWM's vision of gender equality in music.

We continue to grow, in our offerings to our members, in the scope of our advocacy, with our purpose, our mission and our vision, leading the way. In the Spring, the IAWM board approved creating a half-time Executive Director position for 2027. We hope to bring someone on for a transition period in Fall 2026.

Your support and donations make our work possible! We could not produce our programming—our awards, grants, the journal, our YouTube channel and other opportunities—without your dues and your active participation. Consider a legacy gift to advocate for women into the future See the [WAYS to SUPPORT](#) page to see images of our work in action!.

ENJOY!

Christina Rusnak

CHRISTINA RUSNAK
President, IAWM

a member of



International
Music Council



5 Music Rights



- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| THE
RIGHT
FOR
ALL
CHILDREN
AND
ADULTS | 1 | To express themselves musically in all freedom |
| | 2 | To learn musical languages and skills |
| | 3 | To have access to musical involvement through participation, listening, creation, and information |
| | 4 | To develop their artistry and communicate through all media, with proper facilities at their disposal |
| | 5 | To obtain just recognition and fair remuneration for their work |
| THE
RIGHT
FOR
ALL
MUSICAL
ARTISTS | | |

Call for Contributions to the IAWM Journal

NEXT DEADLINE FOR JOURNAL SUBMISSIONS: NOVEMBER 30, 2026

Editors await IAWM members' articles, tributes, reviews, and news!

Guidelines for Contributors

All Contributions: Submit all contributions as email attachments in Microsoft Word to journal@iawm.org. Identify the type of submission in the subject line of the email. The journal follows the *Chicago Manual of Style*, including documenting your sources in footnotes. We use the Oxford comma. Only one space after a period, please.

Articles: Before submitting an article, submit a proposal comprising an abstract of about 250 words and your short biography, about 50 words. Send it as an e-mail attachment in MS Word to journal@iawm.org with "Article proposal" in the subject line of the e-mail. The abstract should articulate the thesis of your inquiry (what you will to show), what evidence you will use (how you will show it), and how it relates to the mission of the IAWM (women in music in any period, location, or field). Make clear what is already known about your topic (prior research) and what you will contribute that is new. Estimate the number of words your article will be (1000 to 5000 words, including footnotes, is typical). A short bibliography (about 3-4 reliable sources) is helpful to assess your proposal, as is a short list of musical examples, photographs, or other illustrative material you intend to use. If the proposal is approved, the editor will send more detailed information about your individual submission.

Submitted articles *must be complete for professional publication*. Please proofread your own writing. For musical examples, print-quality pdf

files are preferred; high resolution, (minimum 300 dpi) TIFF or JPEG are also acceptable. Photos should be in color and high resolution, and a minimum 300 dpi at the size to be used. Submit minimum 2.5×3.5 for headshots, 5×4 for articles, 5×6 for cover. Submit the completed article with "article submission" in the subject line and submit the illustrations as separate attachments in the same e-mail.

Authors are responsible for obtaining and providing permission to use copyrighted materials. We encourage you to include hyperlinks to sounding musical or audiovisual illustrations or further resources.

Announcements and Reports: To announce new recording releases or upcoming events (conferences, festivals, news items, women-in-music initiatives, etc.), or to contribute a report on a recently past event, email the information as an email attachment in MS Word to journal@iawm.org with either "Announcement" or "Report" in the subject line.

Reviews: To request a review of your book or recording, email the information to journal@iawm.org with "Review Request" in the subject line. Our review editor, Dr. Kathleen Carter Bell, will be in touch regarding next steps. If you wish to review books or recordings for the journal, put "Review List" in the subject line, and the review editor will contact you if she needs additional information to add you to her list. To submit a completed review, send it as an email attachment in MS Word

to journal@iawm.org with "Review" in the subject line. Reviews are typically about 900 words. Submit illustrations as separate attachments to the same e-mail. See "Articles," above, for instructions about illustrations.

Members' News: Please send your news and updates as an attachment in MS Word to journal@iawm.org with "Members' News" in the subject line. With quarterly opportunities for submission, news contributions should reflect the past 3-6 months, a paragraph limited to 200 words or less, and include one illustration (see "articles," above, for specifications) or headshot photo and one link to an audio or audiovisual recording.

Helpful resources

Chicago's *Turabian Quick Guide* gives footnote formats for most source types: <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/turabian/turabian-notes-and-bibliography-citation-quick-guide.html>

Consult *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary* for authoritative definitions and spelling: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>

Grove Music Online, which most university libraries and many public libraries subscribe to, is a good place to check facts about music and musicians.

You don't have to wait until the deadline to submit your contribution: the earlier you submit it, the smoother the journal production process.

Proposals received past the deadline may be considered for future issues of the Journal of the IAWM.

IAWM New Board Members

Dr. Hope Ayers is a horn player, educator, and advocate for meaningful musical connections. She has over a decade of private teaching experience and performs regularly with orchestras in the southeast states, including as the 2nd horn of the Panama City Symphony. Her work reflects a passion for mentoring students and sharing music by diverse voices.

Dr. Sandra Coursey is a pianist, teacher, and composer based in NW Ohio. She runs an independent piano studio and is the founder of *Sleeping Beauties*, an ongoing project in which she researches, records, presents, and performs historical works by women composers with few or no current recordings.

Vocalist **Lenora Green-Turner**, is a professor at the University of Arkansas. She is president of the Arkansas chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, Founder of both Green Room Studios, LLC, and of Vibez Vocal Arts, a professional development company for singers. An active performer, she enjoys singing classical music, including opera, art song, oratorio, chamber music, and contemporary genres.

Dr. Amy Guffey is Teaching Assistant Professor of Clarinet at Kansas State University. An active performer, educator, and a Backun Musical Services Artist, she performs internationally with Nyx Duo, serves as co-chair of the International Clarinet Association Youth Involvement Committee, and co-hosts *Hidden Cues*, a podcast on pregnancy, parenthood, and musicianship.

Dr. Amy Humberd is a performer and educator who has appeared across the United States and Europe. A founding member of the Civitasolis Reed Quintet, she also serves on the International Clarinet Association editorial board, and she is on the faculty at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp. She is currently Assistant Professor of Music at Lee University.

Sofia Moreno is a Mexican strategy consultant and lifelong advocate for women in music and the workplace, joining IAWM's board as Chair of the Global Initiatives Committee. Through her practice, Nature Interactive, she helps mission-driven founders build workplaces where women lead and thrive. A classically trained singer and sound healer, she is also writing her debut novel, *Tozi and the Forgotten Song* (tozibook.com), a story of voice, heritage, and belonging to the land.

Originally from Arizona, **Mary Schlanger** is Executive Director of Tempe Winds, Director of Recruitment and Outreach for Cormont Music, and Principal Horn in the Women's Orchestra of Arizona. She also plays Horn with Flagstaff Symphony, Tempe Winds, and the Scorching Winds. Additionally, she is pursuing a second master's degree in Business Administration from the University of Arizona.

Dr. Colleen White is Associate Professor of Flute at Kansas State University and an accomplished performer, educator, and arts administrator. Her work centers on mentorship, artistic leadership, and advocacy for women in music through teaching, commissioning, festival leadership, and national service. She is committed to fostering inclusive artistic communities and empowering the next generation of female musicians and composers.

Advertise in the Journal of the IAWM

As a benefit of membership, you can place an ad at a reduced rate! 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. Due dates: November 30, February 28, May 30, and August 30.

Specifications:

Ads should be supplied as high resolution Print PDF, or Photoshop TIF or JPG. Images must be 300dpi or larger at 100% size used.

Ad sizes and prices:

Book Trim Size: 8.5 x 11

Full Page:

To edge: 8.75" x 11.25"

With border: 7.5" x 9.75"

For non-members..... \$300

For members..... \$175

Inside cover:

For non-members..... \$400

For members..... \$225

Half Page: 7.5" x 4.75" or 4.94" x 7"

For non-members..... \$175

For members..... \$100

Quarter Page: 4.94" x 3.5"

For non-members..... \$100

For members..... \$60

Eighth Page: 2.4" x 3.5"

For members only..... \$30

Send your ad as an attachment to: journal@iawm.org

Deadlines: November 30, February 28, May 30, and August 30.

Payment:

1. Pay online through the IAWM website: iawm.org under Journal. Credit card or PayPal
2. Send a check, payable to IAWM:

IAWM
2712 NE 13th Ave.
Portland, OR 97212



American Musical Instrument Society

The American Musical Instrument Society was founded in 1971 to promote the study of the history, design, and use of musical instruments in all cultures and from all periods. Membership includes collectors, dealers, performers, instrument makers, conservators, curators, and scholars.



*For 2027, our annual conference will be hosted by
the National University of Mexico in Oaxaca, Mexico.*

For membership or journal information, please
contact the AMIS secretary, Núria Bonet
secretary.amis@gmail.com

Website: www.amis.org

The Journey of Composing and Producing an Opera: “Frontiers of Sand and Sea”

ELIANE ABERDAM

This article chronicles the creative and production journey behind *Frontiers of Sand and Sea*, a two-and-a-half-hour opera composed by the author (the libretto was written in French, the composer’s mother tongue). By placing Ramita, a young mother, at the center of the refugee crisis, the opera bears witness to the particular vulnerabilities that migrant women face (sexual violence, maternal grief, and systemic invisibility). Ramita’s journey through gang attack, imprisonment, rape, and the loss of her infant is not incidental to the opera’s humanitarian argument; it is the argument, rendered in music and embodied in a woman’s voice.

Prior scholarship has examined women composers navigating opera’s historically male-dominated landscape, and feminist musicology has analyzed representations of women in operatic repertoire. This article contributes to both strands by documenting a living woman composer’s process of creating a large-scale work that simultaneously challenges compositional conventions and centers a female refugee’s embodied experience. Intentionally unnamed places and characters universalize Ramita’s story: her fate could become ours tomorrow.

The article explores the formal innovations of the work, blending operatic lyricism with oratorio gravitas and narrated interventions presenting real refugee data. It also examines the challenges of producing such a piece from within an academic institutional context and the difficulty of finding the resources for a staged production. Finally, the article addresses the ethical responsibility of representing refugee women’s trauma through art.

I. Background

Frontiers of Sand and Sea is my fourth opera, and as with most of my recent works, it focuses on a social justice cause. My first two operas, *Tamar* and

Shahrazad, address domestic violence against women, and my third operatic work *In Our Own Words* concerns interracial adoption as experienced by two young women (Korean and African American). I am also inspired by topics such as climate change, and social injustice. In 2017, my article *One Thousand and One Nights to heal the Heart* about *Shahrazad* (more a monodrama than an opera) was published in the IAWM Journal, volume 23, No 2.¹

This three-act chamber opera is about migration, survival and hope. The work did not emerge in isolation, nor was it a sudden urge of mine to write such a piece. The idea had been germinating in my head for about twelve years, but I first wanted to obtain interviews or testimonies by refugees or migrants that I could use in the work; organizations are wary of sharing sensitive information, and, at first, I wanted the opera to be rooted in facts, with authentic testimonies for credibility. With years passing, the refugee crisis intensified worldwide, and the media have since documented the tragedy of the refugees and migrants community, so the need to convince the larger audience about the severity of this crisis was slightly diminished. In 2022, I wrote a multimovement chorale piece, *Doors*, the immediate precursor of *Frontiers* about asylum seekers, home-sick exiles and émigrés based on texts written by asylum seekers themselves, from across generations and continents.² In 2023, I witnessed first-hand the effect of war on people during the Ukraine war on my way to Kyiv as I was attending the premiere of my

violin concerto dedicated to Ukrainian fighters and the fallen ones. The train was filled with women and children coming back to their country after more than a year spent in a safer place. This is when I finally decided to compose the long-awaited opera.

II. Writing Of The Libretto

I was lucky to be awarded a one-semester sabbatical by the University of Rhode Island in fall 2024 for the composition of *Frontiers*. Prior to the sabbatical, I wrote the libretto. While I had composed three other operas, this was the first time I had to write a libretto. Because of this, I wrote it in French, my mother tongue, and the vocal lines are written in French. Later, I translated it into English;³ it was less intimidating than writing directly in English. I decided that the story and characters would be entirely fictional, and that no names of places or countries would be named, to imply that the refugee crisis is universal. The story would have no governments, no flags, and no borders identified, because I wanted the story to belong everywhere.

Over the course of several years, I had conducted in-depth research about the topic, reading UN reports (UNHCR),⁴ analysis of the refugee crisis in news articles, and NGO documents to understand the realities of refugees, migrants, exiles, and the causes of migration. To ground the work in reality, to provide relief in the dramatic intensity of the work, and to create a striking contrast between lived experience and data, I inserted narrated components

3 Libretto (English translation) <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MuuWzvCUFieyH5XhT9y2ndsNZXQJUAkF/view?usp=sharing>.

4 United Nations agencies such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “Mid-Year Trends,” November 4, 2025, <https://www.unhcr.org/mid-year-trends>, UNICEF, UN Geneva Office, and others such as Médecins sans Frontières, repeatedly emphasize that women and children are disproportionately exposed to danger during migration and forced displacement (e.g., Médecins Sans Frontières’ 2023 article, “Stories of Survival from the Mediterranean Migration Route”).

1 Eliane Aberdam, “One Thousand and One Nights to Heal the Heart,” *IAWM Journal* 23, no. 2 (2017): 16–20.

2 The movements of *Doors* follow the chronological order of the poems. *Chanson d’Amour* by Gace Brulé (c.1159–c.1212), *The Little Cart* by Ch’ên Tzū-Lung (1608–1647), *Refugee Blues* by W. H. Auden (1907–1973), and *Prospective Immigrants* by Adrienne Rich (1929–2012). <https://youtu.be/HJog8p8rfN8> and <https://www.aberdam.org/s/Doors.pdf>.

throughout the opera that present facts, statistics and data about the world of migrants, all based on these articles and documents. These intermittent interruptions by the Narrator of Data and Statistics serve to ease the tension that the audience might experience due to the intensity of the music and the plot.

The opera immerses us into the heart of our global society, its harshness, intolerance, and prejudices, and reveals the lack of empathy inherent in refugee policies; the work encourages us to find solutions in solidarity and humanity. *Frontiers of Sand and Sea* is not only about raising awareness of the refugee crisis; it also subtly critiques systemic inequities and global policies that perpetuate injustice (in the narrated parts). Beyond inspiring the need for more solidarity and compassion, the opera implicitly strives to warn us that the fate of today's migrants and refugees might become ours tomorrow. But above all, *Frontiers* is about the endurance of hope under harrowing circumstances.

Coming up with a storyline and a synopsis was not difficult. I placed a fictional young mother named Ramita at the center of the story. She is forced to leave her village because of war, famine, and violence. Ramita must leave her children and mother-in-law in a refugee camp across the border before continuing her journey in search of safety. What follows is a brutal, unrelenting ordeal through mountains, deserts, prisons, and tempests at sea, all marked by dangers, exhaustion, fear, loss, and abuse, but also the extraordinary resilience of people who refuse to give up on life. Against all odds, hope endures, carried by those who have survived.

I chose a young mother as my protagonist because women and children are among the most vulnerable people in situations of migration and displacement. Through Ramita's journey, *Frontiers* gives a human face to the emotional, physical, and psychological burdens carried by refugees and highlights the risks that fall disproportionately

Prologue: Narrator

I am the narrator of the data, reports, figures, percentages and statistics. All my data comes from trusted sources. Here are some numbers: at the end of June 2024, 122.6 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced from their homes due to persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations and events seriously disturbing public order.

- A. Among those were 43.7 million refugees, (32 million refugees under UNHCR's mandate, and 6 million Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate). There were also 72.1 million internally displaced people and 8 million asylum seekers.
- B. There are many reasons why people around the globe are forced to flee their homes, their countries. They flee persecution or human rights violations such as torture. Millions flee from armed conflicts or other crises or violence. Some no longer feel safe and might have been targeted just because of who they are or what they do or believe – for example, for their ethnicity, religion, sexuality or political opinions. Some fell because of extreme poverty and lack of prospects, or to get a job or an education.
- C. Every day, 7000 to 21,000 people die of hunger in conflict-affected countries. Fifty-four conflict-affected countries account for almost all of the 281.6 million people suffering from acute illness today. Conflict has also been one of the main causes of forced displacement in these countries, which has reached a record high of more than 117 million people globally.
- D. Conflict is not only one of the main drivers of hunger, in fact, warring parties are actively using famine as a weapon by deliberately "targeting food, water and energy infrastructure and blocking food aid. Starvation has become a deadly weapon used by warring parties, despite the prohibition of international law. The fact that civilians continue to be subjected to such a slow death in the 21st century is a collective failure.

on women:^{5,6,7} sexual violence and exploitation during border crossings, and the absence of adequate medical care, sanitation, nutrition, or protection (UN Agency report⁸, La Cimade⁹).

5 United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), "A Child Is a Child: Protecting Children on the Move from Violence, Abuse and Exploitation," May 2017, <https://www.unicef.org/reports/child-child>.

6 United Nations Office at Geneva, "Human Rights Council Hears Concerns over Displacement, Genocide Risks and Migrant Trafficking," June 23, 2025, <https://www.un Geneva.org/en/news-media/news/2025/06/107705/human-rights-council-hears-concerns-over-displacement-genocide-risks>.

7 Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières, "Stories of Survival from the Mediterranean Migration Route," June 15, 2023, <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/stories-survival-mediterranean-migration-route>.

8 United Nations Refugees and Migrants, "Migrating Children and Women Suffer 'Sexual Violence, Exploitation, Abuse and Detention' – UN Agency," February 28, 2017, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/02/552322-migrating-children-and-women-suffer-sexual-violence-exploitation-abuse-and>.

9 La Cimade, "La Cimade," accessed May 19, 2026, <https://www.lacimade.org/la-cimade-english/>. La Cimade emphasizes that young women migrants are often exposed to a *double vulnerability*: first as migrants, and second as women.

Synopsis

The synopsis was written in one day. I had this idea about the geographical frontiers and the structure came to me quickly. Each act represents the crossing of a natural barrier (mountain, desert, sea), though the real challenge is never the geography, but the unfathomable cruelty, brutality, depravity and mercilessness of people.

Act I is the crossing of the mountain. It opens with smuggler Nikim; he can help cross the border to a refugee camp. Ramita begs him to lead her, her mother-in-law, and her two children to the camp. Nikim leads them across the mountain. A few weeks later, Ramita gives birth in the refugee camp. She will take her newborn to cross the desert, leaving behind the rest of her family. She takes a little money and her mother-in-law's bracelet, hiding it in a hairband the same color as her hair.

In **Act II** smuggler Mouti Fa’oul helps a group of refugees cross the scorching desert. Unfortunately, they encounter a militia. The gangster Sheif is now in charge. He confiscates their money, food and water. Ramita’s infant gets sick. They arrive in a port town and are thrown in jail and relentlessly abused. The infant dies. Upon her release, Ramita goes to a funeral home but cannot find the body of her child.

Act III is about crossing the sea. Ramita meets Captain Djanudrine. She pays for the passage with her bracelet. To avoid coast guards, the boat is moored in a secret location a few miles from town. The passengers must wait a few days for the next moonless night before embarking. A vicious storm kills five men, but the captain manages to prevent the worst. They finally reach a safe port. Ramita wants to work as an interpreter in a refugee relief association. The act ends in a detention center, where refugees hope to obtain legal asylum papers.

Libretto

The writing of the libretto¹⁰ itself was more complicated, though the first draft took only ten days. Deciding which part of the story would be an aria, or a duet, or a chorus felt like relentless decision-making pressure. I showed the libretto to a singer colleague of mine. He pointed out that it would be very beneficial to have a screen on stage to project scenery that would be difficult to stage, such as sea, desert, jeeps and militia, etc. His most useful remark was about the pace of the action on stage: indeed, there was a lot of time spent with the chorus or a character ‘just’ singing how they were feeling, rather than the singers ‘acting’ the story in each scene. He also recommended that I use neutral names such as Mr. T, or Mrs. V, but I could not bring myself to eliminate the names of the characters. If needed I will always be able to change the names later: for instance, Ramita would become Madame R.

10 Eliane Aberdam, *Frontiers of Sand and Sea*, libretto (English translation), <https://www.aberdam.org/s/ENG-FINAL-copy.pdf>.

Scène 6 (Le gang du désert)	Scene 6 (Gang in the desert)
Mouti Fa’oul :	Mouti Fa’oul :
Attention, nous devons nous cacher,	Beware, we need to hide,
Le danger est proche, nous devons nous sauver,	The danger is near, we need to escape,
Mais hélas, ils nous ont trouvés,	But alas, they have found us,
Ils ont attrapé Baké et Souba	They caught Mati and Souba.
Ils n’ont pas d’argent,	who have no money.
Ils vont se faire tuer.	They’re going to be killed.
Ils les frappent, nous sommes impuissants	They beat them, We are powerless,
Nous sommes sans défense.	We are defenseless.
<i>Ajouter un moment de confusion, bruit</i>	<i>Add a moment of confusion and noise</i>
Quintette : (Mouti Fa’oul, Ramita Massuti, Sheif, bandit 1, bandit 2)	Quintet: (Mouti Fa’oul, Ramita Massuti, Sheif, bandit 1, bandit 2)
Sheif : <i>Si !</i>	Sheif: <i>Yes!</i>
Mouti Fa’oul : <i>Non, pas d’accord !</i>	Mouti Fa’oul: <i>No, I don’t agree!</i>
Sheif : <i>Si !</i>	Sheif: <i>Yes!</i>
Mouti Fa’oul : <i>Impossible !</i>	Mouti Fa’oul: <i>Impossible!</i>
Sheif (Menaçant) : <i>Fais gaffe, je n’ai ni patience ni temps.</i>	Sheif (Threatening): <i>Beware, I don’t have patience or time.</i>
Mouti Fa’oul : <i>D’accord, Sheif, prends mes migrants, mais sois juste avec eux.</i>	Mouti Fa’oul: <i>Okay, Sheif, take my migrants, but be fair to them.</i>
<i>Il s’éclipse à reculons.</i>	<i>He slipped away backwards.</i>
Mouti Fa’oul : (en aparté)	Mouti Fa’oul: (aside)
Vous n’avez pas le choix,	You have no choice,
Vous devez suivre Sheif,	You have to follow Sheif,
Mais attention, Il n’est pas de confiance.	But beware, he is not trustworthy.

Libretto Excerpt from Scene 6 (exchange between smuggler and gang leader showing action)

I have revised the entire libretto to make the work more theatrically compelling and more stageable. By reducing passages that dwell solely on inner feeling and expanding the dramatic action, the revision creates far greater opportunity for physical interaction among singers on stage, making the work more operatic, less oratorio-like. The revised libretto also integrates the narrator’s data-driven interventions alongside projected excerpts from interviews with refugees and migrants, for which I have received authorization. Finally, I plan to revise the closing lines of the final chorus (currently ending on “no visa, no work permit”) to leave the audience with a more hopeful message.

III. The Composition Process

I started composing the vocal score for the first act of *Frontiers* during the summer preceding my sabbatical and finished in early December 2024. It was an intensive process of five months of isolation during which I would write an average of ten hours a day. There are fourteen scenes in all, four in Act I, and five in each of Act II and Act III. Each scene comprises several ‘tableaux’ (sub-scenes). I also incorporated a recurring theme for the Narrator of Data, Statistics, and Facts to make his interventions stand out and easily identifiable. In summer 2025, I orchestrated twelve tableaux (for string quintet, clarinet and piano) representing

ACTE I Par-delà la Montagne

Tableaux Scène 1

Ecoutez-moi bien (Nikim, gens du village)
Je t'implore (Ramita)
Chère Ramita (Nikim)
Pour mes enfants (Ramita)

Tableaux Scène 2

Marchez
Ensemble (choeur)
Les étoiles (Nikim)
Unis dans la nuit
Reardez là-bas

Tableaux Scène 3

Le camp est un refuge
Merci Nikim
Le coeur soulagé

Tableaux Scène 4

Nouveau né (choeur)
Berceuse (Ramita)
Interlude
Chaque pièce compte
Bracelet (Ramita, Waguti, Kulima, Danir)
Adieu (Ramita)

thirty-four minutes of music or a quarter of the music (the opera is two hours and fifteen minutes long approximately), selected for a video recording that would serve as promotional materials from which I would extract a teaser. In fall 2025 and spring 2026, I orchestrated the entire opera for chamber ensemble.

In its current version, *Frontiers*¹¹ is written for five strings (two violins, viola, cello, double bass), flute, clarinet, percussion and piano. The score asks for two electro-acoustic sound files for the *Desert Crossing* tableau at the start of Act II, and *Ramita's Nightmare*¹² at the end of Act II. At minimum, the production would require seven singers.

11 Eliane Aberdam, *Frontiers of Sand and Sea*, Act I score, <https://www.aberdam.org/s/ACTE-1.pdf>.

12 Eliane Aberdam, "Ramita's Nightmare," *Frontiers of Sand and Sea*, electronic manipulation of a recording, YouTube, October 2025, <https://youtu.be/wLzyNgLIGfl>.

NARRATOR'S THEME

Nar vx

Je suis le nar-ra-teur des don-nées, des rap-ports, des chif-fres et des-pourcen-

Pno.

tages et des sta-tis-tiques. Voi-ci des don-nées sur le tra-fic de mi-grants.

6 7 8 9 10

NARRATOR'S THEME from Act II Interlude

List of characters by voice type and SATB chorus

1. Soprano 1 (lead role): Ramita Massuti, young migrant mother.
2. Soprano 2: Danir Massuti (Ramita's son, four years old), and Kabelo (11-year-old child protected by Ramita), will be part of the chorus.
3. Mezzo-Soprano: Kulima Massuti (Ramita's daughter, 7 years old), will be part of the chorus.
4. Alto: Waguti (grandmother/mother-in-law) will be part of the chorus.
5. Tenor: Nikim Nabouari (guide), Sheif (smuggler), Office worker, Ambo (passenger 1).
6. Bass/Baritone: Mouti Fa'oul (desert smuggler), Djanudrine (captain), guardian (fort prison and detention center).
7. Narrator of Data, Statistics, and Facts: male voice (tenor or baritone), will be part of the chorus.
8. SATB Chorus: 8 members preferred (some chorus members will be assigned minor roles such as singing members of the rescue team, or the various guardians).

My opera is built on lyrical, expressive, and dramatic foundations. The score combines rich instrumental colors,

rhythmically engaging motives (meters of 5/8 or 7/8, syncopated figures), and very singable vocal lines—a primary concern of mine—as exemplified in the *Bureau*¹³ scene. The ensemble of nine players, seven singers, and a small SATB chorus was chosen with flexibility and producibility in mind, making the work accessible to a wide range of presenting organizations.

Throughout the score, I explore an array of playing techniques and textural contrasts, moving freely between simple homophony and elaborate interweaving motivic work. My music has often been described as "sounding French," and standing at the border of tonality and atonality. This is not surprising given my upbringing and early experiences playing piano music from late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century French composers. I draw on a range of scales and modes, including octatonic, as in *Courage*,¹⁴ hexatonic, whole-tone, and other synthetic collections (*Tempête*¹⁵),

13 Eliane Aberdam, "Bureau," *Frontiers of Sand and Sea*, video recording, YouTube, August 2025, https://youtu.be/vbf_xRWEsLc.

14 Eliane Aberdam, "Courage," *Frontiers of Sand and Sea*, video recording, YouTube, August 2025, <https://youtu.be/tty0sRT371>.

15 Eliane Aberdam, "Tempête," *Frontiers of Sand and Sea*, video recording, YouTube, August 2025, <https://youtu.be/Xee3x-o-WFU>.

FUNERAL HOME SCENE: RAMITA AND EMPLOYEE

Rm: viens ré - cla - mer le droit - d'en - ter - rer mon en - fant.

Ten Emp: OÙ est le corps de votre en - fant? Quel est son nom? Quel est son âge?

Pno: *p*

Rm: *ff* Je ne sais pas où il est, je pen - sais qu'il vous a - vait é - té re - mis.

Ten Emp:

Pno: *mp*

Rm: Il est mort mar - di der - nier.

Ten Emp:

Pno: *p*

FUNERAL HOME from Act II Scene 9

COURAGE

♩ = 120

Mouti Bar: MOUTI FA'OUL *ff* Cou - ra - ge

Pno: *mp*

Mouti Bar: *mf* mes a-mis. É - cou - tez moi bien. É - cou - tez moi bien.

Pno: *f*

COURAGE from Act II Scene 5

but I never allow the harmonic language to drift into absolute atonality for very long: short-term tonics are almost always present, and when/if absent, strong pedal points are established (*Mon Corps*¹⁶), thus providing points of orientation that anchor both performers and listeners even as the harmonic surface shifts underneath. I situate the style of *Frontiers* between the pre-Impressionists' ambiguous tonal language of C. Franck and G. Fauré, the Impressionists' timbral richness and modal shimmer (Debussy, Ravel), and the Central European modernists' formal structure, all unified by my familiarity with the chamber-opera genre.

This harmonic balance between tonal freedom and tonal centers, between modal ambiguity and momentary tonal clarity is central to how I approach musical expression. The synthetic scales dissolve the directed tension of classical tonal syntax, yet the local tonics preserve a sense of place and arrival. It is in that tension, I believe, that the emotional life of the music resides. For dramatic effect, I employ long notes, extreme registers, and extreme dynamics; these tools punctuate the musical surface and emphasize theatrical moments. Lyrical vocal writing, in my view, depends on predominantly conjunct melodic lines with naturally arching phrase contours, rhythms that follow the stress and breath patterns of the text, and a tessitura that keeps the voice in its most resonant range (*Berceuse*, scene 4), reserving those extreme registers for dramatic peaks. Recurring motifs reinforce this singularity by giving performers and listeners recognizable material that comforts the ear with each reiteration. Word painting plays an important role as well. For example, the *Desert Crossing tableau* (scene 5), shows a snake, and the slithering effect is achieved with an unsettling chromatic figure to evoke the snake moving through the desert sand. At the very beginning of scene 12, a sudden percussive crash represents an accidentally dropped

16 Eliane Aberdam, "Mon Corps," *Frontiers of Sand and Sea*, video recording, YouTube, August 2025, <https://youtu.be/UN11Cmrc92A>.

TEMPEST

52

53

CHOEUR

Les va-gues hur-lent, le vent gronde.

63

64

TEMPEST from Act III Scene 12

Support the IAWM

Your donations and support enable IAWM to fulfill its mission and vision. With your generous gifts, our programs continue to cultivate diversity and inclusivity throughout the world of classical music in countless facets. Our awards, grants, and advocacy efforts bring greater equity and awareness of the contributions of women in music.

DONATE: Any amount helps to fund our concerts, conferences, the Journal of the IAWM, grants, and all of our member services. The International Alliance for Women in Music 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. Just click the DONATE button at the bottom of the page on iawm.org.

PLANNED GIFT: If you would like to include IAWM in your estate planning, IAWM can set up Restricted or Unrestricted Endowments. Contact president@iawm.org for more information.

IN-KIND SUPPORT: If you can provide time and/or services rather than funding to support IAWM, please contact Christina Rusnak at president@iawm.org for more information.

SPONSORSHIP: Sponsor a concert, conference, webinar, award, or more. You will make a difference and reach diverse musician members globally. Contact Christina Rusnak at president@iawm.org for more information. You can also sponsor a student membership for \$30 or a full membership of \$75. Each membership enriches their understanding of Women in Music. Please contact membership@iawm.org for more information.

MON CORPS

Poco Agitato $\text{♩} = 92$ **ff** 3

S 23 Mon - corps est vio - - -

Pno. **ff**

S 25 lé, Et mon â - me tor - tu -

Pno.

S 27 réc. Et mon â - me tor - tu - réc.

Pno.

MON CORPS from Act II Scene 8

object in an otherwise hushed moment of departure to capture the fragility of secrecy and the shock of the unplanned. The gunshot in the *Gang Encounter* tableau is rendered by two violent **fff** timpani strokes.

IV. Grant To Video-Record Selected Tableaux

As soon as I came back from my sabbatical, I applied for a grant from the University of Rhode Island (Career Enhancement Grant) to do a video recording of selected tableaux from *Frontiers*, from which I would extract a teaser. I am deeply grateful to have been awarded this grant as it was indispensable to get me started on my path to a potential production. To maximize chances of attracting the attention of opera companies and granting organizations, the twelve tableaux were selected to represent stylistically diverse samples: a few four-part choruses with various meters and textures (two with responsorial), a duet (Bureau) between Ramita and the funeral-home employee (scene 9), the *Tempête* scene, the *Mon Corps* aria from scene 8 (dramatic singing of Ramita recounting her multiple rapes), the Desert Smuggler aria from scene 5, and three short arias from the mountain guide/smuggler (from scene 1 and scene 2). These samples effectively capture the essence of *Frontiers* by showcasing the breadth of my musical

BERCEUSE

Sop Rm **RAMITA** **mp** Mon

Sop Rm en - fant ma lu - mière, dans ce mon - de dans ce mon - de de mi -

Sop Rm sè - - re tu nous ap - por - tes la paix Tu nous

BERCEUSE From Act I Scene 4

language and stylistic approaches, from intimate vocal writing to dramatic choral forces.

I hired a team of nineteen artists and professionals, including nine singers (three soloists and six exclusively for the chorus), seven instrumentalists, the conductor, the videographer and the sound engineer. I orchestrated these twelve tableaux for string quintet, clarinet and piano. The tableaux were recorded in August 2025 and resulted in a thirty-four-minute high-quality video^{17,18} and a teaser¹⁹ with subtitles in English. In fall 2025 and spring 2026, I orchestrated the whole opera, adding percussion and flute.

V. What's Next?

While my institution has been supportive, I have had difficulty making progress toward a production of *Frontiers*: I have joined multiple opera organizations, attended a conference and submitted several grant applications. I have spent a year and a half working to share this opera more widely and the barriers I have encountered seem to exemplify the same challenges the subjects of the opera experience in being given no voice. These barriers also speak to wider structures of exclusion in the operatic industry, still favoring male composers. According to the Institute for Composer Diversity, while productions by historically excluded groups of composers have risen in recent years,

17 Eliane Aberdam, *Frontiers of Sand and Sea*, video recording of selected scenes, YouTube, August 2025, <https://youtu.be/QeYBID6cd4Y>.

18 Credits for the video recording: Luis Viquez, Conductor; Logan Trotter, Soprano solo/chorus; Mark Conley, Tenor solo/chorus; Devon Russo, Bass solo/chorus; Chorus: Jess Huetteman, Soprano; Caroline O'Dwyer, Arielle Rogers-Wilkey, Celia Russo, Altos; Colin Campbell, Tenor; Nathan Halbur, Bass; Wendy Rios, Violin I; Alexey Shabalin, Violin II; Consuelo Sherba, Viola; Megan Koch, Cello; Garrett Campbell, Double Bass; Peter Bianca, Clarinet; David Gilliland, Piano; Brad Kleyla, Audio/Video Producer; Ethan Hicks, Video/Sound recording; Chris Kleyla, Assistant Engineer.

19 Eliane Aberdam, "Teaser," *Frontiers of Sand and Sea*, video recording, YouTube, January 2026, <https://youtu.be/cwQrsAD5N4s>.

DESERT CROSSING

186

DESERT CROSSING from Act II, Scene 5

I have spent a year and a half working to share this opera more widely and the barriers I have encountered seem to exemplify the same challenges the subjects of the opera experience in being given no voice.

—ELIANE ABERDAM



Recording Session, Aug. 12, 2025

women composers remain particularly underrepresented. In the 2023–24 concert season, fewer than twelve percent of pieces performed by U.S. orchestras were composed by women.²⁰

Why would I write an article for IAWM about my journey of composing and producing an opera, when the work has not even been produced, and no clear path toward a potential production exists? Writing about the journey, even before a production has been secured, is both justified and urgent, particularly within the IAWM Journal's mission of giving voice to women composers. *Frontiers* is a substantial, finished work: a three-act, fourteen-scene chamber opera with a full score, libretto in French and English translation, and video recordings of selected scenes. The compositional journey—my decisions about form, language, instrumentation, having a narrator grounded in statistics and data, and using a bit of electronics alongside live chamber forces—already stands on its own as a subject of scholarly inquiry. This is my fourth opera in a deliberate body of work committed to social

justice, following *Tamar*, *Shahrazad*, and *In Our Own Words*, situating *Frontiers* within a sustained artistic vision rather than an isolated event. The act of writing this article is itself advocacy on multiple levels: it gives operatic voice to refugee and migrant women whose suffering is too often rendered invisible or reduced to statistics, and it asserts my own voice as a woman composer in a genre historically dominated by men as composers, conductors, and librettists. For women writing serious, politically engaged opera, structural barriers to production are real and systemic. For example, in a study examining gender parity in opera production at The Royal Opera, Vincent, Coles, and Vincent write: “The systemic and relative (in)visibility of women’s artistic work indicates that women, as a group, experience gender-based disadvantage in the key creative roles central to opera production at The Royal Opera.”²¹ I hope this article will make my work visible to the programmers, directors, funders, and scholars who could become part of the path forward, and not merely be a reflection of my endeavor. It is an active ingredient of my journey.

21 Caitlin Vincent, Amanda Coles, and Jordan Beth Vincent, “Opera-ting on Inequality: Gender Representation in Creative Roles at The Royal Opera,” *Cultural Trends* 31, no. 3 (2022): 217, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09548963.2021.1966295>.

20 Rob Deemer and Cory Meals, 2024 *Orchestra Repertoire Report*, with assistance from P. J. Corron, Humay Gasimzadeh, Andrea Layedra, Philip Marra III, Jessica Sisti, Darren Sobol, and Katherine Wynn (Institute for Composer Diversity and League of American Orchestras, 2024), <https://americanorchestras.org/2024-orchestra-repertoire-report/>.

VI. Conclusion

Two years after I began writing the libretto and composing the music for *Frontiers of Sand and Sea*, I find myself facing a wall that I don’t know how to cross. The work exists, it breathes, it lives. But making it exist on a stage is a completely different battle that I do not yet know how to fight. There is a painful irony in having spent so much time giving a voice to those whom no one hears, only to find oneself speechless in the face of the nearly impenetrable opera industry. I composed the music. I wrote the libretto. I recorded scenes, created a teaser. The work is there, whole. How can I turn this creation into production? The course of action I have established for myself is not a guarantee of success, but the least I can do is to give voice to refugees and migrants, especially women, so their vulnerabilities, endurance, hopefulness, and extraordinary resilience can be exposed. Becoming a member of Opera America and recently attending their conference gave me hope. The organization offers Discovery Grants to female composers²², helping support the exposure and production of operas by women.

Throughout her four-decade career as a composer, Eliane Aberdam (<https://www.aberdam.org>) has pursued a relentless quest for artistic excellence and social impact. Her compositions have been performed in Europe, the United States, Hong-Kong, Ukraine, Mexico and Costa Rica. She has been selected for the prestigious electronic music program at IRCAM (Paris), has received commissions from prominent ensembles such as the Ensemble-Intercontemporain and has had premieres of her works at renowned venues such as Carnegie Hall and the ODC Theater (San Francisco). Her three previous operas and many other works explore pressing social issues such as violence against women, war, racism, the environment, and the refugee crisis.

22 OPERA America, “Opera America Awards \$100,000 to Support Opera by Women at Five Opera Companies,” OPERA America, September 12, 2024, <https://www.operaamerica.org/r/grants-awards/11885/opera-america-awards-100000-to-support-opera>.

IAWM Interview Series

Is there someone we should interview whose work deserves more recognition? Please send your recommendations for our Interview Series to president@iawm.org.

AWARDS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

IAWM 2026 Annual Concert Winners

We have nine winners for the 2026 call for Vocal and Choral Works. The University at Buffalo in western New York will host the concert and feature the Chamber Singers and the Buffalo Girlchoir. A review of the concert will be in issue #4 of the IAWM journal in November. Full biographies and program notes for each piece are on the website. Congratulations!



Anne Kilstofte



Kari Cruver Medina



Lucy Shirley

Anne Kilstofte, *Soldier's Prayer*. Kilstofte has received a multitude of professional accolades and honors including two McKnight Fellowships, two Minnesota State Arts Board Fellowships and the Bush Artist Fellowship in 1997. She has written approximately fifty sacred works for other church residency programs in Arizona and Minnesota. She has been commissioned by The Dale Warland Singers, and was selected as composer-in-residence with the Stockholm String Quartet of Stockholm, Sweden, and received a Jerome Grant for her work in Sweden. She also served as composer-in-residence at Hamline University then in 2004, she received a Fulbright Senior Scholar to compose, research, and teach at the Estonian Academy of Music in Tallinn. After moving to Arizona, Kilstofte was hired at Glendale Community College and has been teaching there for seventeen years, continuing with composer residencies. Dr. Kilstofte

served on the executive committees of the American Composers Forum, Society of Composers, Incorporated (SCI), and formerly at IAWM. She currently serves on the Fulbright Association Arizona (FAAZ) board of directors. She holds a Ph.D. in Music Theory/Composition from the University of Minnesota, an M.M. in Music Composition, and a B.S.M.M. in Sound Technology from the University of Colorado. <https://kilstofte.com>

Kari Cruver Medina, *Silver Apples of the Moon*. Seattle-based composer and pianist Kari Cruver Medina grew up on the lively shores of Puget Sound surrounded by the music of the natural world. Literature, history, faith, folklore, and the intersection of Art and culture have always inspired her. These interests reflect in engaging music that is marinated in an imaginative, often whimsical blend of narrative and nature. She likes to laugh, and that reflects in her music too. Medina's

award-winning pieces have been performed and premiered internationally and span a broad swath of stylistic traditions: from art song and choral works to chamber and orchestral music. A true child of the Pacific Northwest, her BA and MA are from UW and WSU. When not composing you will find her working in her garden or tramping through the woods: a rake, a book of poetry, and a good cup of coffee close at hand. She loves to travel and savors making music with friends across the globe. <https://www.karicruvermedina.com/aboutkaricruvermedina>

Lucy Shirley, *Moonrise*. Shirley is a composer interested in language and memory. Her works are poly-stylistic and playful, often focusing on aspects of the human voice. Shirley's earliest influences come from long car rides as a kid listening to her mom's mixtapes of showtunes and classic Americana, and she still frequently incorporates aspects of theatricality and folk melody into



Stefania De Kenessey



Sabrina Clarke



Cara Haxo

her current practice. She has worked with artists like JACK Quartet, the mdi ensemble, LIGAMENT, The Crossing, The Imani Winds, Mammoth Trio, and Carrie Koffman, and her music has been featured at festivals such as June in Buffalo, the Norfolk New Music Workshop, the Napoleon Electronic Music Festival, the World Saxophone Congress, University of Georgia's New Music Festival, and High SCORE Festival in Pavia, Italy. Shirley's awards include selection in IAWM's 2024 Call for Scores, SOLI Chamber Ensemble's 30x30x30 Project, and a 2022 ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award. Shirley holds degrees from the University of Indianapolis, and the University of Missouri Kansas City. Shirley is currently a Ph.D. Candidate at the University of Iowa, where she studies with David Gompper. <https://lucygraceshirley.com>

Stefania De Kenessey, *Urgent Earth*. Her music has been performed throughout New York City, from Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center to Joe's Pub and La Mama; internationally, it has been heard in more than 35 countries, from Australia to Venezuela. Her output ranges from choral, vocal and operatic pieces to chamber and orchestral work, as well as scores for film, theater and dance. De Kenessey is the inaugural

Composer-In-Residence for the Dal Sogno Ensemble, which commissioned *The Names of Woman*, a cantata dedicated to women who have been unjustly neglected by history. De Kenessey is also the first Composer-In-Residence for the Accord Treble Choir, which commissioned her *Urgent Earth* (2024), a feminist eco-cantata about the climate change crisis. She has collaborated regularly with the all-female Ariel Rivka Dance Company and its founding choreographer Ariel Grossman, and now serves as its Composer-In-Residence. De Kenessey is committed to helping women composers and musicians achieve parity in an unequal, biased world. She is the founding president of IAWM and serves on the board of New York Women Composers. <http://www.stefaniadekenessey.com/about>

Sabrina Clarke, *Love Songs for Ada*. Clarke is a composer based in Raleigh, NC, where she is an Assistant Professor of Music Theory and Composition at Meredith College. Her music has been performed across the United States and abroad, at events including the Penn State New Music Festival, the International Music by Women Festival, the Common Tone Music Festival, the Geelvinck Fortepiano Festival in Amsterdam, the International Trombone Festival, the University of

Louisville New Music Festival, the Raleigh Symphony Orchestra Chamber Series, and the Society of Composers Region III Festival. Sabrina earned her Ph.D. in Music Composition from the Boyer College of Music, Temple University. <https://www.sabrinaclarkemusic.com>

Cara Haxo, *Flame and Shadow*. Described as "movingly lyrical" (Avant Music News) and "quirky but attractive" (The Art Music Lounge), the music of Cara Haxo juxtaposes delicate, sparkly textures with the gritty and the grotesque. Haxo is the winner of the 2022 NWMF Emerging Women Composers Competition. She was also awarded the 2019 IAWM Libby Larsen Prize, the 2013 NFMC Young Composers Award, and the 2013 IAWM Ellen Taaffe Zwilich Prize. She has received commissions from the May Festival Youth Chorus, Hub New Music, Quince Ensemble, and Splinter Reeds. Haxo earned her Ph.D. in Composition at the University of Oregon, where she worked as a Graduate Teaching Fellow in Music Theory. She also holds degrees from Butler University and The College of Wooster. She is an Academic Dean and faculty member for The Walden School Young Musicians Program and the current Vice Chair and Treasurer of the Cleveland Composers Guild. Visit www.chaxomusic.com.



Beth Wiemann



Faye-Ellen Silverman | Photo: Da Ping Luo



Melika M. Fitzhugh

Beth Wiemann, *Home Decor and the CDC*. Wiemann was raised in Burlington, Vermont, studied composition and clarinet at Oberlin College and received her Ph.D. in composition from Princeton University. Her works have been performed nationally and internationally by the ensembles Continuum, Transient Canvas, Earplay, Guerilla Opera, and others. Her compositions have won awards from the Orvis Foundation, Copland House, the Colorado New Music Festival, New York Treble Singers, and regional arts councils. She teaches clarinet, composition and music theory at the University of Maine. Wiemann's many recordings include *Why Performers Wear Black*, on Albany Records, and also works on the New Focus Recordings, Navona, Ravello, Capstone, Innova and Americus record labels. A recording of her chamber opera *I Give You My Home* for Guerilla Opera was released on Parma in 2023, and also made into a film released by Guerilla. Her compositions are available from American Composers Edition in New York. Wiemann has also served as the Director of the McGillicuddy Humanities Center at UMaine. She is the state chair for the International Clarinet Association, and as leadership in the Society of Composers, Inc. <https://bethwiemann.com>

Faye-Ellen Silverman, *From Eve's Perspective*. Silverman is an American composer whose works draw inspiration from a variety of sources, including her Jewish heritage. Some of her works, such as *A Free Pen*, have evolved from her commitment to free speech. Her decades of working with the International Women's Brass Conference have led to the creation of several works for brass instruments. While many of her compositions are for solo, chamber and vocal genres, she also enjoys writing for choir, orchestra, and other large mediums. Over 100 of her works are published by Seesaw Music/ Subito Music Corp. and are recorded on several labels. At age 13 she won the Parents League composition contest, judged by Leopold Stokowski, resulting in her Carnegie Hall debut. She was the first woman to receive a D.M.A. in music composition from Columbia University. She has taught at many institutions, including the Juilliard School (Extension), NYU, the Mannes School of Music, Goucher College, the Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University, and Columbia University. She has lectured across Europe and the United States. Silverman currently serves as Board Secretary for New York Women Composers. <https://www.fayeellensilverman.com>

Melika M. Fitzhugh, *Requiescant*. A native of Stafford, Virginia, she studied at Harvard-Radcliffe, A.B. and Longy School of Music of Bard College M.M. Mel's compositions have been performed internationally by the PHACE Ensemble (Austria), Quarteto Larianna (Brazil), the Brouwer Trio (Spain), Sarah Jeffery (Nederland, Sweden), Sylvia Hinz (Germany), the Radcliffe Choral Society (US), Berit Strong (US), John Tyson (US), Miyuki Tsurutani (Japan/US), and Aldo Abreu (Venezuela/US). Mel was a 2021 Bang on a Can Fellow, the 2020 winner of the PatsyLu Prize for IAWM's Search for New Music, the 2014 winner of the Longy orchestral composition competition, and has performed with the Radcliffe Choral Society, Coro Allegro, the Harvard Wind Ensemble, the Village Circle Band, and WACSAC. The artist, who has composed music for film and stage, was a member of *Just In Time* Composers and Players and is currently a member of world/early music ensembles Quilisma Consort and Urban Myth, in addition to playing bass guitar with symphonic metal/progressive band Illusion's End, the ambient rock band Rose Cabal and the Balkan folk dance band Balkan Fields. <http://melikamfitzhugh.com>

Bellingham Chamber Music Society's 2026-27 Season to Highlight Women Composers

The 2026-27 Bellingham Chamber Music Society concert season pays tribute to the composers featured in Leah Broad's biography "Quartet: How Four Women Challenged the Musical World."

Broad's book explores the lives of four British composers spanning 150 years as they negotiated the realities of musical life as women in the world of their times. Broad calls out "historical forgetting [as] a powerful form of erasure." Five chamber works from these composers are sprinkled throughout the season.

The quartet of composers

- Ethel Smyth (b.1858): Famed for her operas, this trailblazing queer Victorian composer was a larger-than-life socialite, intrepid traveller and committed Suffragette.
- Rebecca Clarke (b.1886): This talented violist was one of the first women hired by a professional orchestra in London, later celebrated for her modernist experimentation.
- Dorothy Howell (b.1898): A prodigy who shot to fame at the 1919 Proms; on retirement, she tended Elgar's grave alone.
- Doreen Carwithen (b.1922): One of Britain's first woman film composers

Rebecca Clarke's great-nephew, Charles Johnson, will present a lecture on Saturday, September 26 in the Hotel Leo Social Lounge. Johnson worked with Clarke in the last decade of her life to catalogue her works. He owns Clarke's publishing rights, and has edited or published more than eighty of Clarke's works.

This season features Western Washington University's music faculty members Laura Camacho, Celeste Fraser, Mehrdad Gholami, Pat Nelson, Jay Rozendaal, Eli Schille-Hudson, Jill Whitman, Judith Widrig, and Kay Zavislak.

Seating is limited, and reservations are recommended.

<https://musicinbellingham.com/tickets/>



LunART

Celebrating Women in the Arts

2027 Call For Scores

Application Period: September 1 - October 18, 2026

Be heard. Be celebrated. Be part of the legacy. This global competition welcomes women composers of all ages and nationalities, and is an opportunity for women composers to have their music performed, recorded, and celebrated at the LunART Festival.

<https://www.lunartfestival.org/callforscores2027>



Do you know a primary or secondary teacher that should be recognized?

The Education Grant, launching September 1st, helps teachers bring a greater focus on women in music to their students through professional development, materials, commissions, guest artists, or other media. We thank the **Athena Brass Band** for their sponsorship.



HER VOICE IN MOTION

An immersive concert Celebrating Women in Electroacoustic Music as part of the Virginia Tech New Music + Technology Festival

**Friday, March 26, 2027 | 8:00 pm in The CUBE
Blacksburg, Virginia, USA**

NEW Call for Works — Deadline October 1, 2026

The IAWM and SEAMUS invite submissions of Electronic and Electroacoustic Music to be presented in THE CUBE at Virginia Tech as part of the Virginia Tech New Music + Technology Festival. The Cube is a five-story immersive performance environment providing a unique platform for spatial music and multimedia performers. Preference will be given to works that creatively engage immersive audio, explore the artistic possibilities of spatialized sound, and take advantage of the unique capabilities of The Cube.

iawm.org/annual-concert-page/



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR WOMEN IN MUSIC

PAULINE ALDERMAN AWARD

Prizes up to \$300 for
works published in
2024 and 2025 about
women in music

THE CALL OPENS OCTOBER 1, 2026
DEADLINE NOVEMBER 15, 2026

FOR MORE INFO:

[HTTPS://IAWM.ORG/PAULINE-ALDERMAN-AWARDS-GUIDELINES/](https://iawm.org/pauline-alderman-awards-guidelines/)



The International Alliance for Women in Music grants this award for outstanding scholarship on women in music*. The categories include a booklength monograph or dissertation or thesis about women in music (including biography, history, analysis, and interpretation; a journal article or essay dealing with an aspect of women in music and/or a bibliographic study, research tool or reference work by or about women in music.

Notifications: March 30, 2027.

FOLLOW US

www.iawm.org

[Instagram.com/iawmcommunity](https://www.instagram.com/iawmcommunity)

[facebook.com/iawmusic](https://www.facebook.com/iawmusic)

[x.com/iawmcommunity](https://www.x.com/iawmcommunity)

SUPPORT US

IAWM fosters and encourages
the activities of women in music.

www.iawm.org/support

MUSIC by WOMEN

FESTIVAL

MISSISSIPPI UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN

March 4-6, 2027

Call for Participation: Papers, Lecture Recitals, Performances

Deadline: Thursday, September 24 2026

The Program Committee for the Eleventh Annual Music by Women Festival welcomes proposals from various fields of the musical profession. This festival brings together independent musicians, composers, current and retired academics, undergraduate and graduate students, and teachers who are interested in exploring topics relating to music composed by women. Musicians from all professional settings are encouraged to submit proposals from a range of topics including, but not limited to performance, musicology, theory, and music education.

Call for Scores

Deadline: Thursday, September 24 2026

The Program Committee for the Eleventh Annual Music by Women Festival welcomes submissions of original compositions from independent musicians, current and retired academics, and undergraduate and graduate students for performances at concerts throughout the festival. The festival will accept submissions for solo instruments, instruments with piano accompaniment, as well as works for small chamber ensembles. This call is open to women composers of any age, geographical location and stage in their professional career.

[https://www.muw.edu/
musicbywomen/submissions/](https://www.muw.edu/musicbywomen/submissions/)



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR WOMEN IN MUSIC

Join the IAWM Google Group

The IAWM Google Group is an online member community united by an interest in the music of women composers and the achievements of women in music across time, locations, and disciplines. The forum provides members with the opportunity to connect, to network, and to share ideas. You may also share local events that may not qualify for an IAWM social media post.

To join the IAWM Google Group members must opt in through a Google Form. They must email communications@iawm.org. In the subject line, put IAWMLIST FirstNameLastName. The Operations Administrator will send the member the form. The subscriber receives a welcome statement and a message with details to successfully use the list. Subscribers may send posts directly to the list address.

New York Women Composers

We support the creation, promotion, and performance of music by women composers.

Membership benefits include:

- Exclusive score calls from our Seed Money Grant recipients, who present concerts both internationally and locally
- Inclusion in our online searchable database and member profiles
- Participation in our free outreach events, such as our Tutti workshop series
- Opportunities to participate in member-organized events and initiatives
- Bi-weekly email digests with links to available funding, job, and career development opportunities
- Opportunities to be featured in partnerships with peer organizations, including the Flute Examiner and the Cello Museum

Membership is open to women composers who reside in New York State or the greater New York City metropolitan region. We also welcome those in musical or artistic occupations who support the recognition of women composers.

Visit newyorkwomencomposers.org for more information.

REPORTS

Interfaith Center at the Presidio: Unleashing the power of Interreligious Cooperation

30th Anniversary Reunion, May 3, 2026

MONA REESE

This event had speakers who were justifiably proud of the hard work and energy they have devoted to the center all these years. To enhance the celebration, two contemporary composers', Deon N. Price and Meira Warshauer, compositions were performed. Performers were: Rev. James Parrish Smith, organ; Mariya Kaganskaya, mezzo soprano; Alla Gladysheva, piano, and Deon N. Price, piano.

The first piece, *Villanelle*, was composed by Deon Price and performed by Rev. James Smith. Smith performed the piece with joy. The tune was good, the organ registration unusual and refreshing. I enjoyed the complex motifs.

One of my favorite pieces, *Rachel Weeps*, was exquisite. The vocal writing was effective and evocative. The melodies were passionate, sad, and beautiful. This is a wonderful piece! I especially liked the way Ms. Warshauer wrote weeping and keening into the melody. The texture was remarkable. The piano writing provided a good solid counter melody. Excellent work! I hope I can hear it again.

Rev. Smith performed a medley of American pieces. Wow. He has flashing fast feet. He began with *Spiritual Fantasy* by Lucius Weathersby. Next was *American Pastorale* by John S Dixon. To close he played *Festival March* by Michael Burkhardt. He was an enthusiastic and wonderful player. I loved listening to him.

To close the program, Deon Price played several of her short piano compositions. They were fun and funny. *Forever Love*: This piece was made for the movies. Romantic and cinematic texture and melody. It's quite fine musical embroidery. *Desert Impression*: I've driven through the desert. All those spikey plants and tumble weeds are restful for

a while, but then, a scary melody and harmony makes me long for grass and shade. Wonderful writing. *Quake Fantasy*: I've lived in California almost 30 years. We get tiny quakes often. The first time we had a real house-shaker, I was frightened. I stood in a doorway, my cats cuddling my legs. Finally, the house stopped shaking. This music sounds exactly how an earthquake feels. Excellent score and performance.

The 30th anniversary event was successful and interesting.



Mariya Kaganskaya, mezzo soprano.
Alla Gladysheva, piano. | Photo: Tom Hassing



Deon N. Price | Photo: Tom Hassing



Rev. James Parrish Smith | Photo: Tom Hassing

JOIN THE IAWM

To meet the goals of our organization, we need to continue to enlarge and strengthen our membership. Please encourage your colleagues and students to join the IAWM and invite them to visit our website at iawm.org. Ask your university library to subscribe to the *Journal of the IAWM*.

RECORDING REVIEWS



Viola and Harp Recital: Women Composers

Viola and Harp Recital: Women Composers

Pierre Henri Xuereb, viola. Rachel Talitman, harp. Harp & Company. CD505053. (2025)

KATHRYN FELT

Viola and Harp Recital: Women Composers, a release from harpist Rachel Talitman and violist Pierre-Henri Xuereb, goes well beyond the broad label of “women composers” or a niche instrumentation showcase. Adding to Talitman’s extensive catalogue of recordings under Harp & Company, the duo presents four world premieres by the living composers Meira Warshauer, Judith Markovich, Ayala Asherov, and the 20th-century composer Renée Hansen-Jamet (1900-1985). Each composer tackles the acoustic potential of the viola and harp in varied, coloristic ways, and Talitman and Xuereb’s responsive playing impressively negotiates the balance between timbral blending and differentiation. References to the past—which include modal scales in Markovich’s setting of an ancient Jewish prayer, and Warshauer’s use of the Baroque viola d’amore—create a loose thread between these works. The result is a recording that revels in the timbral possibilities of this unusual instrument pairing.

Markovich’s *When Words Fail* draws on a liturgical poem that the composer held on to for years before setting it to music for Talitman’s project. The text, lines from the Jewish prayer *Akdamut*, imagines that even an ocean of ink and a sky of parchment would still be insufficient to express the love of God. The liner notes recount how these words were found on the wall of a patient’s room in a California psychiatric hospital in 1917. The overall effect of this piece is intensely intimate, with a responsorial dynamic between viola and harp as they continually pass gestures and ideas between each other. Elegiac melodies, most notably in “Were Vast Skies of Parchment” and “Were Every Man a Scribe,” give the work a sense of devotion and vocality. Placing three musical interludes called *selahs*, or short pauses which are found in the Psalms, between the larger movements strengthens the work’s dramatic throughline and offers moments of contemplation.

Love Song for Viola d’Amore and Harp by Meira Warshauer draws inspiration from the resonance of the viola d’amore’s seven bowed and seven sympathetically vibrating strings. Warshauer explores the viola’s lower register, with its grainy yet warm timbre, in combination with the open sonorities of the harp. One effect, the harp’s *bisbigliando*, a soft, murmuring tremolo, sounds especially gossamer against the viola. The piece gradually expands into the highest range in both instruments, where the viola occasionally can take on a more brittle texture. This is softened through harmonics and the harp’s ringing tone to evoke the warmth promised by the title.

Imbued with an unmistakable French musical ethos, Renée Hansen-Jamet’s three-movement *Sonata for Viola and Harp* leans into modal color and sprightly rhythmic momentum. Jamet’s lineage as a student of Nadia Boulanger is evident in the work’s craftsmanship and economy. The first movement opens with a lively 3/8 theme, with the harp producing drum-like effects, before the music moves into more virtuosic writing. In the second movement, “Lent,” Talitman and Xuereb beautifully coordinate the phrasing and move with unity. The final movement is propulsive and alacritous, finishing the sonata with a light-footed conclusion.

Ayala Asherov’s experience writing songs in English and Hebrew and scoring music for multimedia enriches the lyrical character in her *Fantasia for Viola and Harp*. Her themes, such as a plaintive descending melody high in the viola’s register, never lapse into the saccharine. The sections in this fantasia grow intuitively out of one another. Xuereb brings a warm vibrato and subtle breathiness to the initial contemplative theme, while Asherov transforms these ideas through an array of textures, such as icy *sul ponticello* effects. Asherov’s work reflects both Talitman’s vision for expanding the viola-harp repertoire and her ongoing commitment to championing Jewish and Israeli composers. The thoughtful curation behind this album is beautifully executed and a meaningful addition to chamber music literature.

Kathryn Felt, DMA, is a lecturer at Rutgers University based in New York City. She is the Artistic Director of Wild Muse Arts, an initiative dedicated to nature-centric programming, ecomusicology, and overlooked historical works.

How to Request a Review of Your Book or Recording

To request a review of your book or recording, email the information to journal@iawm.org with “Review Request” in the subject line. If you wish to review books or recordings for the journal, email with “Review List” in the subject line. To submit a completed review, send it as an email attachment in MS Word with “Review” in the subject line. See *Call for Contributions* on page 3 for more information.

Deon Nielsen Price: Seven Decades of Composing (1956–2026)

Deon Nielsen Price, composer. Navona Records. NV6806. (2026)

ANNA RUBIN

At the age of 91, composer, pianist, and educator Deon Nielsen Price has published a new recording with music representing seven decades of her composing life, from her early 20s up to recent years. In her career, she has composed hundreds of works which have been performed across Europe, the Americas and Southeast Asia, and in some of the most prestigious venues in the world. This latest recording is a musical cornucopia the composer collected from earlier recordings up to the present. Pieces include piano, organ, viola, and reed trio suites, a cello quartet, various art songs, small chamber works, and an orchestral piece. There's even a tasty morsel of Americana for choir.

Price's emotional breadth is wide. Deeply soulful and poignant works include her beautiful arrangement of the spiritual "Nobody Knows de Trouble I See" and "The Spirit Weeping" for four cellos. Her verve and high energy abound in such works as the piquant "Freeway Fugue." Stately grandeur resounds from one of the organ "Chorales" called "Psalm." Throughout, one hears Price's incisive musical intelligence. Her fascination with counterpoint runs throughout much of this music. Her harmonic explorations range from acerbic atonality to lush common practice, with a very idiosyncratic way of combining these extremes even within one piece. Price constantly engages the ear by employing a wide variety of musical textures and timbres.

In several works on this recording, Price has been moved to acknowledge the suffering of victims of war, sometimes using text and other times purely by music. Price honors the "valiant spirit of Ukrainians" in a flute/piano duo. She also creates a musical protest to "hateful cruelty" in this country via a joyful celebration of life in her orchestral work, "Agapi kai Chara" (Love and Joy). Her humanitarianism shines through these works, along with her deep concern for the values of respect, love, and humility.

The works are organized in a roughly chronological order, beginning with one of her earliest compositions from the 1950s, the four-part "Diversions" suite for solo piano. Performed by the composer herself, it displays her formidable technique at the instrument. An example is the opening piece, "Freeway Fugue," which begins with a fast and fierce contrapuntal romp in tart atonal counterpoint that gradually moves into elegant chordal writing. "Desert Impression," and "Surf Dance" explore a wide range of approaches ending in the nervous trills and rapid figuration of the final "Quake Fantasy." The "Chorales" for organ, performed by Karel Martinek, is a four-part suite which beautifully explores the rich timbres available on the instrument—from the thin vulnerable sound of the highest range to the rich full spectrum of sound so characteristic of the instrument. The first piece is based on the Renaissance villanelle form. The second and fourth pieces flower into glorious, full-throated Baroque-style counterpoint. "Persuasion," the third in the series, is described by the composer as "having a quick tempo, repeated chords and alternating meters of two and three beats" which "portray an energetic attempt to persuade." The jazzy melody is set against chordal accompaniment.

Countertenor Darryl Taylor is a longtime collaborator with Price. He is featured in *To the Children of War*, a four-song suite drawn from Price's longer work, featuring the poetry of Maya Angelou. Taylor is accompanied on piano by the composer. Throughout she exploits the singer's powerful and brilliant high range and his lyrical ability. The first song, "Life Doesn't Frighten Me," embodies a child's bravado and optimism. The simple declarative phrases and colorful imagery of the text are supported by a lively accompaniment. "Alone" and its signature line "Nobody can make it out here alone," features



Viola and Harp Recital: Women Composers

a menacing piano ostinato underneath. "Give Me Your Hand" is an inspirational song with soaring melodies spanning a large range. Taylor negotiates the wide leaps beautifully. "Ships" is a short, intense song with a churning piano accompaniment. The last dramatic lines are: "Let me have breath, just to my death. And I'll live it." This poem evokes the transatlantic enslaved persons' trade and the mortal peril and permanent damage it cast upon so many lives.

Her harmonic explorations range from acerbic atonality to lush common practice, with a very idiosyncratic way of combining these extremes even within one piece. Price constantly engages the ear by employing a wide variety of musical textures and timbres.

—ANNA RUBIN

Miran Vaupotic conducts the Royal Scottish National Orchestra in *Agápi Kai Chará* (Love and Joy). Section I, "Agápi kai," begins with a slow and muted brass chorale. A haunting melody will return throughout this section. Price is continually opening the piece into full orchestration and then reducing to soloistic passages. Eventually, the opening melody hovers

over the muted horns with halting harp plucks. Section II, "Agápi Chará," features lively syncopated melodies roving around the orchestra. Tonal harmonies are interrupted by strongly dissonant accent chords. A sudden break into a Klezmer-like dance dissolves into the texture reminiscent of the opening.

"War Ends Song Endures" features Lindsey Goodman on flute with pianist Clare Longendyke. The piece was originally commissioned in tribute to Ukraine. The piece is characterized by alternating contrasts – subdued, consonant, and mournful contrasted with percussive dissonance in both instruments. A dance section with a Slavic or Klezmer-like feel inhabits the middle of the piece. The penultimate section of almost violent music closes in a soft abbreviated flute solo, recalling the peacefulness of the opening.

Brett Deubner is featured in a three-part suite entitled *Stile Antico for Solo Viola*. One section evokes the Greek chromatic

tetrachord, anticipating our chromatic scale. Another section focuses on diatonic tetrachords of the Greeks. This section highlights an intriguing 3-part texture of drone, linear bowed melody, and pizzicato notes plucked by the left hand. The final movement, "Concitato," evokes Monteverdi's 'agitated style' with a far-ranging melody featuring large intervals and powerful double stops.

The final piece and another musical protest honors Armenians who were forced to evacuate their homes by the neighboring dictatorial regime of Azerbaijan. Part I is based on an Armenian folk song "Grinding Wheat." "Grinding Wheat in Artsakh with Friends" is performed by The Shell Trio with Shuashana Hakobyn on piano, Lilit Zakaryan on violin and Katya Janpoladyan on cello. It opens with a circular high violin melody, with cello pizzicato and intermittent piano chords. The cello then dominates with a low, resonant melody against

the continuing violin. The piano is in a subdued, supportive role as the violin and cello are in dialogue. The piano then takes over the repeating melody that expands across the keyboard with more muted string accompaniment. Subtle harmonic modulations keep the motion going. Different pairings of instruments give variety to the texture. Part I ends in a slow and mournful hush. In the shorter second portion, percussive sounds on the instruments lead into a lively melodic and chordal texture. Modal harmony prevails.

The production values of this digital recording release are excellent throughout. Price is to be congratulated on this large collection which she has gifted us.

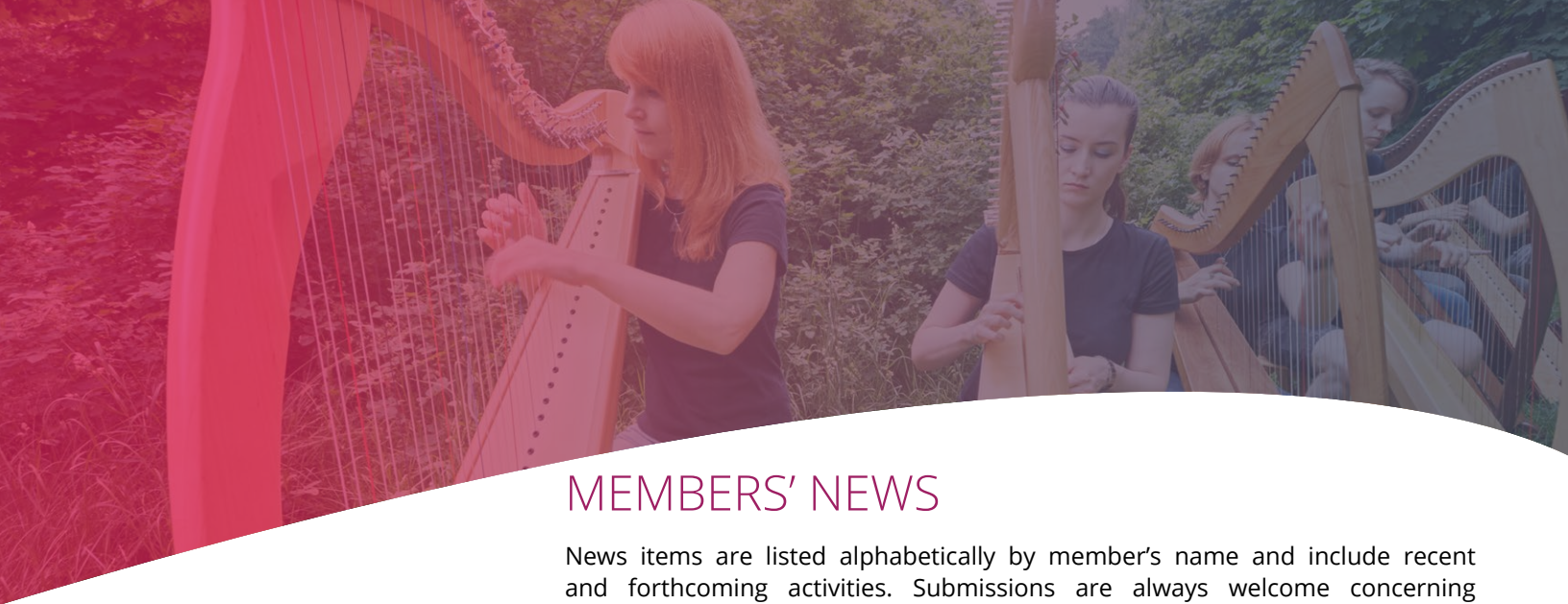
Anna Rubin's music is propelled by her love of the speaking voice, the world of pollinators, robots, and black holes. She has composed for a variety of musical genres including chamber, choral, wind and orchestral ensembles, as well as electronic music for concert stage, video, and dance. Her electroacoustic work is frequently heard at festivals in the US and abroad.



Proudly supporting the
International Alliance for Women in Music

DESIGN | MARKETING | PRINTING
wizards@cheetahgraphicsinc.com
865-446-0688

C H E E T A H
G R A P H I C S
I N C.



MEMBERS' NEWS

News items are listed alphabetically by member's name and include recent and forthcoming activities. Submissions are always welcome concerning appointments, honors, commissions, premieres, performances, and other items. The column does not include radio broadcasts; see Linda Rimel's weekly "Broadcast Updates." Awards and recent publications and recordings are listed in separate columns. We recommend that you begin with the most significant news first and follow that with an organized presentation of the other information. Due to space limitations, information such as lengthy descriptions, lists of performers, long websites, and reviews may sometimes be edited. Send Members' News submissions to journal@IAWM.org with Members' News in the subject.

Submissions are always welcome concerning appointments, honors, commissions, premieres, performances, and other items. Deadlines are November 30, February 28, May 30, and August 30.

—DR. AMY ZIGLER
MEMBERS' NEWS EDITOR



Carol Barnett

Carol Barnett's new website has several listings for upcoming performances of *The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass* (August 2; October 18; November 22; and April 25, 2027) as well as a premiere of *Jenkins on the Lake*, October 29th, at the Landmark Center, 75 Fifth Street West, Saint Paul, MN.



Saida Kalykova

Saida Kalykova's piano compositions will be featured on Tom Quick's show "Women in Music," on October 4, 2026. "Women in Music" airs at least two Sundays a month from 10:00 p.m. to midnight Eastern Time on Grand 101 Radio in Fergus, Ontario, Canada.



Svitlana Kosiak



Dafina Zeqiri Nushi

In the autumn of 2026, Ukrainian composer and pianist **Svitlana Kosiak**, Honored Worker of Culture of Ukraine, member of the National All-Ukrainian Music Union, and member of the International Alliance for Women in Music (IAWM), will present her solo exhibition, *Musical Paintings by Svitlana Kosiak*. The exhibition brings together music, poetry, and visual art into a single artistic space. Each artwork is accompanied by an original musical composition, allowing visitors not only to see the painting but also to hear its musical interpretation. The *Musical Paintings* project was first presented in Kyiv in 2025. The exhibition was created according to Svitlana Kosiak's original concept in collaboration with Ukrainian artists. The upcoming exhibition will be the first solo exhibition entirely dedicated to her authorial project, *Musical Paintings by Svitlana Kosiak*. Svitlana Kosiak is currently completing a multi-media book of the same title, *Musical Paintings by Svitlana Kosiak*, in which music, poetry, visual imagery, and modern digital technologies are combined into a unified artistic concept. The publication will include QR codes enabling readers to listen to the original music and watch video visualizations associated with each musical painting. More than 100 musical paintings will be presented at the exhibition.

Each work includes a QR code allowing visitors to listen to the music and watch a specially created video visualization.

Professor of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Prishtina and composer **Dafina Zeqiri Nushi**, together with Professors Sanije Matoshi and Florita Raifi Ajdini, took part in an artistic and academic evening held in Zurich, featuring an authorial concert of the composer's works and the promotion of a scholarly monograph dedicated to timbre in the art of composition.

The concert presented a selection of works for voice and piano from Dafina Zeqiri Nushi's oeuvre, performed by Sanije Matoshi, mezzo-soprano, and Florita Raifi Ajdini, piano. The programme included the song cycle *Morning, The Lake Slumbers, You and the Moon, On the Road, Longing, and Silent Song*, composed to poetry by prominent Albanian authors Lasgush Poradeci, Ismail Kadare, and Azem Shkreli. It also featured the solo piano work *Fantasy and Fugue*, as well as two songs based on Albanian traditional material, *O Bylbyl i Mjerë* and *Moj e Bukura More*. A particularly significant part of the programme consisted of works composed during the year, which were given their world premieres. During the same evening, the author's scholarly monograph, *Timbre and the Aesthetics of Colour: The Dimensions*

FESTIVALS, CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS

September-December 2026

Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music

September 18-26, 2026

Warsaw, Poland

WomenX

October 21-25, 2026

Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Sound and Music Computing

November 2-7, 2026

Zagreb, Croatia

American Orff Schulwerk

Association (AOSA)

November 4-7, 2026

Richmond, VA

College Music Society (CMS)

November 12-14, 2026

Grand Rapids, MI

Association for Technology in Music Instruction

(in conjunction w/ CMS conference)

November 12-14, 2026

Grand Rapids, MI

American Musicological Society

November 14-15 and 19-20, 2026

Online

The Midwest Clinic International Band and Orchestra

December 16-18, 2026

Chicago, IL

of *Sound in the Art of Composition*, was also promoted. The book is the result of extensive theoretical, analytical, and creative research on timbre as one of the most complex and dynamic elements of contemporary musical language. The study examines timbre not only as an acoustic phenomenon but also as an aesthetic, perceptual, and dramaturgical category, exploring its role in the development of twentieth- and twenty-first-century music, in transformations of orchestration, in contemporary instrumental techniques, and in shaping the artistic identity of the musical work.



Creative **Design Studio**

IAWM **Proud Supporter**

Crafting designs for some of the best clients in the world, including the International Alliance for Women in Music

Let's
**work
together**



Web Design

Brand Identity

Print Design

Presentation Design

Social Media Graphics

Bauer is a creatively-led, full-service design and innovation studio with a tremendous passion for creating high-impact, emotionally-engaging, brand-focused work on behalf of clients near and far.

Let's Talk

+1 503 968 7699
www.bauer.graphics
info@bauergraphics.com

OUR MISSION

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

THE VISION

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

Let's Connect



www.iawm.org



www.instagram.com/iawmcommunity



www.facebook.com/IAWMusic



www.youtube.com/@iawmmedia