

being recognized by established institutions, having their works recorded, performed by major orchestras, and receiving honors and commissions. However, it is clear that much work is still to be done before women composers are to be given the same recognition as their male counterparts.

It is my intention to not only make these works more accessible but also to bring to everyone's consciousness the marginalization of women composers in the classical music field and increase awareness of the lack of effort on the part of presenters, organizations, and musicians towards gender equity. It is my hope that this dissertation will energize and mobilize others to create a level playing field on which women composers are fairly represented.

HALF OF HUMANITY HAS SOMETHING TO SAY, ALSO:
WORKS FOR VIOLIN BY WOMEN COMPOSERS

by

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of the requirements for the degree of

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Dedication

To all the women pioneers on whose shoulders we stand.

Acknowledgments

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Last but not least, a massive thank you to my family for your never-ending love and support.

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Introduction

Before addressing gender equality in Classical Music, I would like to make my objective for choosing this topic and the process I underwent more transparent and coherent. Since a considerable component of this dissertation was in the selection and programming of compositions, I will begin by examining this process in detail.

In the beginning phases of this project, I knew I wanted a diverse collection of works represented: contemporary, old, unconventional, but most importantly, works that are extraordinary and works that are neglected. My initial parameters for selecting compositions were based on two main factors: the quality of the work and my own personal programming decisions.

I knew that I wanted to represent as many living women as possible, highlighting those which I deem most worthy of advocacy, and choosing those compositions which I feel represent them the best. Another requirement was that each living composer had to be making a living from the sales of her compositions, and/or through teaching composition at a higher educational institution. Even after reaching this level of success, I wanted to choose women that I felt were still undervalued and underrepresented, even if this was the case only because they were still in the beginning phases of their careers. Those included who are just starting their careers consist of mostly younger composers, like

Tonia Ko, born in 1988, and the youngest composer included, although not always, as is the case with Franghiz Ali-Zadeh, born in 1947.

While it was important to me to represent as many living women as possible, I also included seven composers from past generations whom I feel are undervalued or underperformed: Franziska Lebrun, Maria Theresia von Paradis, Emilie Mayer, Pauline Viardot-Garcia, Luise Adolpha Le Beau, Amy Beach, and Lili Boulanger. The oldest work in this dissertation is by Franziska Lebrun (her *Sonata op. 1 No. 3 in FM* was composed in 1780) whereas eight compositions represented throughout the recitals were composed in the last decade.

My parameters for instrumentation were only that of size and authenticity from the original work. I often find that works composed for larger orchestrations generally don't work well with a reduced piano accompaniment, especially with more contemporary works. This meant no concerti would be included. So I focused my research on pieces for solo violin or smaller chamber ensembles, the work for string quartet by Caroline Shaw, *Entr'acte*, being the piece with the most performers.

I also wanted to explore works which experimented with different sound worlds than the conventional instrumentation, and discovered such an abundant number of works in this realm that I focused my third and final recital around this theme of various instrumentations and sound worlds. Franziska Lebrun's *Sonata* began the final recital. I

really would have preferred to perform this Sonata on Baroque violin with fortepiano, but the fortepiano could not be tuned down for logistical issues, so I settled for using my modern violin with a Baroque bow and playing in a more Baroque style. I also suspected the fortepiano was a great way to open the audience's tastebuds before transitioning into Tonia Ko's *Still Life Crumbles* which was scored for harpsichord and violin, and which really travels through different sound spectrums and explores the different possibilities of the sound relationship between the violin and harpsichord by using different stops.

While written for more standard instrumentation, Caroline Shaw's *Entr'acte* and Gillian Whitehead's *Torua* both employ unconventional extended techniques to expand the various sound worlds. And last but certainly not least, Sofia Gubaidulina's *Silenzio* is an extraordinary example of a work that creates an entirely new universe with its relationship between the string instruments and the bayan, or in this case, the accordion.

When I was living in Switzerland a few years back I was fortunate enough to meet and briefly work with Sofia Gubaidulina while performing her *St. John's Passion*. The work was entirely unlike anything I had come across and I fell completely in love with her extraordinary expression and unique vision. Her mere presence was exhilarating and she spoke with such conviction that I became a Gubaidulina enthusiast for life. That experience played a crucial role in my development as a musician and creative thinker; it gave me a new appreciation and perspective, and, without a doubt, played a role in leading me to choose this topic for my dissertation.

After compiling a list of remarkable compositions from which I could begin to program I began to notice parallels, among them: a theme of tonalities around the note ‘D,’ works which found inspiration from Bach, and an affinity for nature as a stimulus for creativity. I used these themes as a basis for my first recital.

The inspiration for Augusta Read Thomas’s *Silent Moon for Violin and Cello*, Joan Tower’s *Big Sky*, and Tina Davidson’s *Blue Curve of the Earth* all found their creation through nature. Missy Mazzoli’s work for solo violin, *Dissolve, O My Heart*, and Kaija Saariaho’s *Frises* were not only both directly influenced by Bach, they were influenced by the same work by Bach: his *Partita in D Minor* for solo violin. In addition to Thomas’s, Mazzoli’s, and Saariaho’s works being based tonally around the note ‘D,’ the recital began with the first note played by the violin being a D, and concluded with the single held open D string on the violin, which ends Tina Davidson’s *Blue Curve of the Earth*.

The most important aspect for inclusion of any composition was that it was a work of the highest quality, a true work of merit in my opinion, to the point that it could speak for itself, while at the same time acting as a genuine expression and distinct representation of its creator.

This goes to the point of the slideshow's as well. It was critical for me to not just present the works, but to present a distinct impression of the person who created the work. I displayed photographs of each composer while performing their pieces with the intention that it could bring a clearer portrayal and give the audience a better way to relate to each woman personally. As a performer or an audience member, I often find myself considerably more removed from works when I have no context of the composer as a person. The mere act of seeing her face immediately brings a closer relationship to the creator and creation.

For me, the three 'main courses,' so to speak, of the recitals, Gubaidulina's *Silenzio*, Saariaho's *Frisés*, and Frank's *Sueños de Chambi*, each give a very distinct impression of the composer. After performing these works I feel like I know each composer personally, as each woman exhibits a very earnest and sincere part of herself through the work.

Also to the point of personalizing each composer as distinctly as possible, is the format which I chose to present my dissertation document and program notes. I attempt to paint a clear picture of each composer with a brief biography in my own words, but, more importantly, include firsthand accounts of their works whenever possible. As I wanted to choose works that would speak for themselves through their own merit, I found myself wanting to allow their creators to speak for themselves as well.

While researching the background of the compositions, I found that almost every living composer wrote her own program notes on these works, and very often these notes appear in the published scores. This served as a tremendous advantage in getting a sense of their personhood, and it is crucial for me as a performer to know where they're coming from.

Whether or not male composers include written information on their compositions as often as women I cannot say. In reading these women's words regarding their creations, I found that they all feel very strongly that, along with a need to share their voices through their music, there also comes a necessity to share the situation and/or part of themselves from which the personal impulse to create the work originated. Along with seeing their faces, reading their words makes the experience of the music more personal and real. This is why I included the composer's writings whenever possible.

There were a number of sources that greatly contributed and supported in the process of selection and programming of compositions.

So many women living today have made truly great accomplishments that work towards progress, and many of these individuals are represented in this dissertation. Jennifer Higdon and Joan Tower won Grammy Awards for Classical Composition. Jennifer Higdon, Augusta Read Thomas, and Joan Tower are included in the League of American Orchestras' list of the twenty most popular living American composers. Since 1983,

seven Pulitzer Prizes for Music Composition have gone to female composers, three of which are included in this project: Shulamit Ran, Jennifer Higdon, and Caroline Shaw. I could go on and on.

Pulitzers are impressive and inspiring and will certainly help female students gain confidence in themselves as budding composers, but I believe an even larger contribution occurs when the women earning these prestigious accolades provide hands on guidance and encouragement to younger women as role models. To this end, many forward-thinking projects and publications have contributed to the representation of women composers, and some of these have been extremely beneficial in the discovery process of this dissertation.

Hilary Hahn has provided a great service with her project, *In 27 Pieces: the Hilary Hahn Encores*, in which she commissioned 27 short encore pieces from composers around the world in 2013. There are four pieces from Hahn's project in this dissertation: Tina Davidson's *Blue Curve of The Earth*, Lera Auerbach's *Speak, Memory*, Franghiz Ali-Zadeh's *Impulse*, and Gillian Whitehead's *Torua*. As her project used only living composers and each commission was to be the appropriate length for an encore, these works provided an excellent source based on the parameters for my inclusion of compositions.

Hilary Hahn went to the length of interviewing most of the composers she commissioned works from in person, which also provided great background material on the women and their works for my purposes. Hahn plans to publish a collection of these works in the future, which will also assist in further publicizing these works and the programming of these great pieces.

Another helpful recording, which led to my discovery of Tonia Ko, was Ariana Kim's *Routes of Evanescence: Music for Solo Violin and Violin + I by American Women Composers*. A Collection of published music, *Violin Music by Female Composers: 13 Pieces for Violin and Piano*, produced by Barbara Heller and Eva Rieger was also a great source of discovery for me. Jennifer Kelly's book, *In Her Own Words: Conversations with Composers in the United States*, a collection of interviews done by the author, provided exceptional insight into many of these composers, including Joan Tower, Shulamit Ran, Jennifer Higdon, Gabriela Lena Frank, and Augusta Read Thomas, and gave me a much deeper context on the comparisons between the composers when I was going through the selection process.

I hope this project has also contributed to the available inspirational output and provided another platform for living women composers who will assist in furthering their careers.

Historical Context

Before examining the issues in the current climate, it is important to briefly explore the historical context that helps to identify and explain the residual impact. Societal issues which lead to gender inequality and discrimination have long been embedded in the religious institutions, politics, and family systems in Western cultures and therefore women have not historically been afforded the same opportunities as men, in the music world and beyond.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, women were not allowed to play any instrument that had to be held between their knees or blown with the mouth, as this was considered to compromise their feminine modesty. Women were only allowed to play the instruments that permitted them to demonstrate the culturally popular ideas of femininity while performing, which left them with few options: singing or playing the piano, and subsequently, the violin.

Women were not allowed to pursue an education in music until the late nineteenth century and were not provided the same courses as their male colleagues. The top ten major European Conservatories founded between 1807 and 1878 — Milan, Vienna, Brussels, Leipzig, Cologne, Dresden, Bern, Berlin, Naples, and Frankfurt — admitted female students, but only under special conditions.¹ Boys and girls received instruction in

¹ Reich, Nancy B. "European Composers and Musicians, ca. 1800-1890." *In Women and Music: A History*. 149-150.

separate divisions and separate quarters, and the studies for the young girls paled in comparison to those of their male counterparts. It was customarily assumed the girls could only become performers or teachers, and their courses were limited to voice, harp, and piano, while the boys were taught the fundamentals of music so that they could become conductors, composers, musicologists, or critics.²

Society as a whole and women themselves could embrace the role of performer because it was considered an activity in which the woman re-created music that a man had already created. In Western culture, the prevailing opinion was that the proper behavior for women was passivity and submissiveness, which meant that talented female composers were routinely dismissed without consideration.

Excluding women from educational opportunities in music all but guaranteed their absence from the professional fields in the music world, and this still applies today. In western culture, where the patriarchy is so systemic and endemic, it's not surprising that symphonies and other music professions have been historically male dominated and that women have been so discouraged to attempt to join in the pipeline, and this also explains why the system is so slow to change.

Some areas find the proportion of women to men growing faster than others. Once an all male affair, there are many orchestras in the world that are now more women than men.

² Ibid.

Whereas orchestras and music conservatories are becoming more equal, the field of composition is taking longer to shift.

Professional orchestras, academia, and other music careers won't be 50% women until education is 50%. Women can't move *up* in the world until they are included from the beginning, and it is understandable that this will take a while to shift.

Contemporary Context

I have undergone a thorough investigation to gain insight into the reasons that it appears that women composers continue to be marginalized, and attempt to gather and provide statistics and evidence which might further this insight, as well as solutions that might help remedy this. The marginalization of women in classical music is certainly not an isolated incident/phenomena, and to go into outside patriarchal systems would be extensive and relevant, but for the purposes of this project and in order to further promote the level playing field specifically for composers, I have chosen to focus on only the musical realm.

Until relatively recent decades, women have had severely limited opportunities within the arts, especially music and composition. One of the reasons that there were so few female composers during the previous centuries of classical music is that composers careers depend on performing musicians and ensembles to play their works, and until relatively recent times, musicians, ensembles and musical institutions were overwhelmingly male.

A celebrated pianist of the 19th century, Clara Schumann, was also a gifted composer who wrote mostly compositions that she and her circle of musician friends could perform, such as piano pieces, vocal pieces, and chamber works. Had she tried to compose larger works which required the championing by male orchestras and opera companies the works would have likely been left unperformed during her lifetime. In 1839, Clara

Schumann wrote in her diary: “I once thought that I possessed creative talent, but I have given up this idea; a woman must not desire to compose—not one has been able to do it, and why should I expect to? It would be arrogance, though indeed, my father led me into it in earlier days.”³

Part of the struggle for women in the arts came from the prejudice that stemmed from the male chauvinism of Western culture and the expected role of females. Mozart’s older sister, Nannerl, was an accomplished prodigy who initially went on showcase tours with her brother. Once she grew old enough, she was guided down a path toward marriage and settled down. If the conditions for women had been more favorable Nannerl might have continued with music and become a professional instead of settling down.

Corona Schröter, an 18th-century German singer and composer wrote in 1786: “I have had to overcome much hesitation before I seriously made the decision to publish a collection of short poems that I have provided with melodies. A certain feeling towards propriety and morality is stamped upon our sex, which does not allow us to appear alone in public, and without an escort: Thus, how can I otherwise present this, my musical work to the public, than with timidity? For the complimentary opinions and the encouragement of a few persons... can easily be biased out of pity.”⁴

³ Berthold Litzmann. *Clara Schumann: An Artist's Life Based on Material Found in Diaries and Letters*. 154.

⁴ Citron, Marcia J. “Corona Schröter: Singer, Composer, Actress.” *Music and Letters*. 21.

Further evidence the prejudice which stemmed from the male chauvinism comes from more recent decades from composer Aaron Copland. “As recently as 1978, Aaron Copland suggested that women had an innate block against creating large-scale musical structures.”⁵ Aaron Copland comments in his book, *Copland on Music*: “Everyone knows that the high achievement of women musicians as vocalists and instrumentalists has no counterpart in the field of musical composition. This historically poor showing has puzzled more than one observer. It is even more inexplicable when one considers the reputation of women novelists and poets, of painters and designers. Is it possible that there is a mysterious element in the nature of musical creativity that runs counter to the nature of the feminine mind? And yet there are more women composers than ever writing today, writing, moreover, music worth playing.”⁶

Considering the significant struggle for women composers in history, it’s understandable that they are, even now, underrepresented in the classical music realm. However, many ensembles are becoming more progressive and working towards gender equality in their programming.

In a small study done to determine the ratio of programming female to male composers, composer and author David Smooke found that even amongst five of the more progressive programming ensembles, the percentages were still discouraging for women:

⁵ Ross, Alex. “Even the Score: Female composers edge forward.”

⁶ Aaron Copland. *Copland on Music*. 85.

“I only included artists for whom I have the utmost respect and who I believe care about working towards gender equality in their programming. If I took the time to check other groups, I strongly believe that the ones listed below would remain among the most equal in their gender distribution. This makes the data that much less encouraging.

Bang on a Can displayed the most equality among the ones I counted. Their ratio of 13 works by women compared to 47 by men composers counts as the highest percentage of women among those surveyed. Other of my favorite new music groups all showed gender distributions with more than four men represented for every woman. The incredible JACK Quartet lists 100 pieces in their repertoire, of which 12 are by women. According to their website, Eighth Blackbird has been responsible for the creation of an astonishing 100 commissions, of which 18 are by women. Chicago’s Ensemble Dal Niente, prints event listings that show that they have programmed 75 works this concert season... 7 of which are by women. The current repertoire list of Alarm Will Sound names 65 different works, of which four are exclusively by women...

I believe each of the ensembles I cite above has artistic directors that keep the goal of gender equity in mind when they determine their concert repertoire. It seems that we still have to travel far in order to achieve true equality.”⁷

⁷ Smooke, David. “By the Numbers.”

Smooke's study determined that new music ensembles are programming 8–22% composers that are female, and composer Amy Beth Kirsten writes in an article titled "The 'Woman Composer' is Dead," "I simply must point out that fifteen years ago this number would probably have been 0–3%."⁸

Despite smaller, more progressive ensembles working towards fair representation for female composers in their programming, the older institutions, orchestras, and opera companies seem to be failing to follow in these footsteps. The Metropolitan Opera House in New York City has performed only two operas by women: Ethel Smyth's "Der Wald," in 1903, and Kaija Saariaho's "L'Amour de Loin" in 2016. On Operabase's 2012 list of the hundred most frequently performed opera composers, Saariaho is the only female, in ninety-sixth place. A study by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra found that during the 2015–2016 season, the top 89 orchestras in the USA dedicated just 2% of their programs to music composed by women.

The average orchestra plays, at most, one or two works by women each year, but often it is because there are only a few slots for new pieces allotted each season, and these go to safely familiar male composers which bring in the habitual and reliable audience members. The problem would perhaps diminish if more new music were played. Kirsten

⁸ Kirsten, Amy Beth. "The 'Woman Composer' is Dead."

writes, “Perhaps if we are going to fixate on equality in programming it should be to balance out the division between living composers and dead ones.”⁹

Despite less than encouraging statistics by established American institutions, in recent years, many women have made great strides in composition. Since 1983, seven Pulitzer Prizes for Music Composition have gone to female composers, including Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, Shulamit Ran, Jennifer Higdon, Melinda Wagner, Caroline Shaw, Julia Wolfe, and Du Yun. Kaija Saariaho, Jennifer Higdon, and Unsuk Chin are among the first to be commissioned by major opera companies. Chen Yi received the Charles Ives Living Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Joan Tower, Libby Larsen, Augusta Read Thomas, Jennifer Higdon, and Anna Clyne became composers-in-residence for some of America’s leading orchestras. Jennifer Higdon and Joan Tower won Grammy Awards for Classical Composition. Jennifer Higdon, Augusta Read Thomas, and Joan Tower are included in the League of American Orchestras’ list of the twenty most popular living American composers.

The performance space National Sawdust in Brooklyn has created a competition for emerging female composers, and many other institutions are also providing more opportunities for women composers, although the opportunities are not always taken advantage of. Opera America’s Women Composers Readings and Commissions program awards \$15,000 grants to women composers, and the League of American Orchestras

⁹ Ibid.

now offers discovery and commissioning grants to female composers of \$15,000 and \$50,000. Both of these initiatives are supported by the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation and Alexander Sanger, a trustee of the foundation, said that after offering seven leading American orchestras a chance at a \$50,000 grant for a new work by an emerging female composer, only three of the orchestras bothered to apply.¹⁰

It is notable that often when women are in leadership positions, gender equity is more often a consideration and women composers are therefore represented more fairly. In New York's new-music series Composer Portraits at Miller Theatre, directed by Melissa Smey, three of the eight portraits in the 2013 season were devoted to women:

Gubaidulina, Olga Neuwirth, and Rebecca Saunders. Also during the 2013 season, another of New York's new-music series, the Ecstatic Music Festival, curated by Judd Greenstein, presented ten concerts at Merkin Hall, featuring as many women as men.

Francesca Zambello has made gender and race equity a priority as artistic director of The Washington National Opera, and the WNO is a national leader in hiring women and artists of color. In January 2018, WNO will be presenting the opera "Proving Up" by Missy Mazzoli, a beneficiary of an Opera America grant. Perhaps as more women are taking leadership positions, female composers will be better represented.

It seems that a core problem of underrepresentation stems from the lack of females applying themselves to become composers in the first place. Composer Laura Kaminsky,

¹⁰ Midgette, Anne. "Female composers are making great strides. The classical music world isn't helping them."

head of composition at the conservatory at the State University of New York at Purchase said, “when I get the applicant pool and see three-quarters of the applications are male, I get depressed.”¹¹

In an article written for *New Music Box* in 2011, composer Alexandra Gardner writes, “The number of female composers who graduate with advanced degrees is far lower than the number of males, as is the percentage of submissions to composer competitions by women, etc. I spent a couple of years teaching computer music at a community music school in Washington, D.C., and over ninety percent of my students were male. Similarly, when I gave a presentation to a composition seminar at a university last year, there was only one female in a group of almost thirty composers.”¹²

Gardner goes on to write that the answer comes in the form of role models and incorporating the music of female composers in our classrooms: “Show them people writing music who are cool, so they can see that composing is a viable option for them. I know I would not have stuck with it had Annea Lockwood and Pauline Oliveros not been mentors during my college years, and it was the music of Laurie Anderson, Julia Wolfe, Meredith Monk, and many others that truly served as the inspiration that kept me on track... I hope that the music teachers and college professors out there will continue to expand their listening choices to include larger numbers of [non-white male composers],

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Gardner, Alexandra. “Strength in Numbers.”

and that they will share that music with their students by incorporating it into their teaching. More than that though, the [non-white male] composers out there need to speak up and make yourselves heard as best you know how...¹³

Only in the last fifty years, and especially the past few decades, have there been expanding opportunities for women in music. Many orchestras are overwhelmingly female, and in most conservatories, female students make up a fair percentage of the population these days. This alone will create more opportunities for women in the field of composition.

¹³ *Ibid.*

Conclusion

After thorough research into the marginalization of women composers, solutions present themselves clearly. It seems clear that if more female composers play a more active part in the system as role models, if teachers incorporate the music of female composers in our classrooms, if more women gain leadership positions, and if ensembles and institutions program more music by living composers and become more conscious of progressive programming, we might begin to see a world in which women composers are represented more fairly.

With this dissertation I hope I have also contributed to the available inspirational output and provided another platform for living women composers that will assist in furthering their careers. I chose this topic with the objective that it might also assist the younger generation of girls in giving them greater conviction in the possibilities available to them. My intention was to provide a service, however significant, not only to these extraordinary women and their works, but to the music world, and to the movement of gender equality.

There aren't enough people or organizations consciously attempting to fairly represent women composers on the concert stage. I understand that it's slow to move social views and stereotypes but I plan to continue with this objective, and know that I'm not alone in my mission. The consciousness has started to shift in the art world, and most are in favor

of fair programming. I will continue with my effort to this end until the term 'women composers' is no longer a necessity and can be retired.

Recital I: April 6, 2017, Gildenhorn Recital Hall, The Clarice

Frises: A Celebration of Women in Music

Biographical information on and Program Notes for works by Luise Adolpha Le Beau, Pauline Viardot-Garcia, Augusta Read Thomas, Joan Tower, Kaija Saariaho, Amy Beach, and Missy Mazzoli.

Luise Adolpha Le Beau (1850-1927)

Biography

Born in Germany, Luise Adolpha Le Beau, like many other female composers during the 19th century, began her career in music as a pianist and studied piano with Clara Schumann during the summer of 1873. In 1874 she beginning touring as a concert pianist but had to stop due to unstable health.

Le Beau began writing music when she was fifteen, and her compositions began to be performed in Europe in the 1880's and even reached outside Europe later that decade, as far as Sydney and Constantinople. Her success led to her nomination for a chair position

at the Royal School of Music in Berlin but, as it was never assigned to women, she was not granted the position.

In 1910 Le Beau wrote her autobiography, Memoirs of a Composer, a firsthand account of her experiences as a female composer and musician in the 19th century. Later in life she earned her living composing, teaching, performing, and writing music reviews for the newspaper in Baden-Baden. On July 17, 1927, Luise Adolpha Le Beau died at the age of 77 and, in her memory, the city of Baden-Baden named their music library after her.

Romanze, op. 35

This short yet eloquent *Romanze* begins in G Major with a lovely expressive melody in the violin, Andante con moto, before moving on to a more virtuosic and fiery Allegro section in 6/8 meter in G minor. Tempo I returns, leading to a short cadenza in the violin which leads once again to the 6/8 Allegro, albeit briefly, this time in G Major. Instead of ending in this triumphant manner, a stringendo leads back to Tempo I, where we are left with the peaceful melody in the violin.

Pauline Viardot-Garcia (1821-1910)

Biography

The prodigious Pauline Viardot-Garcia was born into a musical family and had an impressive career from a very early age. By the age of four she was fluent in four languages, at the age of twelve she was sought after as a composition student by Rossini, by fourteen she was performing solo voice recitals, and by fifteen she was encouraged to become a concert pianist by her teacher, Franz Liszt.

Viardot-Garcia had an especially successful career as an opera singer, making her formal debut in 1839 at the King's Theatre in London in the role of Desdemona in Rossini's *Otello*. In 1849 she appeared at the Paris Opera in Meyerbeer's *Le Prophete*, a role which was written for her. In 1859 she was invited by Berlioz to sing in his revival of Gluck's *Orpheus*, a role she performed 150 times. She had numerous composers write for her, including Brahms, Schumann, Saint-Saëns, and Fauré.

Viardot-Garcia composed primarily for voice, having 60 of her 100 plus songs published during her lifetime. She also arranged many compositions by Brahms, Haydn, and Schubert for voice and composed a significant amount of instrumental music, primarily for piano. She wrote more than one hundred songs, four operettas, one opera, many piano works, and two volumes of violin music.

Six Morceaux: III. Berceuse

Viardot-Garcia's *Six Morceaux* is a collection of six short character-pieces, composed for violin and piano, titled Romance, Bohémienne, Berceuse, Mazourka, Vieille Chanson, and Tarantelle. They are evocative of the romantic and lyrical style which she was accustomed throughout her vocal career, and display skilled writing for the violin. The *Berceuse*, labelled Andante, is the third character-piece in the collection, a charming melody over a beautifully flowing piano accompaniment. *Six Morceaux* was dedicated to the composer's son, Paul.

Augusta Read Thomas (b.1964)

Biography

Augusta Read Thomas found great success as a composer at an early age. While teaching at Eastman School of Music she received tenure at only 33 years old, but left to teach at Northwestern University until she resigned in 2006 to focus on composing. She was named composer-in-residence at Chicago Symphony Orchestra from 1997-2006 and in 2010 became the University Professor of Composition at the University of Chicago. She was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Music in 2007 for her composition *Astral Canticle*, and also became a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2007.

Read Thomas prides herself on her meticulous hand: "My scores are highly nuanced, certainly detailed, every note having a dynamic, articulation and/or adjective. The

notation explains exactly what I heard.”¹⁴ She holds the desire to leave a recorded output and being involved firsthand with the recording of her works and believes that, “If recordings do not exist, there is such less work... Composers depend heavily on past recordings to be offered future employment.”¹⁵

Read Thomas often finds inspiration in poetry: “Crazy as this sounds, I think of my compositions as poems on fire — very precise, yet with a lot of spontaneous life and human spirit. Hopkins’s poems are burning off the page they’re so hot, imaginative, creative, and full of explosively gorgeous images and words. Ditto with Emily Dickinson. Every word is like a little bomb— beautiful words in elegantly crafted, blazing juxtapositions. Here are two poets whose works are vastly inspiring for their content, sounds, and concision.”¹⁶

Silent Moon (for violin and cello) (2006)

Program Note included in the Score:

“When twofold silence was the song of love”

from the sonnet, **Silent Moon*

-Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882)

¹⁴ Kelly, Jennifer. *In Her Own Words: Conversations with Composers in the United States*. 265.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 266.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 272.

*Research has found the title of the sonnet to be “Silent Noon” however many versions use the title “Silent Moon.” The sonnet which is attributed to Christina Georgina Rossetti in many editions, is the work of her brother, Dante Gabriel Rossetti.¹⁷

Composer note:

Silent Moon is a reference to the break in the stillness of winter that is indicative of a gathering of energy. Like the silence before the storm, the Silent Moon offers an opportunity to cleanse the past so that we might better shift our attentions to future growth.

This concept is often depicted through certain double-visaged gods and goddesses such as Janus, who looks simultaneously backward at the past and forward to the future.

A silent moon exists in the deep silence of winter earth after the solstice celebration heralding the birth of energy and the return of ever lengthening daylight.

This is a time for stillness.

The quality of this moon's energy is vivid.

¹⁷ Thomas, Augusta Read. *Silent Moon*. 2013.

Silent Moon was commissioned by, and is dedicated with admiration and gratitude to, Almita and Roland Vamos.

The duration of this work is eight minutes and is in three movements played without a pause. The music goes full-cycle, coming back to its exact starting point, as if we hear one orbit.

The program booklet should list the three movements in this fashion:

I: Still: Soulful and Resonant

II: Energetic: Majestic and Dramatic

III: Suspended: Lyrical and Chant-like — "When twofold silence was the song of love."

— Augusta Read Thomas¹⁸

Joan Tower (b.1938)

Biography

Included in the League of American Orchestras' list of the twenty most popular living American composers, Joan Tower is a respected composer, performer, conductor, and

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

educator who is affecting later generations of musicians. Many composers and women in music refer to her as one of the few women composers on whose shoulders they stand.¹⁹ With numerous recordings and performances of her works, Tower has been influential for decades.

Tower was the first woman to win the prestigious Grawemeyer Award for *Silver Ladders* in 1999 and was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1998. Her recording *Made in America* won three Grammy Awards in 2008 and is currently a Professor of Music at Bard College in New York.

A native of New York state, Joan Tower moved to Bolivia when she was nine years old and spent most of her youth in South America, which she credits as the reason for the strong rhythmic energy in her work and her emphasis on rhythm and percussion.

An accomplished pianist in her own right, Tower cofounded the New York Da Capo Chamber Players in 1969. She is a strong advocate of the composer-performer relationship, stating in an interview with Jennifer Kelly: “I have my own theory of why classical music is in trouble, and I think a part of it is that the composer and performer have split...In classical music, the split of composers and performers has created a huge problem, because now the composers don’t perform that much, and certainly the performers don’t compose. You’ve got two different relationships to music, which are not

¹⁹ Kelly, Jennifer. *In Her Own Words: Conversations with Composers in the United States*. 19.

codependent the way they are in the pop world.”²⁰ Tower also has a very refreshing outlook on her role as a composer and the relationship with the audience: “...what I say to audiences. I say, “You’re empowered to sit in your seat and have an opinion about me. You are allowed to say, ‘I don’t like those cow bells.’” ... I welcome the opinions — the human component. That’s what we need to do with classical music: humanize it again.”²¹

And when asked if there was still a need for women’s-only festivals and concerts? “Absolutely, because to me it’s like a research thing. It’s like going to a festival of electronic music to learn more about the latest technology. It’s a subject, and if you’re part of that subject, I think it’s important to know that history. I think at a women’s festival you can do that...I never got the connection between the word “marginalization” and women. The fact that it’s a gender-related subject to me is not the issue. The issue is that women have had a different experience than men, different history, different everything. It’s a subject for research and understanding, and the more you know about it, the more tools you have to talk about it and understand where you came from.”²²

Big Sky (2000)

Composer Note:

²⁰ *Ibid.* 20.

²¹ *Ibid.* 22.

²² *Ibid.* 17.

Big Sky was commissioned by the La Jolla Chamber Music Society for their "SummerFest La Jolla 2000" music festival.

This slow seven-minute trio for violin, cello and piano was intended as a companion piece to a short and fast trio entitled *And... They're Off* (which was commissioned by the Scotia Festival in Canada where I served as composer/conductor-in-residence in 1996). The common subject of these two works is horses—namely race horses. As a young girl—and like many young girls—I had an obsession with horses. When I was growing up in South America, my father bought me a racehorse. This was in Bolivia, where horses, even racehorses, were very cheap. I loved this horse and took very good care of it in our makeshift garage/stable. My obsession with horses continued into my teens when I learned to jump. More recently (and many years later), I found a partner whose main love is playing the horses!

Big Sky is a piece based on a memory of riding my horse "Aymara" around in the deep valley of La Paz, Bolivia. The valley was surrounded by the huge and high mountains of the Andes range; and as I rode I looked into a vast and enormous sky. It was very peaceful and extraordinarily beautiful. We never went over one of these mountains, but if we had, it might have felt like what I wrote in this piece.

—Joan Tower²³

²³ Tower, Joan. *Big Sky*.

Kaija Saariaho (b.1952)

Biography

Kaija Saariaho has gained worldwide recognition and acclaim, and is one of the most highly regarded and successful living women composers. Known for her characteristically rich polyphonic textures, the Finnish composer often writes for live music and electronics. She has been awarded numerous awards and honors, including the Prix Ars Electronica in 1989, Musical America's "Musician of the Year 2008," and the Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording in 2011 for *L'amour de loin*.

Saariaho attended computer music courses at IRCAM, the computer music research institute in Paris, and in 1982 she began researching computer analyses of the sound-spectrum of individual notes produced by different instruments, shifting her compositional style dramatically towards spectralism. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* defines Spectral Music as "A term, coined by Hugues Dufourt, applied to the music of several late 20th-century French composers whose works explore the acoustic properties of sound itself and the psychology of musical perception (of tempo, sound, and pulse). Spectralist composers used the overtone series of pitches as an organizing principle and transferred techniques developed for electronic music to the manipulation of live instrumental sounds."²⁴

²⁴ Anderson, Julian. "Spectral Music".

Saariaho has spoken about possessing a kind of synesthesia that involves all of the five senses, saying: "...the most important thing in my perception is that the visual and the musical world are one to me... Different senses, shades of color, or textures and tones of light, even fragrances and sounds blend in my mind. They form a complete world in itself, which calls me to enter into it, and where I can then focus on some details. They are the source from which I draw."²⁵

Saariaho is the composer of the first opera written by a woman to be staged by the Metropolitan Opera in New York in 113 years. In an interview with Jeff Lunden in 2016 she expressed weariness over having to discuss this operatic glass ceiling. "It's kind of ridiculous," she says. "I feel that we should speak about my music and not of me being a woman." Despite her weariness, Saariaho is keenly aware of the challenges women still face today in the music world. "I've seen it with young women who are battling with the same things I was battling ... 35 years ago," she says. Saariaho says these gender barriers might even cause her to revise her earlier point and speak out despite her weariness on the subject. "Maybe we, then, *should* speak about it, even if it seems so unbelievable," she says. "You know, half of humanity has something to say, also."²⁶

²⁵ Moisala, Pirkko. *Kaija Saariaho*. 55.

²⁶ Saariaho, Kaija. "Half Of Humanity Has Something To Say!': Composer Kaija Saariaho On Her Met Debut."

***Tocar* (2010)**

Composer Note:

One of my first ideas for *Tocar*, about the encounter of two instruments as different as the violin and piano, was the question: how could they touch each other?

Whilst composing music, I always imagine the instrumentalist's fingers and their sensitivity. The violin sounds are created by the collaboration between the left hand and the bow controlled by the right hand. On the piano, the pianist should be extremely precise in order to control the moment when the fingers touch the keys, afterwards the sounds can be coloured only by the pedals. In spite of such different mechanisms, both instruments also have some common points, purely musical, noticeably they share some of the same register.

In *Tocar* both instruments move forward independently, but also keep an eye on each other. I imagine a magnetism becoming stronger and stronger – the piano part becomes more mobile – which draws the violin texture towards the piano writing culminating in an encounter in unison. After this short moment of symbiosis, the violin line is released from the measured piano motion, continuing its own life outside the laws of gravity.

The title, in Spanish, is translated as “to touch, to play”.

Tocar was commissioned by the International Jean Sibelius Violin Competition. The work was premiered by the 20 semi-finalists in Helsinki on the 26th, 27th, and 28th November 2010.

Paris, November 29th 2010

Kaija Saariaho²⁷

Amy Beach (1867-1944)

Biography

Born in New Hampshire and living primarily in Boston until 1911, Amy Beach was one of the first American women composers to achieve prominence in the US and abroad. Her compositions were performed widely between 1893 and 1914 by major orchestras. As of 1940, only 3 of her 150 works remained unpublished, an impressive record for any American composer.

Beach debuted as a concert pianist with the Boston Symphony in 1883 at the age of sixteen, and continued to perform with them until 1885. She was then married to a Boston surgeon who was twenty-four years her senior and from that point forward concentrated on composition. Beach found great popularity as an American composer,

²⁷ Saariaho, Kaija. "Works: *Tocar*."

and in 1920 Amy Beach fan clubs began forming all over the country, as local music teachers met together to admire and perform her songs and piano pieces. Her compositional style was characteristic of the late Romantic period, and she had a natural gift for writing sentimental melodies.

Romance, for violin and piano, Op. 23

Known for her lyrical and sensitive melodies, Amy Beach displays technical mastery and thoughtfully spontaneous and highly passionate writing in the *Romance, Op. 23*. The piece was dedicated to violinist Maud Powell for the Women's Musical Congress in Chicago on July 5–7, 1893, during the World's Columbian Exposition and was premiered on July 6 by Maud Powell accompanied by the composer on the piano. The premiere received positive reviews, and the audience was so enthusiastic after the performance that the piece had to be repeated. Powell thanked Beach for the “dainty, artistic edition” of the “charming Romanza,” which she had received the day before in a letter dated December 6, 1893. She wrote: “Our meeting in Chicago and the pleasure of playing together made a most delightful episode in my Summer's experience. I trust it soon may be repeated.”²⁸

Missy Mazzoli (b.1980)

Biography

²⁸ Powell, Maud. “Maud Powell letter to Amy Beach, 6 December 1893.”

American composer Missy Mazzoli was recently deemed “one of the more consistently inventive, surprising composers now working in New York” by the New York Times.²⁹ Mazzoli is the recipient of many honors and awards, including a 2015 Foundation for Contemporary Arts Award, four ASCAP Young Composer Awards, a Fulbright Grant, and the Detroit Symphony’s Elaine Lebenbom Award. Mazzoli also recently created new works commissioned and premiered by the LA Philharmonic, the Young People’s Chorus of New York, ETHEL, Roomful of Teeth and pianist Emanuel Ax. Her music has been performed all over the world by the Kronos Quartet, eighth blackbird, Opera Philadelphia, LA Opera, the Minnesota Orchestra, the American Composers Orchestra, JACK Quartet, violinist Jennifer Koh, and many others.

From 2012 to 2015 Mazzoli was Composer-in-Residence with Opera Philadelphia, Gotham Chamber Opera and Music Theatre-Group. In 2013 Mazzoli joined the composition faculty at the Mannes College of Music. She also recently founded Luna Lab, a mentorship program for young female composers ages thirteen to nineteen.

Upcoming projects include a third opera, *Proving Up*, commissioned by Washington National Opera, Opera Omaha and New York’s Miller Theatre. *Proving Up* will premiere in January 2018 at Washington D.C. at the Kennedy Center. Mazzoli also produced orchestral arrangements for the Icelandic band Sigur Rós, which will premiere as part of the LA Philharmonic’s Iceland Festival in April 2017.

²⁹ Smith, Steve. “It’s All About Brooklyn at Prospect Park Concert.”

Mazzoli is a pianist and keyboardist, and performs with Victoire, a band she founded in 2008 dedicated to her compositions. Their debut full-length CD, *Cathedral City*, was named one of 2010's best classical albums by *Time Out New York*, NPR, the *New Yorker* and the *New York Times*. *Pitchfork* praised Victoire for “condensing moments of focused beauty and quiet conviction from the pandemic distractions of modern life,”³⁰ and NPR’s First Listen asks “Is Victoire’s music post-rock, post-minimalist or pseudo-post-pre-modernist indie-chamber-electronica? It doesn’t particularly matter. It’s just good music.”³¹

Dissolve, O My Heart (2010)

Composer note:

Dissolve, O My Heart has its roots in a late-night conversation over Chinese food and cupcakes with violinist Jennifer Koh. She told me about her Bach & Beyond project, a program that combines Bach's Sonatas and Partitas with newly commissioned works, and asked if I would write a piece that referenced Bach's Partita in D Minor. This request was, to put it mildly, utterly terrifying; the last movement of the Partita, the Chaconne, is undoubtedly the most famous piece of solo violin literature in the world. It overwhelmed

³⁰ Howe, Brian. “Victoire: Cathedral City.”

³¹ Sims, Ashalen. “Victoire, Missy Mazzoli’s ‘Cathedral City.’”

Brahms, has been subject to hundreds of transcriptions and arrangements over the past two centuries, and is dizzying in its contrapuntal complexity. But something about Jennifer's enthusiasm was infectious, and I agreed to the project before I realized what I was getting myself into. Jennifer seemed to approach Bach through the lens of contemporary music, and I realized that this was what this new piece should do as well.

Dissolve, O My Heart begins with the first chord of Bach's Chaconne, a now-iconic d minor chord, and spins out from there into an off-kilter series of chords that doubles back on itself, collapses and ultimately dissolves in a torrent of fast passages. The only direct quote from the Partita is that first chord, which anchors the entire piece even as it threatens to spiral out of control. The title comes from an aria in the St. John's Passion, but has many potential interpretations.

Dissolve, O My Heart was commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic and was premiered in 2011 as part of their Green Umbrella Series in Disney Hall.

— Missy Mazzoli³²

Kaija Saariaho (b.1952)

[see above biography on composer]

³² Mazzoli, Missy. "Programme Note: Missy Mazzoli, *Dissolve, O My Heart* (2010)."

***Frises* (2011)**

Composer Note:

Frises was born of violinist Richard Schmuoucler's request who told me his idea of combining different works around Bach's second partita for solo violin, particularly in relation to the last part, the Chaconne. He asked me to compose a piece to be performed after Bach's Chaconne and start it with the note that ends this second partita movement, the D.

My piece has four parts. I focused in each of them on the idea of one historical ostinato variation form, using as starting point carillon, passacaglia, ground bass and chaconne. There are four variations around a theme, a harmonic process or other musical parameter.

To expand the ideas and possibilities of the instrument, I added an electronic dimension to the work. According to its character, each part has a different processing. In general and in accordance with the score, prepared sound materials are set off by the musician during the piece. These materials are completed by real-time transformations of the violin sounds.

My aim in composing this piece was to create a rich work for violin with four very different and independent parts. The first part, "Frise jaune", is a prelude, a flexible

improvisation around a constant D, colored by harmonics and the electronic part consisting of bell sounds. This part is also inspired by the idea of “carillon,” a continuous melodic variation.

The second part, “Frise de fleurs”, is based on a harmony created on a ground bass.

Sequences of successive chords are gradually enriched before opening to achieve a more free and lyrical development.

The third part, “Pavage” is inspired by transformations of a source material by a mathematical process where a frieze is a filling of a line or a band by a geometric figure without holes or overflow, like the paving. But I do not work in the sense of perfect symmetry — as with the cobblestones of a patterned ground — rather to create continual metamorphosis, in the spirit of some of MC Escher’s images, though less consistently.

The last part, “Frise grise”, is like a strange procession, solemn, fragile, but at the same time solved. The idea of passacaglia is here realized with slow triplets, the constant accompaniment of the left hand pizzicati on three strings, while the melody is evolving on the fourth which is not part of the accompaniment. The thematic material evolves descending slowly from E - the highest string - to G - the fourth string. The music finally reaches the initial D in double stop which take us back to the beginning of the piece.

The titles are inspired by the mathematical ideas mentioned above but also by Odilon Redon's painted friezes which I saw recently in an exhibition dedicated to his work; especially the Yellow Frieze, Frieze of Flowers and Gray Frieze.

Frises was composed for and dedicated to Richard Schmoucler, and commissioned by the Borusan Art Centre, Istanbul.

Kaija Saariaho - 2012³³

Tina Davidson (b.1952)

Biography

Although perhaps not as well known as some of the others, American composer Tina Davidson has made a successful career for herself as a composer. Originally from Stockholm, Sweden, Davidson has spent most of her life in the United States, growing up in Oneonta, New York and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She has received numerous awards, including a Pew Fellowship, residencies with the Fleisher Art Memorial, and commissions from the National Symphony Orchestra, Cassatt Quartet, Kronos Quartet, and the Mendelssohn String Quartet.

³³ Saariaho, Kaija. "Programme Note: Kaija Saariaho, *Frises* (2011)."

She formed a program in Philadelphia called *Young Composers*, in which children are taught to compose and perform their own music, and has also created community partner programs for homeless women.

A post-minimalist composer, Davidson's music is perhaps best described by the Philadelphia Inquirer's Peter Dobrin as, "rhythmically driving, with fascinatingly simple yet lovely harmonic changes. The composer makes music satisfying by carefully managing tension and release ... it's being able to bring a sense of beauty and emotion to a strict organizational structure, a rarity in any age."³⁴

Blue Curve of the Earth (2013)

Tina Davidson is a highly regarded American composer who wrote *Blue Curve of the Earth* for Hilary Hahn's *In 27 Pieces: the Hilary Hahn Encores* project, in which pieces from 26 composers from 17 countries around the world were commissioned and the 27th composer was selected from entries to HilaryHahnContest.com.³⁵ "Well, [Tina] was in Wyoming, in an artist residency when she wrote it and the title refers to some photos she saw online from NASA of the Earth's edge," Hilary explains in an interview about the project. "I think that's a very lyrical interpretation of this place that we are in the universe. It draws on a lot of different senses as well. I think her music ties into ... line. Even

³⁴ Dobrin, Peter. "Computerized Sounds Horn in on New Music."

³⁵ Hahn, Hilary. *In 27 Pieces: The Hilary Hahn Encores*.

though she writes fast-moving notes and different sound effects — it's all about the line and about the interweaving intricacies of how notes can illustrate an idea or an emotion. It's a beautiful piece.”³⁶

When asked about the composition process for *Blue Curve of the Earth*, Davidson commented, “Wyoming, that November, was turbulent, the weather twisting and turning on itself, before settling into snow. As I wrote, I was aware of all the different blues of the landscape; blue-blue, grey-blue, mountain-blue, water-blue, and the constant motion of the world. I had a sense of creating a blue line of string sound, that curled in and out, and up along the curve of the earth, the beautiful curve we call home.”³⁷

Tina Davidson’s compositions, including *Blue Curve of the Earth*, are often similar in tonality to those of Copland, and quite frequently have minimalistic qualities.

³⁶ Hahn, Hilary. “Hilary Hahn, 'In 27 Pieces.’”

³⁷ Davidson, Tina. “*Tina Davidson, by Hilary Hahn, for 'In 27 Pieces: the Hilary Hahn Encores.’*”

Recital II: October 11, 2017, Gildenhorn Recital Hall, The Clarice

Sueños: A Celebration of Women in Music

Biographical information on and Program Notes for works by Maria Theresia von Paradis, Shulamit Ran, Lera Auerbach, Lili Boulanger, Grażyna Bacewicz, Emilie Mayer, Jennifer Higdon, and Gabriela Lena Frank.

Maria Theresia von Paradis (1759-1824)

Biography

Maria Theresia von Paradis, born in Austria in 1759, lost her eyesight at a very early age. She nevertheless became a flourishing pianist and vocalist in Vienna by the age of sixteen. She toured as a concert pianist to major European cities like London and Paris and commissioned works from Salieri, Haydn, and Mozart.

As Paradis grew older she shifted her focus more towards composition and teaching. From 1789 to 1797 she composed twelve piano sonatas, which are unfortunately all lost, five operas, and three cantatas. In 1808 she founded her own Music School for young girls in Vienna and taught until her death until 1824.

***Sicilienne* in E flat Major**

The *Sicilienne*, Paradis' most famous work, follows the usual Baroque dance form, made popular by the Baroque masters, and has a simple yet undeniably beautiful melody.

Like many of the other compositions said to have been written by Paradis, including perhaps all of her piano sonatas, the *Sicilienne* is suspected to not be an original Paradis composition. The Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers states: "The famous *Sicilienne* is spurious, *probably* the work (after a Weber Violin Sonata Op. 10, No.1) of its purported discoverer, Samuel Dushkin."³⁸ There does not appear to be significant evidence of this, and listening to both compositions does not, in my opinion, support the theory.

An alternative opinion on the origin of the *Sicilienne* can be found in Diane Peacock Jezic's *Women Composers: The Lost Tradition Found*. Jezic writes that the piece is, "Originally written for violin and piano but arranged for viola and piano and for cello and piano."³⁹ And yet another piece of evidence that this is an original Paradis composition lies in the fact that the score, published by B. Schott's Söhne, can be found in *The*

³⁸ Matsushita, Hidemi. "Maria Theresia von Paradis." 360.

³⁹ Jezic, Diane, and Elizabeth Wood. *Women Composers : The Lost Tradition Found*. 59.

*Historical Anthology of Music by Women.*⁴⁰ There is also the opinion that the piece was originally written for piano quartet and later arranged for violin and piano.

Shulamit Ran (b. 1949)

Biography

Like other composers included in this dissertation, Shulamit Ran continues the tradition of pianist-composers. At one time Ran performed extensively in the United States, Europe, and her native Israel, but ultimately chose composition over performance. In her interview published in Jennifer Kelly's *In Her Own Words: Conversations with Composers in the United States*, Ran states:

“Having been immersed as I was in performance was one of the most valuable lessons life had given me towards my work as a composer. I have a deep respect for performers. I never think they are just here to execute what I’m putting down on the paper. I see them as my closest collaborators. There is a great intimacy in the whole process... It is very much alive in my mind, and yet it needs the performer so that it won’t just live in my mind or on paper. It becomes a reality. And so performers are my closest allies, and it’s an extraordinary relationship.”⁴¹

⁴⁰ Garnett, L. *New Historical Anthology of Music by Women*.

⁴¹ Kelly, Jennifer. *In Her Own Words: Conversations with Composers in the United States*. 30.

Born in Tel Aviv in 1949, Ran spent most of her youth in Israel and came to the United States at fourteen while on scholarship from the Mannes College of Music in New York and the America Israel Cultural Foundation. The composer feels a strong relationship with her birth country that comes out in many of her compositions.

In 1991 Ran was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music for *Symphony*, making her the second of only seven women to be given the award from 1943 up to present day. She is a Professor at the University of Chicago and the artistic director for Contempo, the Contemporary Chamber Players of the University of Chicago. She is the recipient of many awards, including the Kennedy Center Friedheim Award, the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund, Chamber Music America, and the music foundations of Ford, Guggenheim, Koussevitzky, and Fromm. She was composer-in-residence for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (1992) and the American Academy of Arts and Letters (2003), and is the recipient of five honorary doctorates.

Soliloquy for Violin, Cello, and Piano (1997)

Soliloquy was dedicated to the Peabody Trio, who premiered the piece on February 27, 1998 in Amherst, MA. The trio is an adaptation of *Yearning* for violin and string

orchestra (1995), a piece composed for violinist Edna Michell and the late Yehudi Menuhin. Both pieces fall within Ran's Middle Eastern inspired compositions.

The genesis of *Soliloquy* and *Yearning* comes from a musical line sung by the character Khonnon in Ran's opera, *Between Two Worlds* (The Dybbuk). This line is recognized by its mostly stepwise and whole-tone scale theme, largely resembling the opening violin melody in *Soliloquy*.

Lera Auerbach (b.1949)

Biography

As the youngest composer on the prestigious Hans Sikorski International Music Publishing Company roster, Lera Auerbach is one of the most widely performed composers of her generation, having been commissioned and performed by top tier artists and orchestras world-wide. She is also a virtuoso pianist and has appeared as solo pianist in venues around the world and was awarded the esteemed Hindemith Prize by the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival in Germany.

Born in Chelyabinsk, Russia, Auerbach defected from the Soviet Union during a concert tour in 1991 as a teenager. She went on to earn her Bachelor and Master's degrees from

Juilliard, studying piano with Joseph Kalichstein and composition with Milton Babbitt and Robert Beaser. She subsequently went on to serve as Artist-In-Residence and Composer-in-Residence for many acclaimed programs, including the International Johannes Brahms Foundation, the Lockenhaus Festival in Austria, the Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa in Japan and the Bremen Music Festival, among others.

Auerbach is also internationally recognized as a poet and artist. Drawing and painting was part of her comprehensive creative process her entire life, and after a devastating fire destroyed her studio in New York in 2009, she began sculpting prolifically. Her large scale works have been produced in major theaters on every continent, she had her first solo photography show in Norway in 2013, she has three published books of poetry in Russian, and her first book in English, *Excess of Being* was published in 2015. The World Economic Forum selected her as a Young Global Leader in 2007 and as a Cultural Leader in 2014.

Speak, Memory (2013)

Like *Blue Curve of The Earth* by Tina Davidson, *Speak, Memory* was commissioned as part of “In 27 Pieces: the Hilary Hahn Encores,” a project in which Hahn commissioned 27 short encore pieces from composers around the world in 2013.⁴² The piece exists in two versions, one for solo violin and another for violin and piano. *Speak, Memory* is also

⁴² Hahn, Hilary. *In 27 Pieces: The Hilary Hahn Encores*.

the name of the autobiographical memoir by writer Vladimir Nabokov that includes individual short stories published between 1936 and 1951 and first published as a collection in 1951.

As part of Hilary Hahn's series of YouTube video interviews with each of the 27 composers in the project, Auerbach discusses her composition:

“The work where he talks about his childhood. I gave the title after the piece was written so it's not directly linked to Nabokov's novel, but there is a way I thought of this title because the piece deals with memory and time and the gesture of looking back, because to me that's what an encore in a way is. This is something that happens after the end. And what I love about Nabokov's prose is how he's able to recreate smallest details and describe some smallest details like light or a certain smell, a certain feeling that he felt as a child, and describe it in such a way that the reader starts remembering suddenly moments of the reader's childhood: some forgotten memory he suddenly starts to remember, long forgotten sensations, or dreams, or moments. And in a way it's the greatest gift that the writer can give to the readers, to bring back memories. So I really love this about Nabokov's work and in the piece there is a similar sense of addressing time. Addressing something familiar yet which was changed through life because our memories change. Our understanding of our memories change. Our direction of our memories change. So I wanted to create this sense of something very fragile, something that can disappear quite easily yet is

essential when one is looking back. And in that way there is perhaps there is certain similarity to Nabokov's prose."⁴³

The opening line of Nabokov's memoir reads: "The cradle rocks above an abyss, and common sense tells us that our existence is but a brief crack of light between two eternities of darkness."⁴⁴

Lili Boulanger (1893-1918)

Biography

Lili Boulanger was born in Paris to a musical family; her father taught voice at the Paris Conservatory, her mother was a singer, and her older sister, Nadia, was one of the most famous composition teachers of the twentieth century. In 1895 Lili suffered from bronchial pneumonia which left her susceptible to many illnesses during her lifetime, ultimately leading to her death at the young age of 24. Her short life was plagued by illness that today would be diagnosed and treated as Crohn's disease.

During the ten short years between when Lili decided to become a composer and her early death in 1918, she composed over fifty works, with her main contribution to vocal composition, although she composed for a wide range of genres. Her most well known

⁴³ Auerbach, Lera. "Lera Auerbach, by Hilary Hahn, for "In 27 Pieces: the Hilary Hahn Encores."

⁴⁴ Nabokov, Vladimir Vladimirovich. *Speak, Memory: A Memoir*.

work is probably the composition which won her the prestigious and coveted Prix de Rome in 1913, her cantata *Faust et Hélène*.

Lili and Nadia were surrounded by the elite French artistic and intellectual society of that era, who were friends of the Boulanger family, such as Charles Gounod, Massenet, Eugene Ysaÿe, and Jacques Thibaud, among many others. Lili audited her elder sister's composition class at the Paris Conservatory, taught by Gabriel Fauré, in which she met many well-known composers of that time including, but not limited to, Georges Enesco and Maurice Ravel. The exposure of this stimulating atmosphere surely had a profound influence on the sisters and their developing musical skills during their early years.

A month after winning the Prix de Rome Lili signed a contract with the prestigious Italian publishing firm Ricordi and her compositions began to appear on programs throughout the United States and Europe. The Parisian press took substantial notice of her death even though France was in the midst of war during the time of her death. The U.S. journal, *The Musician*, honored her with a two-column obituary, and the publishers Durand and Ricordi published many of her later compositions posthumously. All this serves as a testament to the astonishingly high level of her compositions during her short life, and to her astounding musical skill and imagination.

D'un Matin de Printemps (1918)

Composed in 1918, *D'un Matin de Printemps* (*A Spring Morning*) was the last piece that Lili was healthy enough to write out by her own hand, and even then dynamic markings and expressions were filled in by her sister. She began to compose its companion piece *D'un Soir Triste*, (*A Sad Evening*), in December 1917 and shortly thereafter began composing *D'un Matin de Printemps*. Both pieces share similar melodic elements and lines, but are contrasting in mood. The similar melodies both begin with a dotted-note motive E-G-E-D-E.

Unlike *D'un Soir Triste* and the sacred compositions of her last two years, which are generally more melancholy and slower in tempo, this composition is animated and rhythmic, marked *gai, léger* (“gaily, lightly”). Lili Boulanger wrote *D'un Matin de Printemps* in three different arrangements: violin or flute and piano, piano trio, and an orchestral arrangement.

After these companion pieces Lili was too weak to keep composing by herself, but with the help of her sister she continued on her opera *La Princesse Maleine*, which was unfortunately never finished. The bright mood of *D'un Matin de Printemps* and its joyful and brilliant ending are both testaments to Lili's joyous spirit and vitality, despite her physical frailty.

Grażyna Bacewicz (1909-1969)

Biography

Born in Poland, Grażyna Bacewicz was an accomplished composer, pianist, violinist, and author. She studied composition at the Warsaw Conservatory with Kazimierz Sikorski, and in Paris with Nadia Boulanger and Carl Flesch. She acted as principal violin in the Polish Radio Orchestra from 1936 to 1938 and performed as soloist around Europe before returning to Poland before the Second World War, during which she gave secret underground concerts in which she premiered her own works.

Bacewicz's divided her compositional output into three segments: the first from 1932 to 1944, the second from 1945 to 1959, and the last from 1960 to 1969. Even though her musical characteristics, including wit, clarity, and her use of folk elements, can be seen early on in her career, her most distinctive and influential works date from her last period. In 1954, the year in which she suffered serious injuries from a car accident, Bacewicz finally dedicated her efforts solely to composition.

She won numerous awards for composition, including the First Prize at the International Composition Competition in Liege in 1951 and the Second Prize at the same competition in 1956, and the Prize of the Belgian Government and the gold medal at the International Competition for Composers in Brussels for Violin Concerto No. 7 in 1965, as well as multiple lifetime achievement awards.

She became only the second woman composer from Poland to gain National and International recognition, after Polish composer Maria Szymanowska. She taught composition during the last three years of her life at the Warsaw Conservatory.

Bacewicz had a significant role in the postwar Polish musical world and carried the torch for the numerous Polish women composers who followed her. According to another woman composer, Bernadetta Matuszczak (b. 1937), Bacewicz was the first woman in Poland to be accepted as an equal by her male peers:

“In Poland, Grażyna opened the way for women composers. . . It was difficult for her, but with her great talent she won, she became famous. . . . Afterwards, we had an open path, and nobody was surprised: “My God, a woman composer again!” Bacewicz had already been there, so the next one also had a right to exist.”⁴⁵

Humoreska (1953)

A “Humoresque” is a genre from the Romantic period that is playful and generally lighthearted in mood. Written in 1953, the composer’s self-proclaimed ‘middle period,’ the piece has an uneven meter of 5/8 to create an off-kilter and witty *Humoreska*. The

⁴⁵ Trochimczyk, Maja. “Polish Composers: Grażyna Bacewicz.”

short and virtuosic piece for violin and piano is in three sections, with a *dolce* middle section.

A virtuoso violinist herself, Bacewicz won the Honorable Mention prize in the 1935 Wieniawski Violin Competition, the same year in which the first prize was won by the French violinist Ginette Neveu and the second prize went to David Oistrakh. With its expertly idiosyncratic writing for both violin and piano, the *Humoreska* clearly displays the composer's masterful knowledge of both instruments.

In 1964 Bacewicz said in an interview, "Contemporary composers, and at least a considerable number of them, explain what system they used, in what way they arrived at something. I do not do that. I think that the matter of the way by which one arrived at something is, for the listeners, unimportant. What matters is the final result, which is the work itself."⁴⁶

Emilie Mayer (1821-1883)

Biography

Born in Mecklenburg, Germany, Emilie Mayer, the daughter of an apothecary, received music education and studied piano from an early age. She also began composing short piano pieces at a young age. Known as the "female Beethoven" of her time, Mayer was a

⁴⁶ Bacewicz, Grażyna. "Interview for Polish Radio, 1964."

prolific and celebrated composer during her lifetime, yet her compositions have largely been forgotten since her death.

In 1840 her father shot himself fatally on the 26th anniversary of the death of Emilie's mother. Author Marie Silling, wrote:

"The death of her father caused her first deep sorrow; in order to numb this pain, she buried herself in work. She went to Szczecin and became Loewe's student. After a challenging test he said in his crafty manner: *"You actually know nothing and everything at the same time! I shall be the gardener who helps the talent that is still a bud resting within your chest to unfold and become the most beautiful flower!"* Emilie always considered it important to be thrifty in her own life but was continually giving to the needs of others. When, for these reasons, she asked Löwe whether she could share the composition lessons with other female pupils, he answered: *"such a God-given talent as hers had not been bestowed upon any other person he knew."* This statement filled her with the greatest thankfulness throughout her whole life and obliged her to work extremely hard."⁴⁷

Mayer was the most prolific German woman composer of the Romantic period. Her compositions were performed throughout Europe and so she was much acclaimed during her lifetime. She received the gold medal of art from the queen of Prussia, Elizabeth of Bavaria, and was appointed co-director of the Berlin Opera. In 1885 she was appointed

⁴⁷ Silling, Marie. *Jugenderinnerungen einer Stettiner Kaufmannstochter*.

an honorary member of the Munich Philharmonic Society. Despite her success during her lifetime, her works remain largely unperformed since her death.

***Notturmo* (1883)**

Emilie Mayer wrote the *Notturmo*, opus 48 in 1883, the year of her death, and it is her last known composition. The charming work is rather unpredictable in places. The violin sneaks in when the listener least expects it after the melody is introduced in the piano, and the piece has a few unconventional and rather abrupt modulations. While the elegant melody is played by the violin above a developing, brooding line in the piano accompaniment, it can be seen as somewhat reminiscent of Schubert's *Lieder*. The short piece is dedicated to the world-famous violinist Joseph Joachim.

Jennifer Higdon (b.1962)

Biography

Born in Brooklyn and raised in the Southern states, Jennifer Higdon was not exposed to classical music in her youth like most women composers, but was instead exposed to experimental art exhibitions by her father. This assisted in Higdon forming an early artistic identity that eventually lead to her tremendously successful career in composition.

Higdon's exposure to classical music happened during her high school years as a flutist in marching band. She taught herself to play the flute at age fifteen and didn't begin her formal studies until the late age of eighteen.

Higdon is now one of the foremost contemporary composers in America. Like Shulamit Ran, Higdon is a winner of the Pulitzer Prize in Music in 2010 for her *Violin Concerto*. She also won a Grammy in 2010 for her *Percussion Concerto* and has received numerous awards, including awards from the Guggenheim Foundation, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Pew Fellowship in the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). She also runs a publishing company along with her partner, Cheryl Lawson, called Lawdon Press which exclusively publishes and distributes Higdon's works.

Higdon currently holds the Rock Chair in Composition at The Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Her composition for orchestra, *blue cathedral*, is one of the most performed contemporary works in America, with more than 600 performances since its 2000 premiere.⁴⁸ She is now one of the most frequently performed contemporary composers in the United States, forging a path for women composers everywhere.

Nocturne (from String Poetic)

⁴⁸ <<http://jenniferhigdon.com/biography.html>>

Nocturne is the second movement of five from Higdon's *String Poetic*, which was commissioned in 2006 for violinist Jennifer Koh. When asked about the inception of *String Poetic*, Higdon cited Koh's "virtuosic abilities and soulful playing. Because I have heard her play so many different types of music, I created a piece that has different moods: almost like a small story book."⁴⁹

Composer Note:

PROGRAM NOTES: "String Poetic"

Poetic songs sung in the voice of violin & piano...each contributes to the story...

I. Jagged Climb

Jagged run...rise, running, sidle up the side of the climb-jagged-climb

II. Nocturne...that piece of night-night of peace

III. Blue Hills of Mist—in the glaze of light between dawn...sunset, blue's hills have mist
—a covering of song and mystery that belongs not to any person, but to other places

IV. Maze Mechanical

Amazing maze; maze that is mad; mechanical machine...putzing and stalling
along...made to chug; amazed at the maze; steaming forward; stalling; racing;
maniacal...lost in the maze?...mechanical maze

V. Climb Jagged

Rise above, in jagged climb...climb, arise, in jagged run...running, rise, jagged fun

⁴⁹ Lamoreaux, Andrea. *String Poetic. American Works: a 21st century perspective.*

This work was commissioned in 2006 for violinist, Jennifer Koh, by San Francisco Performances, San Francisco, CA; The Carlsen Center, Johnson City Community College, Overland Park, KS; 92nd Street Y, New York, NY; Oberlin Conservatory, Oberlin, OH; and The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, Philadelphia, PA.

Note: movements should be listed as...

1. Jagged Climb
2. Nocturne
3. Blue Hills of Mist
4. Maze Mechanical
5. Climb Jagged

--Jennifer Higdon⁵⁰

Gabriela Lena Frank (b.1972)

Biography

Born in Berkeley, California in 1972, Gabriela Lena Frank considers her compositions an exploration and expression of her identity, and most importantly her Latin American Roots. Born to a mother of mixed Peruvian/Chinese ancestry and a father of Lithuanian/

⁵⁰ Higdon, Jennifer. *String Poetic: II. Nocturne*.

Jewish descent, she feels an especially strong connection to her Andean/Peruvian heritage.

A virtuosic pianist specializing in contemporary music, Frank explores and interprets the compositions she performs largely from a cultural perspective, and any artist performing her compositions must do the same. As a pianist and composer, she is greatly inspired by the works of Bela Bartók and Alberto Ginastera. With a keen interest in musical anthropology, she has traveled extensively throughout South America, and her evocative compositions reflect her Latin American studies. She writes program notes that can greatly enhance the listeners' experience of her pieces and writes, "There's usually a story line behind my music; a scenario or character."⁵¹

Frank won a Latin Grammy in 2009 for Best Classical Contemporary Composition for *Inca Dances* and was nominated for a 2011 Grammy for Best Small Ensemble Performance for *Gabriela Lena Frank: Hilos*, featuring Alias hammer Ensemble. She has awards from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, a United States Artists Fellowship, and the Brilliant Prize awarded by the Hispanic Scholarship Foundation. She has been Artist-in-Residence with the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and for the past three years was Composer-in-Residence with Houston Symphony.

⁵¹ <<http://www.musicsalesclassical.com/composer/long-bio/Gabriela-Lena-Frank>>

Sueños de Chambi: Snapshots for an Andean Album (original version) (2002)

Composer Note:

Sueños de Chambi: Snapshots for an Andean Album is inspired by the work of Martín Chambi (1891-1973), the first Amerindian photographer to achieve international acclaim, albeit posthumously. In a career spanning half a century, he recorded as much of Peruvian life, architecture, and landscape as possible, having had the good luck to train with Max T. Vargas in the southern Peruvian town of Arequipa as a young boy. In 1920, he opened a studio in Cuzco, the original capital of the Inca Empire, which became the base for his examination of indigenous culture. In his documentation of both the Quechua-speaking descendants of the Incas and the mestizo (mixed-race) elite, Chambi produced more than 18,000 glass negatives depicting the customs and festivals, the working lives and public celebrations of twentieth-century Peruvians.

Chambi was notable for his lack of interest in the industry of touring and exhibiting, buying and selling, and obtaining listings in foreign photography collections and catalogues. As far as he was concerned, his subjects were his constituency. Chambi's desire to integrate his Indian heritage with his artistic talent, his unassuming nature and ease in meeting people regardless of class, caste or race, and his natural curiosity meant that he avoided exoticizing the inhabitants of the high altiplano of Peru. His pictures are consequently direct but not at the expense of pictorial concerns - Throughout his life,

Chambi experimented heavily with light sources which can be directly related to his interest in Rembrandt's paintings.

Sueños de Chambi ("Dreams of Chambi") is my musical interpretation of seven photos from Chambi's vast collection of pictures. I was first introduced to Chambi's work at the encouragement of compadre and friend Rodney Waters, a fine pianist and photographer himself. Having watched me explore my Peruvian heritage (in music and otherwise) for some time, Rod purchased a slim volume containing some of Chambi's work for me one day... and I fell in love with the images. It was with great difficulty that I picked just seven to muse on in this duo for violin and piano! They are:

I. Harawi de Quispe: Based on the photo, "Portrait of Miguel Quispe, Cuzco, Peru, c. 1926," this opening movement frames a Cusqueño religious tune (collected by the Peruvian ethnomusicologist Daniel Alomia Robles) in a harawi, a melancholy and emotional song played by a solo quena flute, the quintessential wind instrument of the Andes. Nicknamed "El Inca" for hiking these mountains barefoot, Miguel Quispe was famous for his nonviolent organizations against the deplorable economic conditions of Indians. Here, he is photographed in profile, the lines of his face and Inca outfit quietly brilliant.

II. Diablicos Puneños: This picture ("Danzarin de la Diablada, 1925") features a single dancer dressed as a devil from the southern Peruvian region of Puno. The piano flows

attacca into this second movement from the first, setting the scene for a dance number with a singing melody on repeated notes. Black note clusters imitate shacapa percussion (seed rattles strapped to the dancers' thighs) while the violin plays in legato and connected parallel fourths to imitate the tayqa, an extremely large and breathy panpipe.

III. Responsorio Lauramarqueño: In this picture ("Shepherds Piping in their Flocks, Lauramarca, Peru, 1929-33"), two shepherds, presumably father and son, are portrayed with their flutes against the backdrop of the Peruvian highlands, calling in their sheep. The music is structured as antiphonal responses between short solo piano interludes and the serrana cantilena melody sung by the violin. The cantilena melody is set against a swinging piano backdrop meant to convey the sound of the wind in the regional trees.

IV. P'asña Marcha: This picture ("The P'asña Marcha, Cuzco, Peru, 1940") features women, known as bastoneras de Quiquijana, who dance for one another. In a game testing their skill, they balance large poles on their hands while performing intricate dance steps. After a capricious opening evoking the tremolo and pizzicato sounds of charangos (instruments similar to the mandolin) and guitars, a karnavalito rhythm persists throughout as an ostinato ground in the piano. The tinya drum is alluded to as well - Small in size, it is one of the only musical instruments commonly played by women in indigenous Peruvian culture.

V. Adoración para Angelitos: As a piano solo, this movement sets a Peruvian nursery rhyme (collected by Peruvian ethnomusicologist/composer Andre Sás) to reflect "Dead Child Displayed for the Mourners, Cuzco, Peru, 1920s," a photograph of a deceased child laid out among flowers and candles on a bed, ready for burial.

VI. Harawi de Chambi: The sixth photo is a self-portrait of Chambi which caught my eye for its similarity to the first portrait of Miguel Quispe. Both photos are in profile, in tranquil repose of quiet strength, and bathed in a halo of intertwining light and dark.

Consequently, the same harawi melody from the introduction is set in the finale.

Considering Chambi's penchant for posing in disguise in his pictures in an attempt to get "inside" the setting, I like to think he would have appreciated my linking him to Quispe. I also pay tribute to the folk-influenced music of Bela Bartók by alluding to his second sonata for violin and piano.

VII. Marinera: "Folkloric Musicians, Cuzco, Peru, 1934" is the inspiration for this finale in an enlivened marinera style, a coastal dance popular among folk musicians throughout Peru.

This work exists in two arrangements: Violin with piano, and Alto Fl./Fl. in C with piano.

Bio and caption notes for Chambi and his photos draw heavily on "Chambi" published by Phaidon Press Limited and annotated by Amanda Hopkinson.

Thanks must go to Rodney Waters who introduced Martin Chambi to me. In addition, my gratitude goes to the commissioning violinist, Sergiu Luca, who has generously interested himself in my work as a classical composer of mestiza persuasion; pianist Brian Connelly who premieres the work along with Sergiu at the Cascade Head Music Festival; and Wendy Olson - It is not every day that a composer gets to befriend, perform with, and be roommates with a gifted musician who gamely whips out her violin while still in pajamas to - ever so gently - test out and correct my "questionable" string passages...

— Gabriela Lena Frank⁵²

⁵² Frank, Gabriela Lena. *Sueños de Chambi : snapshots for an Andean album : for violin and piano*.

Recital III: November 6, 2017, Gildenhorn Recital Hall, The Clarice

Silenzio: A Celebration of Women in Music

Biographical information on and Program Notes for works by Franziska Lebrun, Tonia Ko, Caroline Shaw, Gillian Whitehead, Sofia Gubaidulina, and Franghiz Ali-Zadeh.

Franziska Lebrun (1756-1791)

Biography

Born in Mannheim, Franziska Lebrun was the daughter of noted Italian cellist Innocenz Danzi and became one of the leading German soprano masters of her time. She held the title 'virtuosa da camera' in the Elector Carl Theodor's court opera at Mannheim. The role of the countess in Ignaz Holzbauer's *Günther von Schwarzburg* was written for her voice, and in 1777 she triumphed in the role. She married oboist and composer August Lebrun in 1778, the same year in which she sang the principal role in Antonio Salieri's *Europa riconosciuta* at the opening of La Scala in Milan. She published two sets of six Sonatas for violin and piano (opp. 1-2, 1780) which were published throughout Europe during her life, and of which the first six were reprinted.

Sonata op. 1, No. 3, in FM

Franziska Lebrun's set of Six Sonatas, Op. 1, written in 1780, are each comprised of two movements which follow the Mannheim tradition, in which the violin plays a primarily accompanying role. This Sonata is the third from her Opus 1 and its movements are titled "Allegro" and "Rondeau: Allegretto." The challenging and brilliant piano part is written with great technical mastery, the violin playing a charming and graceful role in each movement. The Six Sonatas, Op. 1 were composed for and dedicated to Lady Clarges.

Tonia Ko (b. 1988)

Biography

Born in Hong Kong and raised in Honolulu, Tonia holds a DMA from Cornell University where she studied composition with Steven Stucky and Kevin Ernste. She served as the Composer-in-Residence for Young Concert Artists from 2015 until 2017. Tonia has received numerous grants and awards, including those from Chamber Music America, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Composers Now, and the International Alliance for Women in Music.

Also a visual artist, she develops interactive installations and sound sculptures, most recently supported by the Studios at MASS MoCA. Her most prominent interdisciplinary work, “Breath, Contained,” is an current project in which she uses bubble wrap as a canvas for both art and sound.

Artist Statement from the Composer’s Website:

I work primarily in sound, specifically in concert music— but use my visual and tactile instincts to guide and grow my artistic practice. Exploring micro-textures is a central concept in my work across diverse mediums. Whether I am composing for orchestral instruments, improvising on bubble wrap, or creating large-scale paintings, the quality and character of an object’s exterior membrane is my primary focus of research.

Over the past four years, I have developed a mode of tactile performance— techniques that reveal a material’s potential as both art and sound object. For example, bubble wrap’s buoyancy, transparency, and inherent rhythm determine its sonic identity and the performer’s physical movements. I investigate the space where pressure meets friction.

My work is concerned with how tactile experiences and physical motion convey the immediacy of a moment, something easily forgotten in today’s virtual clouds of information and incessant commentary. Along the way, several conceptual questions guide my work: How can we bring out the instability seemingly flat and inert surfaces?

What are the sonic images of these surface imperfections? How closely does our sense of touch align with our visual and aural instincts?

Although my interests are articulated here as an intellectual pursuit, they are deeply connected to my personal background. I have always loved music as an abstract construct, yet my most distinctive and powerful musical memories are visceral, narrative, and communal. I vividly remember breathing and stepping together with my youth chorus while we danced and sang Hawaiian folk songs, or hiding backstage during one of my father's musical theater productions, waiting for an actor to step onstage at the perfect moment. In this way, the elements of movement, timing and texture are important to me because of their innate, powerful emotional content.

-Tonia Ko⁵³

Still Life Crumbles

Composer note:

Upon my arrival at Cornell University in the summer of 2012, I was introduced to the school's impressive collection of historical keyboards, which include harpsichords, fortepianos, as well as unique instruments manufactured before the standardized piano as we know it today. I immediately wanted to take advantage of this collection, being

⁵³ <<http://toniako.com/about/biography/>>

particularly drawn to the harpsichord's brittle sound-quality. At the same time, I encountered a whimsical, yet bittersweet moment in the closing lines of Amy Lowell's 1915 poem "Aliens": "And while I laugh/ My spirit crumbles at their teasing touch." The imagery of these lines seemed to be the ideal sonic inspiration for a violin-harpsichord duo. *Still Life Crumbles* was completed that October and premiered in Cornell's Barnes Hall Auditorium.

I was particularly interested in integrating the instruments timbrally, rather showing off their obvious contrasts. The opening gesture, featuring the harpsichord's buff stop, is at first punctuated by pizzicato in the violin. As the music develops, the two instruments engage in an intimate dialogue that constantly overlaps. Brief monologues for the violin offer some respite from the close relationship of the duo. The harpsichord writing engages all the stops of the instrument, allowing me to construct a dramatic arch for the piece-- the relaxed, muted sound at the beginning transforms gradually into the bright, energetic middle section. The musical gestures of this piece continuously crumble and splinter in various ways, ultimately resembling the unpredictable rustling of autumn leaves in the wind.⁵⁴

FULL POEM:

Aliens

The chatter of little people

⁵⁴ Ko, Tonia, e-mail to the author, 14 Oct. 2017.

Breaks on my purpose

Like the water-drops which slowly wear the rocks to powder.

And while I laugh

My spirit crumbles at their teasing touch.

-Amy Lowell⁵⁵

Caroline Shaw (b.1982)

Biography

Caroline Adelaide Shaw became the youngest ever winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2013, for her composition *Partita for 8 Voices*. She performs as a violin soloist, chamber musician, member of American Contemporary Music Ensemble (ACME), and as a vocalist in the Grammy-winning ensemble *Roomful of Teeth*. Recent commissions include works for Carnegie Hall, the Guggenheim Museum, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra with Jonathan Biss, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter. Shaw received her Bachelor of Music in violin performance from Rice University in 2004, and her Master's Degree in violin from Yale University in 2007. Currently a doctoral candidate at Princeton, she is based in New York.

***Entr'acte* (2011)**

Composer Note:

⁵⁵ Lowell, Amy, et al. *Selected Poems of Amy Lowell*.

Entr'acte was written in 2011 after hearing the Brentano Quartet play Haydn's Op. 77 No. 2 — with their spare and soulful shift to the D-flat major trio in the minuet. It is structured like a Minuet and Trio, riffing on that classical form but taking it a little further. I love the way some music (like the minuets of Op. 77) suddenly takes you to the other side of Alice's looking glass, in a kind of absurd, subtle, technicolor transition.⁵⁶

Gillian Whitehead (b.1941)

Biography

Born in Hamilton, New Zealand in 1941, Dame Gillian Whitehead spent fourteen years in Britain and Europe establishing an international reputation. She studied composition at the University of Sydney with Peter Sculthorpe from 1964 to 1965. In 1966 she attended a composition course given by Peter Maxwell Davies in Adelaide and travelled to England to continue studying with him.

From 1978 to 1980 she was Composer-in-Residence for Northern Arts at Newcastle University (UK). In 1981 she joined the staff of the Composition School at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music where she acted as Head of Composition for four years. After a

⁵⁶ Shaw, Caroline. <<https://caroline-shaw-editions.myshopify.com/products/entr-acte>>

fifteen-year teaching career at the Conservatorium she took early retirement in 1996 and continues to compose in New Zealand.

In 1999 her opera, *Outrageous Fortune*, won the SOUNZ Contemporary Award. In 2000 she became one of the inaugural Artist Laureates of the New Zealand Arts Foundation and is now a governor of the organization. During 2000 and 2001 she was Composer-in-Residence at the Auckland Philharmonia and from 1998 until 2003 was President of the Composers' Association of New Zealand. In 2003 she was given an honorary doctorate by Victoria University of Wellington. In 2008 she became a Distinguished Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit, one of New Zealand's highest honors, and she was granted the title 'Dame' in 2009.

***Torua* (2011)**

Like Tina Davidson's *Blue Curve of The Earth*, Lera Auerbach's *Speak, Memory*, and Franghiz Ali-Zadeh's *Impulse*, Gillian Whitehead's *Torua* was commissioned as part of "In 27 Pieces: the Hilary Hahn Encores," a project in which Hahn commissioned 27 short encore pieces from composers around the world in 2013.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Hahn, Hilary. *In 27 Pieces: The Hilary Hahn Encores*.

Composed shortly after the earthquake in Christchurch in February, 2011, Davidson describes the piece as being “somber” in a YouTube interview with Hilary Hahn, and admits to having difficulty composing after the destructive earthquake.⁵⁸

Composer Note:

Tōrua, translated from the Māori language of New Zealand, has several meanings – it signifies a change in wind or current, it is the name given to a weaving pattern, and in its third meaning of 'twofold' or 'double thickness' suggests the idea of duet. Tōrua was written in the wake of the destructive Christchurch earthquake in February, 2011. Tōrua was commissioned by Hilary Hahn for her Encores (2010) Project.⁵⁹

Sofia Gubaidulina (b.1931)

Biography

Sofia Gubaidulina was born in the Soviet Republic in 1931. She studied piano and composition at the Kazan Conservatory, and went on to study composition at the Moscow Conservatory with Nikolai Peiko and Vissarion Shebalin. Since 1992 she has lived in Germany, outside Hamburg.

⁵⁸ Whitehead, Gillian. “Gillian Whitehead, by Hilary Hahn, for *In 27 Pieces: the Hilary Hahn Encores.*”

⁵⁹ Whitehead, Gillian. *Torua.*

Gubaidulina is one of the leading representatives of New Music from the former Soviet Union, along with Schnittke, Denisov, and Silvestrov. Numerous dedicated musicians have championed her compositions, and Gidon Kremer, a true advocate of Gubaidulina, helped bring her works to the international spotlight in the early 1980's with his dedication to her Violin Concerto, *Offertorium*. After she was first allowed to travel to the West in 1985, her international influence flourished.

Gubaidulina believes in the mystical properties of music, and her compositions often possess a relationship with mystical ideas and Christian mysticism. She was a co-founder of the "Astreia" ensemble, which collects and specializes in improvising on rare Russian, Caucasian, and Asian folk and ritual instruments. These eccentric timbres greatly influenced her works, which often explore unconventional techniques of sound production.

Her awards include the Prix de Monaco, the Russian State Prize, the SpohrPreis, the Sonning Prize in Denmark, the Polar Music Prize in Sweden, the Living Composer Prize of the Cannes Classical Awards, the Great Distinguished Service Cross of the Order of Merit with Star of the Federal Republic of Germany, the 'Golden Lion' for Lifetime Achievement of the Venice Bieniale, and the Prix de l'Académie Royale de Belgique. In 2005, she was elected as a foreign honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. She is the recipient of honorary doctorates from Yale University and the

University of Chicago and she has been honored twice with the prestigious Koussevitzky International Recording Award.

Silenzio (1991)

Silenzio is composed for bayan (the Russian accordion which is widely accepted by classical music audiences), violin, and cello. It is dedicated to and inspired by the personality of the German accordionist and pedagogue Elsbeth Moser, who gave the first premiere in Hanover, Germany in 1991 along with violinist Kathrin Rabus and cellist Christoph Marks.

The composer explains that much of the work is to be played in pianissimo, giving explanation to the title. Gubaidulina did not intend to express silence or create an impression of silence. Rather, she means to convey that silence is the foundation from which something grows.⁶⁰

There are five movements, or miniatures, titled: quarter note = 96, double whole note = 42, quarter note = 56, eighth note = 152 and quarter note = 72. The work has a predilection for minor seconds and tone clusters.

⁶⁰ Anderson, Keith. *GUBAIDULINA: Seven Words / Silenzio / In Croce*.

Gubaidulina's propensity for creating sound worlds that are uncommon is displayed through the relationship between the sounds of the accordion and the strings. At many times, the strings create uncommon sounds using harmonics, extreme registers, *sempre vibrato* over an open string drone, often using minor seconds, and *sul tasto*, which makes the distinction between them and the accordion hard to distinguish. These techniques create an otherworldly sound, completely unique to this work.

Franghiz Ali-Zadeh (b.1947)

Biography

Franghiz Ali-Zadeh was born in Baku, Azerbaijan and studied piano and composition with Kara Karayev at the Baku Conservatory from 1965 until 1973. She then went on to teach music history at the Conservatory until 1990 and then went on to become professor of contemporary music and history of orchestral styles. Her 1989 doctoral thesis was *Orchestration in Works of Composers of Azerbaijan*.

As a pianist, she was committed to performing works by contemporary composers of the former Soviet Union and was therefore responsible for the works of the Second Viennese School, composers including Olivier Messiaen, John Cage, and George Crumbe, being introduced in Baku.

As a composer Ali-Zadeh successfully blends the traditions of the musical heritage of her homeland with modern western compositional techniques. She attempts to realize the personal tensions that have resulted during her lifetime by reflecting the religious and cultural conflicts between the societies.

In November 2000 she received the honorary title of “People’s Artist of the Republic of Azerbaijan” and was named “UNESCO Artist for Peace” in 2008. In 1976 she introduced her *Piano Sonata in Memory of Alban Berg* at the music festival in Pesaro, and her music has been performed and recorded internationally ever since. Artists such as Mstislav Rostropovich, Yo-Yo Ma, Evelyn Glennie, and Elsbeth Moser among many others have been advocates of her compositions for years.

***Impulse* for violin and piano (2013)**

Like Tina Davidson’s *Blue Curve of The Earth*, Lera Auerbach’s *Speak, Memory*, and Gillian Whitehead’s *Torua*, *Impulse* was commissioned as part of “In 27 Pieces: the Hilary Hahn Encores,” a project in which Hahn commissioned 27 short encore pieces from composers around the world in 2013.⁶¹

Composer Note:

⁶¹ Hahn, Hilary. *In 27 Pieces: The Hilary Hahn Encores*.

What is the outstanding quality of Hilary Hahn, who has at such a young age joined the ranks of the prominent stars of contemporary interpretational art? When one hears her live, on the station “Mezzo,” or on numerous YouTube videos, one comprehends that she is marked by a formidable level of energy. Her interpretations shine with sunny, joyfully colorful emotions; her playing is gripping and thrilling to hear. This young violinist copes with technical difficulties as if she came from another planet, giving virtuoso interpretations of the most complex pieces in the violin repertoire. This deep impression provided the first impetus, the first impulse to write a piece dedicated to her — a piece expressing youthful impetuosity and determination. The slow middle section embodies a sudden memory of childhood — pure visions. But then a storm grabs hold of the movement anew, impetuously driving it to a brilliant, bravura finale, as befits a piece with the title *Encore for Hilary Hahn*.⁶²

⁶² Ali-Zadeh, Franghiz. “Premieres of Franghiz Ali-Zadeh’s “Impulse”.

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