Concerto for Violin and Orchestra and "Nevertheless, She Composed: A Contemporary Survey of Women Composers of the Twenty-First Century"

Elizabeth Anne Knox

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CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND ORCHESTRA AND
NEVERTHELESS, SHE COMPOSED:
A CONTEMPORARY SURVEY OF WOMEN COMPOSERS
OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in
The Department of Music

by
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B.M., University of Indianapolis, 2013
M.M., Butler University, 2016
May 2020
PREFACE

While composing the violin concerto, I found myself continually thinking about the potential performers and listeners. I would like to think that I have always cared about both parties when I compose, but I believe this consumer-awareness coupled with a strict non-programmatic approach had a profound impact on the outcome of this piece, whether positive or negative. The terminal struggle of the contemporary composer is alive and well with famous questions such as: Should I write in a strictly academic style to land a job? Should I rage against the machine and write what I want? Should I write what I think others want to hear or play? Should I write a piece that has a chance of being performed? All of these considerations are worth exploring when creating a new piece, depending on the composer’s end goal. This also reveals the importance of (if possible) securing a commission or writing for a specific ensemble. This gives the composer an idea of the target audience, the skill level of the performers, the resources available within the performing ensemble, etc. While composing this work, instead of establishing a programmatic narrative, I imagined live performances by both collegiate orchestras and professional ensembles. This imaginative performance technique helped me consider specific decisions regarding style, technique, balance, etc. within the ensemble. It also informed the level of difficulty of the piece and the potential personnel considerations. For the purposes of a dissertation, this concerto may be lacking a strong academic or contemporary flair, but I believe that the solo voice against the larger ensemble gave me an opportunity to explore my abilities in creating distinct melodies and counterpoint within the confines of a larger form. My desire to study with Dr. Dinos Constantinides was centered around this more traditional approach to composing.
I look forward to composing additional concertos that may reflect a more virtuosic setting, but I believe personal growth and advances were made with this first violin concerto.

For the last two and a half years, I have had the privilege of meeting so many wonderful musicians and composers as a result of *Nevertheless, She Composed*. Developing and maintaining NSC has been an amazing and challenging opportunity. I had to research and develop many (unanticipated) new skills on demand while investing an immense amount of time, energy, and resources to see the project come to life and maintain its existence. From weeks of video editing and processing, to countless hours of scheduling interviews, recording them, and then transcribing, the effort was and is worth every minute to be able to connect with these amazing composers that deserve to be heard. Though the scope of this project may be slightly outside of the “dissertation box”, I believe the value of recording these active, living composers holds great merit and potential. I look forward to continuing the interviews, promoting new music, the composers that write it, and expanding our compositional outreach.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the following LSU faculty members for their service and guidance as my doctoral committee: My teacher and mentor, Dr. Dinos Constantinides, LSU Boyd Professor of Composition, Dr. Edgar Berdahl, Assistant Professor of Experimental Music & Digital Media, Dr. Alison McFarland, Associate Professor of Musicology, Dr. Jeffrey Perry, Manship Professor of Music Theory, and Dr. B. Charlene Henderson, Assistant Professor - Department of Accounting.

I would like to acknowledge the research and advocacy that I witnessed (on behalf of composers who happened to be women) during my undergraduate and graduate education in Indianapolis, Indiana. The efforts of Dr. Rebecca Sorley, Professor of Music at the University of Indianapolis, and Dr. James Briscoe, Professor Emeritus of Music, Butler University, were early inspirations for this dissertation and the subsequent anthology that will follow.

A very special note of thanks to the women that opened their hearts and worlds to us through these somewhat candid yet inspiring interviews. Thank you to all of my colleagues, friends, and family for showing enthusiasm and providing encouragement for this project. It has been and will be an honor to continue to reach out to additional composers and share their stories.

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”
- 1 Corinthians 10:31(KJV)
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation consists of two parts: the first part includes an original composition titled, “Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.” This twenty-minute work is composed for traditional orchestral instrumentation and solo violin. Motivic variation is the primary focus of this piece with a goal to show evidence of a thorough understanding and use of this technique. In music composition, variation is a technique achieved by restating musical material in an altered form. Schoenberg describes a motive as, “a unit which contains one or more features of interval and rhythm [whose] presence is maintained in constant use throughout a piece.” Therefore, motivic variation (sometimes referred to as motivic development) is the compositional process of restating a musical idea throughout a piece in an altered form. The large-form structure consists of four movements; each movement is approximately five minutes in length with no breaks between. The music is non-programmatic with emphasis on color, timbre, and textural changes. The harmonic language is mostly pandiatonic (lacking functional tonality.) Counter-point, range, instrument combinations, and compositional style were considered for each passage.

The second part of this dissertation, Nevertheless, She Composed: A Contemporary Survey of Women Composers of the Twenty-First Century, consists of transcribed interviews conducted between 2017 and 2019. The interviews feature living composers who happen to be women and are active within the academic and new music community. The primary purpose of this project is to feature the lives, careers, and works of the composers. The featured composers were interviewed in person or via Skype with the exception of Kate Waring. Kate passed away in 2015; the decision to include her story was made due to her compositional achievements.
during the twenty-first century and her ties to Louisiana State University. Reflections of her life were provided by her niece, soprano Cara Waring, her husband, Richard Tannenbaum, and her teacher, Dr. Dinos Constantinides.

The format of each interview was guided by a general outline of past, present, and future, allowing the composers to share information in a mostly non-scripted, free-associative manner. The result of this format yielded a wealth of biographical, educational, and resource-filled commentary.
CHAPTER 1. CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND ORCHESTRA

Introduction

For a composer, crafting a violin concerto is a monumental milestone. The history of this
genre shows a past that is rich with works created by compositional giants such as Beethoven,
Alban Berg, Samuel Barber, Igor Stravinsky, Arnold Schoenberg, Augusta Read Thomas, Ellen
Taaffe Zwilich, Jean Sibelius, and Erich Korngold. Each of them incorporated elements of
tradition, variation, and innovation into their works. These three characteristics are the
foundation of my violin concerto in the following ways: traditional instrumentation with a focus
on timbre and texture, variation in the form of motivic variation with an attempt to force the
piece to draw upon itself, and innovation of the concepts of a violin concerto by deviating from
the traditional form and stylistic qualities…all while making a conscious effort to develop a
harmonic language that utilizes some elements of allusion yet reflects my own realizations.¹

When constructing the foundation of this concerto, I wanted to combine a variety of
elements. I looked to composers such as those mentioned above and then worked my way to
some of the more recent violin concertos of our time. The list is extensive, but I listened to and
reviewed concertos from a wide variety of centuries and styles; from J.S. Bach to Bela Bartok,
Paul Hindemith to Jennifer Higdon, Edward Elgar to Danny Elfman. Stravinsky provided an
interesting view of the violin concerto, and in true Stravinsky style, his Violin Concerto in D
gave me the creative confidence I needed to construct my concerto with both traditional and non-
traditional qualities. Penned four years prior to Berg’s violin concerto, Stravinsky’s concerto had

1. A reference in a musical work to another work, style, or convention. Allusion to a particular work is
generally distinguished from Quotation in that material is not quoted directly, but a reference is made through some
other similarity between the two works, such as gesture, melodic or rhythmic contour, timbre, texture, or form.
characteristics that colored outside of the lines of the traditional genre. In correspondence with his publisher, Stravinsky is associated the following statement:

…the texture is almost always more characteristic of chamber music than of orchestra music. I did not compose a cadenza, not because I did not care about exploiting the violin virtuosity, but because the violin in combination was my real interest. But virtuosity for its own sake has only a small role in my concerto, and the technical demands of the piece are relatively tame.\(^2\)

Stravinsky’s description encompasses my intentions toward my own concerto. The solo violin should be the primary focus, but the combination of the violin and its interaction with the orchestra is also an important feature of this concerto. In regard to the nature of this piece: although I am familiar with various extended violin techniques, the character of this piece is more traditional. I wished to focus on my ability to create long lines and melodies with complimentary counterpoint as opposed to fragmented motives and sound effects.

Concerning form, Stravinsky constructed his work in four movements instead of the traditional concerto’s three movements, as did I. A typical performance of both concertos is approximately twenty minutes. Stravinsky’s instrumentation includes solo violin, piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 1 E-flat clarinet, 2 clarinets in A/B-flat, 3 bassoons (3rd doubling contrabassoon), 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, and strings. My *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* consists of instrumentation for solo violin, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets in B-flat, bassoon, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, trombone, tuba, timpani, bass drum, tam-tam, harp, piano, celesta, and strings. The addition of the tam-tam, harp, piano, and celesta reflects my desire to add more color and texture. The transition between each movement more closely mimics the transition between the final movements of Mendelssohn’s violin

concerto; all four movements of my work melt from one to the next with no pause or break between.

As a modern composer, there was a mild concern that the piece would be viewed as simplistic due to the choice of the instrumentation and the nature of the piece. Much like Stravinsky’s response to the lack of a cadenza or virtuosity in the solo violin part, the absence of extended techniques or exotic instrumentation in my concerto is not due to a lack of awareness or acknowledgement (it is not unusual for me to blast Messiaen’s *Turangalila* or Havergal Brian’s *Gothic Symphony* and scare the neighbors) but this piece is more about transparency and a hint of innocence through melodic and harmonic relationships, color, and texture. Although none of these characteristics are particularly ground-breaking, at the time of this writing, there is a compositional climate within our new music community that is influenced more by timbre and the interaction of sound. With the advancements in technology influencing electroacoustic music, soundscapes and sound masses are prevalent in today’s art music. As a composer of both genres, I personally find these sound masses appealing. A more contemporary example of what I had originally envisioned for this concerto may be found in John Luther Adams’s Pulitzer Prize winning composition, *Become Ocean*. Although not a concerto, this 45-minute orchestral work features undulating sound masses that wash the listener with an array of colors and changing textures. However, works with these characteristics require great patience and endurance on the part of the listener. As my concerto began to take shape, I realized that the interaction between the orchestra and the solo instrument was of great importance. Using repetitive rhythms and patterns, my beginning attempts were very minimalistic in nature. I enjoyed the resulting soundscapes as these sound masses can be captivating, but unless you share my penchant, they can become mundane for both the performer and the listener.
The final question became: *can I create some of the characteristics of a sound mass while utilizing a more interactive counterpoint among the voices?* Some of the characteristics of Debussy’s *La mer* align with what I envisioned for the soundscape of my concerto. The following score excerpt of *La mer* features the brief violin solo at m. 59/rehearsal 6.³

Example 1. Score excerpt of Debussy’s *La mer* featuring violin solo

![Score excerpt of Debussy’s La mer featuring violin solo](http://ks4.imslp.net/files/imglnks/usimg/b/b6/IMSLP15420-Debussy_-_La_Mer_(orch._score).pdf)

In Debussy’s passage, we see a somewhat busy, staggered counterpoint in the woodwinds, with the harp adding just a hint of color, all layered over a short, yearning violin solo. Although his violin sonata is an important work, Debussy never composed a formal violin concerto.

---

This short example, however, aurally affirmed ideas for my own work. One of the challenges of this concerto was creating an orchestral background that was quasi-impressionistic but not strictly minimalistic. Attempting to consider and create counterpoint that complemented and interacted with the violin solo was important to my compositional development. I was grateful to have many resources and references such as *La mer* and the great scores and recordings of the composers listed above during the creative process.

Example 2. Score excerpt of Knox *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*, (I, mm. 10-15) for comparison to Debussy’s work
I wanted this concerto to be constructed without a programmatic narrative. As each movement begins, the four sections are labeled by the approximate time that has arrived. I included the *Finale* as a nod to the past. As mentioned, there are no breaks between the movements. This is a common characteristic of my multi-movement works.

I. 0:00. II. 5:00 III. 10:00 IV. 15:00 (Finale)

The first movement opens with a canonic melody that is passed between the flute, solo violin, clarinets, violins, and harp. The introduction is slow and reflective, leading to a spritely opening in m. 10. The accents and *pizzicato* in the strings provide the section its driving rhythm. The melodic material beginning in m. 10 is taken from the melodies in the introduction through intervallic relationships (fourths and fifths.) An example of *motivic variation* that influences the work can be demonstrated through the following excerpts.

Example 3. Motivic variation through rhythmic variation and intervallic relationships (I, m. 16-26)

---

4. This is also a mild tongue-in-cheek gesture toward attention spans today. I witnessed an audience all but dismiss a beautiful live performance of Adams’s *Become Ocean*. If they must check their watches during this concerto, at least they will know how much longer they must endure it.
Example 3 (p. 6) shows the relationship between the harp melody in m. 17 and the variation in the solo violin in m. 19. The upper line of the harp melody was extracted, and the first three pitches were kept in m. 19 in the solo violin line, while the fourth sixteenth note was omitted. The inverse was then applied to beat two, as the fourth sixteenth note was reinstated, and octave displacement was incorporated. In mm. 20-26, the triplet figures are circled to show the variation among them.

Harmonically pandiatonic, the first movement was intentionally constructed of natural pitches only. This is another common characteristic of my work, as I find the clarity and energy of this technique to be appealing. Finding ways to transition and incorporate accidentals without adhering to traditional harmonic progressions offers a nice challenge as well. I believe when the accidentals do arrive, they provide a great impact on the listener with a new aural palette.

As mentioned, my multi-movement works continue without breaks. This is simply a preference as I personally find breaks between movements distracting. I have been asked, “Why include movements at all?” For this concerto, distinguishing between the movements may be helpful for the conductor and performers (rehearsal efficiency) and may help the listener to navigate the work and distinguish between the intentional changes within the music. Each movement begins with a short introduction that helps incorporate the new sound palette and texture of the proceeding section.

Example 4. Introduction of second movement (II, mm. 1-4)
Although there was a desire to void all programmatic references, the second movement is perhaps a nod to Debussy, as this section holds an impressionistic, dream-like quality. The primary theme that is first presented by the piano in m. 13 is the central axis, and the rest of the material gently dances around this idea which I privately referred to as the French café theme.

Example 5. Primary or French café theme in second movement (II, mm. 13-16)

The rhythmic material is derived from the introductory material shown in Example 4, and the motivic variation within the melody is as follows: the musical phrase from mm. 13-14 is restated in mm. 15-16, but altered; the fourth beat of the measure which was originally tied over the bar in mm. 13-14 is now broken into two quarter notes over the bar from m. 15 into m. 16. The range is increased by one octave and descends to the F# before ending on B₅.

The violin and oboe begin a countermelody with this theme in m. 13. This gentle dance is briefly interrupted by one of the largest climaxes of the work beginning at m. 24 and culminating in m. 29. The movement then proceeds to become a loose set of theme and variations as this material is passed around the orchestra. The continuous whole-step ostinato pattern and pentatonic passages reminisce of Debussy’s Estampes (Prints) from 1903. The texture becomes rather thick and polyphonic beginning in m. 64 as several voices begin to swirl in their own space and time.

---

5. Composed for solo piano, the first movement of this work, Pagodes, utilizes pentatonic scales and mimics Indonesian melodies. The harp (Knox violin concerto) in this movement added to the recognizable whole-step ostinato pattern attempts to mimic Debussy’s style in a very subtle way.
Example 6. Score excerpt (winds) of Knox concerto (II, mm. 64-67)

opening violin melody from second movement

Estampes whole-step ostinato

French café theme

The third movement is ushered in by the sixteenth notes in the oboe and clarinet in m. 1. With a slight jazz-inspired quality, this movement is the most harmonically exotic section of the work and occurs in the middle of the piece. Rhythmically, it is minimalistic in nature and offers a driving force to the music.

Example 7. Minimalistic qualities of third movement as metric force (III, mm.1-3)

III. 10:00

Slightly faster, straight eighths
It is at this point that some of the themes from the first and second movement are brought back by various instruments and incorporated into the solo violin. Due to the reoccurrences of the themes and the repetition of rhythm, I began to focus on instrument combinations, color, and timbre. A specific example can be found in m. 40 as the trumpets are called to use straight mutes to produce a brassy tone. The polyphony returns as the ostinato patterns are passed from various instrument groups. This culminates into a climax involving a variation of the *French café theme* from the second movement. The movement takes a complete turn away from the original style and evolves into a more chorale-like exit as the fourth movement approaches.

The fourth movement (*15:00-Finale*) consists of material taken from each of the movements and varied. The natural pandiatonicism of the first movement returns and the texture broadens to signify the closure of the piece. The whole-step relationship from the previous movement is varied as quasi-trills to create a soundscape under the long melodic lines such as the following harp and piano excerpts.

Example 8. Layered whole-steps rhythmically varied from second movement (IV, mm. 7-8)

The purpose of this *finale* is to create a snapshot of the entire piece by bringing back elements of the first three movements in an effort to create unity and remembrance within the work.
Although this concerto is void of a virtuosic cadenza, the solo violin is given a true spotlight moment in m. 25 with one of its highest pitches of the piece (B6) accompanied only by the celesta.

Example 9. high pitch in solo violin with celesta (IV, mm. 25-26)

Throughout the piece, the violin seems to be in competition with the orchestra with all of the polyphonic and rhythmic activity. This moment of clarity and repose comes very late in the piece, but I see it as the music stating that although each has had something to say, this is a violin concerto, and the solo violin should be the primary focus. This passage also serves as a moment for everyone to catch their breath and reflect before the final moments of the piece arrive. The solo violin gradually emerges from this tranquil state with a slight *accelerando* which leads to a varied return of the *pizzicato* passage in the strings from m. 20 in movement I.

Example 10. Gradual building up to final two minutes of the piece following solo violin feature (IV, mm. 33-36)
With a combination of returning motives and rhythms coupled with new harmonic material, the music makes an attempt to briefly “rewind” through previous sections of the piece. I wanted to avoid the deadly sin of “copy and paste”, but I also wanted to tie the piece together. On occasion, one will find the famous “Scotch snap” rhythm sprinkled throughout. This rhythm becomes important in m. 39 as it is used canonically to drive the piece forward to the final two minutes of the piece.

Example 11. Scotch snap rhythm with variation (IV, m. 39)

Example 12. Final measures (IV, mm. 70-74)
Following a series of rising and falling climaxes, the piece settles into a state of repose as the violin emerges through a series of ascending lines. Accompanied by only a few voices, the piece comes to a rest with the solo violin ending on its highest note of the piece, C7, followed by a hint of resolution by the harp, piano, and celesta.
Score in C: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

Duration: c. 20 minutes

I. 0:00 II. 5:00 III. 10:00 IV. 15:00 (Finale)

**Instrumentation**

Flute I, II

Oboe I, II

Clarinet in B-flat I, II

Bassoon

Contrabassoon

Horn in F I, II, III, IV

Trumpet in C I, II with straight mutes

Trombone

Tuba in C

Timpani

Percussion I

Bass Drum with soft mallet

Percussion II

Tam-tam (largest available) with 2 soft mallets and metal triangle beater

Harp

Piano

Celesta

Solo Violin

Violin I Violin II Viola Violoncello Double Bass
Program Notes

Void of any programmatic suggestions, Knox’s *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* was composed with a focus on melodic and harmonic relationships and *motivic variation*. To avoid descriptive narratives, each of the four movements are simply labeled by the approximate number of minutes that have passed. Non-traditional characteristics of the piece include the lack of a virtuosic cadenza for the solo violin, a total of four movements instead of a concerto’s traditional three, and there are no breaks between the movements; one simply melts and transforms into the next through short, introductory transformations.

Performance Notes

Though the notation of this concerto is rather traditional, each movement holds a unique character that is conveyed through subtle changes within the music. The tempo indications are important to the overall arch of the piece, especially in regard to the transitions from one movement to the next (no breaks between movements). The orchestration is heavy at times. The relationship between the solo violin and the ensemble should be evaluated often. Thirty-second notes passages are more of an effect than a focus on exact note and rhythmic alignment. The passages have been written in their entirety for ease of reading and placement. Trill-like passages should be played as a relaxed, legato murmuring unless otherwise indicated. Breathe as necessary. Scalar passages should be played legato but with more precision in note accuracy and beat placement.
Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

I. 0:00

Liz Knox
(BMI)

Reflective

Flute I, II

Oboe I, II

Clarinet in Bb I, II

Bassoon

Contrabassoon

Horns in F I, III, II, IV

Trumpets in C I, II

Trombone

Tuba in C

Timpani

center of largest bass drum with soft mallets

center of largest tam-tam with soft bass drum mallets

center of largest tam-tam with metal triangle beater

Percussion I

Percussion II

Harp

Piano

Celesta

Solo Violin

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Double Bass

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www.elizabethaknox.com | www.neverthelesshecopmed.org
tam-tam to soft bass drum mallets
\( q = 60 \) with momentum

\[ \text{A} \]

\[ \text{Bsn.} \]

\[ \text{Cbsn.} \]

\[ \text{I, II} \]

\[ \text{Hn.} \]

\[ \text{ITp.} \]

\[ \text{Pno.} \]

\[ \text{Cel.} \]

\[ \text{Solo Vln.} \]

\[ \text{Vln.} \]

\[ \text{Vla.} \]

\[ \text{Vc.} \]

\[ \text{Db.} \]

\[ \text{Fl.} \]

\[ \text{II} \]

\[ \text{I} \]

\[ \text{Tbn.} \]

\[ \text{Tba.} \]

\[ \text{Timp.} \]

\[ \text{Perc.} \]

\[ \text{II} \]

\[ \text{I} \]

\[ \text{Hp.} \]

\[ \text{f} \]

\[ \text{mp} \]

\[ \text{pizz.} \]

\[ \text{pizz.} \]

\[ \text{p} \]
tap edge of tam with one metal beater
center of tam-tam with metal beater - l.v. tam-tam to soft mallets
Slightly Faster, Very Romantic
*slightly playful, dance-like*
Slightly faster, straight eighths
C * all natural pitches →
Majestic, but not too slow
*hand over hand glissandi - approximate starting and ending pitches ok
\[ \frac{1}{4} = 72 \]

forward with energy

Cbsn.

forward with energy

C Tpt.

forward with energy

Pno.

solos

Vln.

spiccato
Slightly slower
CHAPTER 2. NEVERTHELESS, SHE COMPOSED: A CONTEMPORARY SURVEY OF WOMEN COMPOSERS OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Introduction

Nevertheless, She Composed: A Contemporary Survey of Women Composers of the Twenty-First Century (NSC) consists of a series of transcribed interviews conducted between 2017 and 2019. With one exception, the interviews feature living, women composers that are active within the academic and new music community. The primary purpose of this project is to feature the lives, careers, and works of women composers. All of the featured composers have been interviewed in person or via Skype with the exception of Dr. Kate Waring. Dr. Waring passed away in 2015; her story is included due to her relatively recent passing, her ties to Louisiana, and her compositional achievements during the twenty-first century. The five women chosen as the featured composers for this dissertation include: Drs. Elainie Lillios, Mara Gibson, Kate Waring, Jennifer Higdon, and Clare Shore. Many factors such as varied backgrounds, accomplishments, and years of experience in the field of composition played a role in their inclusion. The format of this printed dissertation features the transcribed interviews of the above composers, however, readers are encouraged to experience additional interviews of other composers, featured recordings, and various resources by visited the following website: www.NeverthelessSheComposed.org An example of the resource feature of NSC can be viewed on p. 233 of this document. If the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is mentioned at any point during an interview, the CSO is listed in the credits at the end of the interview. Additionally, this same resource is then listed on the interviewee’s NSC website page with a link to the CSO website. This feature serves as an academic resource to complement and enhance the biographical nature of the interviews.
This yields a secondary benefit by drawing awareness to a wide variety of performing musicians, ensembles, festivals, schools, and organizations for the reader/viewer.

A common thread among the interviews is the topic of gender in composition. A certain bond exists between the composers; each desires to focus on their craft and have their music accepted based on its merit, not due to the gender of the composer. Secondary conversations of underrepresented groups and marginalized artists arose from the discussion of gender in music.

The interviews allow the composers to share their biographical information and career highlights, however, several performing musicians, ensembles, schools, educators, and other resources were mentioned during the discussion process. I consider these resources to have great value in today’s contemporary music community.

The following transcriptions feature a combination of verbatim and edited formats. The text features moments of pause and laughter; these are included to give the interviews a more personal quality. Some light editing of train-of-thought moments and grammatical corrections are included for the purpose of clarity. The somewhat candid nature of the interviews was intentional (contractions, slang, etc.) For ease of navigation as an academic resource, the timestamps of each interview correspond with the Youtube videos associated with each composer. The format of each interview is guided only by a general outline of past, present, and future, allowing each composer to share information in a mostly non-scripted, free-associative manner. The result of this format yielded interviews that were rather relaxed and informal, but in doing this, we found that the composers were more likely to share information or details of their lives that they may have never had the opportunity to share. For these reasons, I believe this format was beneficial for a project of this nature.
This project was inspired by the work of Dr. James Briscoe, Professor of Music History (ret.) at Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana. Dr. Briscoe is the author and editor of the *New Historical Anthology of Music by Women*. He describes the book as:

A popular collection that features 55 compositions by 46 women composers from the ancient Greeks to the present. Each work is introduced by an informative essay by a specialist in the field, with recommendations for further reading, listening, and performing. Historical scores have been transcribed into modern notation for ease of use, and the works represent a wide variety of genres, including solo songs, chamber music, piano music, and orchestral scores. Composers include Sappho, Hildegard of Bingen, Barbara Strozzi, Clara Schumann, and Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel. The anthology includes a foreword by Susan McClary, a leading scholar on women’s music.\(^6\)

The most recent edition of this anthology was published in August of 2004. Although it is a very valuable resource, many of the featured composers are no longer living. *NSC* fills a need to provide an active, breathing resource that could continue indefinitely by featuring living composers. *Women Making Music: The Western Art Tradition, 1150-1950*, edited by Jane Bowers and Judith Tick is another valuable resource which is described as:

The first work of its kind, *Women Making Music* presents biographies of outstanding performers and composers, as well as analyses of women musicians as a class, and provides examples of music from all periods including medieval chant, Renaissance song, Baroque opera, German lieder, and twentieth-century composition. Unlike most standard historical surveys, the book not only sheds light upon the musical achievements of women, it also illuminates the historical contexts that shaped and defined those achievements.\(^7\)

The title points out a contemporary problem: Bowers and Tick do not review composers beyond 1950. This is the case in many of the anthologies that are available today; other books highlighting composers often focus on specific styles of composition.

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The sources lack a single approach to covering a wide range of female composers. It is common for the resources to feature many of the same composers, and when women are included in the lesson plans of theory and music history classes, they usually feature the same few names. For NSC, the goal is to interview as many active women composers as possible, regardless of their economic or social status. Critics, newspapers, and magazines appear to have the same issue. Articles featuring the same interviews resurface week after week. Those same women will be included in NSC, but with a hope that several underrepresented women can be included as well. Even in its early stages, NSC has interviewed an eclectic mix of composers. The criteria to be interviewed are rather simple. Is the composer well-educated in her craft? Is there evidence, and are there ways that the public can access her work? Is she continuing to develop her craft and making a conscious effort to diffuse her music?

One final example of a contemporary initiative can be found in the Composer Diversity Database (www.ComposerDiversity.com). This online database was established by Dr. Rob Deemer, Associate Professor of Composition at Fredonia State University of New York. It was originally named the Women Composers Database but has since been updated to reflect its current state, which includes a variety of composers based on gender, ethnicity, and geographical categories. This resource is valuable as a searchable database and is described as being:

Dedicated to the celebration, education, and advocacy of music created by composers from historically underrepresented groups through online tools, research-based resources, and sponsored initiatives. 8

Composer Biographies and Interviews

Elainie Lillios Biography

Acclaimed as one of the “contemporary masters of the medium” by MIT Press’s Computer Music Journal, electroacoustic composer, Elainie Lillios, creates works that reflect her fascination with listening, sound, space, time, immersion and anecdote. Her compositions include stereo, multi-channel, and Ambisonic fixed media works, instrument(s) with live interactive electronics, collaborative experimental audio/visual animations, and installations. Her work has been recognized internationally and nationally through awards including a 2018 Fromm Foundation Commission, 2016 Barlow Endowment Commission, 2013-14 Fulbright Award, First Prize in the Concours Internationale de Bourges, Areon Flutes International Composition Competition, Electroacoustic Piano International Competition, and Medea Electronique “Saxotronics” Competition, and Second Prize in the Destellos International Electroacoustic Competition. She has also received awards from the Concurso Internacional de Música Electroacústica de São Paulo, Concorso Internazionale Russolo, Pierre Schaeffer Competition, and La Muse en Circuit. She has received grants/commissions from INA/GRM, Rèseaux, International Computer Music Association, La Muse en Circuit,
NAISA, ASCAP/SEAMUS, LSU’s Center for Computation and Technology, Sonic Arts Research Centre, Ohio Arts Council, and National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts. She has been a special guest at the Groupe de Recherche Musicales, Rien à Voir, festival l’espace du son, June in Buffalo, and at other locations in the United States and abroad. Reviews of Elainie’s debut solo electroacoustic compact disc Entre Espaces (Empreintes DIGITALes) praise her work for being “… elegantly assembled, and immersive enough to stand the test of deep listening” and as “…a journey not to be missed.” Her fixed and instrumental works also appear on Centaur, MSR Classics, StudioPANaroma, La Muse en Circuit, New Adventures in Sound Art, SEAMUS, Irritable Hedgehog and Leonardo Music Journal. Elainie serves a Director of Composition Activities for the SPLICE institute (splicemusic.org) and is Professor of Composition, and Coordinator of Music Technology at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. 9

9. Image and biography text provided by Dr. Elainie Lillios. Used here by permission of the composer.
Lillios Interview
Liz Knox (LK) | Elainie Lillios (EL)

LK: [1:16]

My name is Liz Knox and today’s date is Friday, November 3rd, 2017 and I’m here with Dr. Elainie Lillios, and I’m going to let her open up this interview and talk about her current residency or current positions; we’ll get started with that…good morning, Dr. Lillios!

EL: [1:40]

Good morning, Liz! Thank you for inviting me to speak with you today. It’s really a pleasure to talk to you about composing and creativity, and electroacoustic music and how all of those things come together for me as an individual, as a professional, as a teacher, and as a woman in the field, so it is great to talk to you. I am Professor of Composition and Coordinator of Music Technology at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, and I am also the Director of Composition Activities for Splice Institute which is a summer program at Western Michigan University that focuses on composing and performing electroacoustic music.¹⁰

LK: [2:24]

Excellent, well thanks so much for taking time and doing this interview, we’re really looking forward to learning more about you. I’ve devised this interview with a form (which we love, right?) of “past, present, and future”, so let’s start with the past…general interview questions; how about we start with your education, what is your early education?

EL: [2:55]

Sure, thank you. I think the most interesting aspect of my education is how I ended up in electroacoustic music. It is not a field that people…you don’t go to grade school and say,

¹⁰ website: https://splicemusic.org/
“Oh, I want to be an electroacoustic music composer!” Especially at the time I was in grade school: young people were playing flutes and clarinets and trumpets; they weren’t composing and they were not playing electroacoustic music, so perhaps, the most interesting part of my background is the fact that I had a neighbor gal down the street who was taking organ lessons (that was back in the 1970s when organ was all the rage). I went and heard her…it was a Lowry organ with the curved keyboard and all the colorful tabs that you could push that did things. It had a built-in rhythm section and it had the big long, curved pedal board. I heard her play that organ and I went home and said, “Mom, I want to do this! I want to play the organ!” So, I started taking organ lessons and I think that it is through being an organist that I came to this appreciation of timbre, and the sound of sound, and of the power of sound. When you sit behind those big pipe organs, and you play all those keys, we think about Ligeti’s *Volumina*¹¹, there’s a lot of power in that kind of music, and I think, maybe, I was on a power trip! There was also this amazing challenge of having multiple things happening; when you play a Bach three-part invention on the organ or when you start playing more complex music, both of your feet are going, both of your hands are going all at once, and so there’s a mental challenge: there’s the beauty of the timbre, there’s the power of the instrument, and then there’s the technical challenge of playing three, four, maybe five things at a time, maybe one hand is doing two things, another hand is doing one thing, and both of your feet are going; you really have to challenge yourself. So, that’s maybe the most exciting aspect of my background, that I started life as an organist. One day I went to my organ lesson and my organ teacher said, “Elainie, today we’re going to compose!” I was 11, so when you’re eleven you just say, “OK!”

¹¹ György Ligeti, “Volumina for Organ” (1962), one of three organ works by Ligeti that was a watershed piece for experimenting in clusters of sound and dissonance.
She started teaching me about music theory, and the first thing she taught me was about antecedent and consequence phrases. She composed one line and said, “OK, now you finish it”, and we went through a whole series of theoretical studies, both composing little pieces. My first piece was an organ Toccata, and so from there, I progressed and as I got older. I played some other instruments in high school, but I continued playing the organ and composing, and when I finished high school, I went to a summer camp at Oberlin…back in the day, it was called MIDI! Now, it is called something much different but (and I think the summer camp is still going) I started playing around with synthesizers and that was my first introduction to electronic music. When I went to college, I decided that music technology, electronic music, electroacoustic music, was something I really felt a connection to through the organ. I think through synthesizers, I started doing analog tape manipulation, and then went to modular analog synthesizers (this was in the 80s), then, to computer programming, and eventually onward into the things I have been doing over the last twenty years.

**LK: [7:15]**

That’s incredible. You wouldn’t think about organ as a child leading to that…but the synthesis part does make so much sense, and that’s a wonderful description. I love that, that’s great! Talking about your education, and going into “that world”, did you find that you were one of the only females in your program at the time?

**EL: [7:42]**

Well, as an undergraduate student, there were other women composers, but they were primarily writing acoustic music. As I moved on into the master’s level and to doctoral studies, there were still some women in my doctoral program who were composing electroacoustic music; some were only acoustic composers;
I think that I was fortunate in that there were other women students when I was a student. I never had a female mentor as a young composer, and there were no composers on any of the faculties of the schools I attended until I went to the University of North Texas where Cindy McTee was teaching. At that time (and I’m still sorry about this), I told Cindy McTee, “I’m so sorry I never studied with you!” I never studied with her…at that time I was composing exclusively, electroacoustic, fixed media works; I wasn’t writing any instrumental music. She is an amazing instrumental composer, a large ensemble composer, and has done some wonderful things that I really admire. I regret that I couldn’t somehow find a way to make that happen. But she has still been…and through her music, through her professionalism, and the interactivity that I did have with her…she has been a role model for me, even though I didn’t take those lessons, she still taught me a lot about composing, about materials, and about professionalism, style, and class. She was a fantastic role model for me at the University of North Texas…despite not having that one-on-one connection.

**LK:** [9:47]

It’s nice to be reminded that we can learn from each other in so many different ways and still be influenced even when we don’t know it. That’s incredible. Fun question! Albums in high school…what were you listening to when you were in high school?

**EL:** [10:06]

Oh, in high school? That’s a terrible question! [laughter] I was in high school in the 80s,

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12. Composer Cindy McTee has received numerous awards for her music, most significantly: a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Fulbright Fellowship, a Composers Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, two awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Music Alive Award from Meet the Composer and the League of American Orchestras. Official website: http://www.cindymctee.com/
so it was all 80s music. …I listened to a lot of popular/pop music…Pink Floyd, Rush, YES, Van Halen, REO Speed Wagon, Ozzy Osborne…

**LK:** [10:46]

Well, we’re in the same generation, so that’s why I feel comfortable asking that question. [laughter] I listened to the same things. I like looking into people’s pasts and seeing what you were listening to when you were younger…so, that’s great!

**EL:** [11:05]

…Styx, Chicago…and then all that 1980s music that now we sort of shake our heads about…Adam Ant, and INXS and that whole genre…New Order and Depeche Mode…I listened to a lot of that.

**LK:** [11:32]

In talking to your students, do you ever talk about the popular side of music? Sometimes it gets left out of electronic music but, we’re starting to kind of chat about some of the influences, and how that sort of shaped music in the popular…it’s an interesting topic.

**EL:** [11:55]

Yeah, that could be a whole conversation unto itself!

**LK:** [12:10]

So, let’s move to the present! How long have you been at Bowling Green State University?

**EL:** [12:16]

This is my eighteenth year at Bowling Green State University. I started in the year 2000, so Bowling Green State University (BGSU) was my first job out of college; I came straight here from the University of North Texas.
LK: [12:30]

Interesting! Some people that see this presentation may be on the same path, working on their Ph.D.'s or graduate degrees, and thinking about that career search…how did you come to find BGSU? Did you know about the position through an advertisement, a job search, or word of mouth?

EL: [12:55]

Well, I joined the College Music Society when I was a doctoral student…this was in the late 90s…and at that time…yes, there was internet…[laughter] but we didn’t have the same kind of easy access to things…it’s amazing how much things have changed over the last 18 years! There was no music theory/composition Wiki, where you could go to that site and see all the listings. You had to find things through either the Chronicle of Higher Education or through the College Music Society and the weekly music vacancy list. So, I’m fairly certain, the way I found out about the BGSU job was through the music vacancy list. The interesting story about BGSU…BGSU has an annual New Music Festival that brings young, emerging composers and more well-established composers from around the United States and sometimes from Europe, every year for three days for a festival. I was very fortunate that I was a guest as a doctoral student in 1996 at the BGSU New Music & Art Festival and I had a piece for Javanese Gamelan, that the Gamelan Ensemble performed. I remember coming to BGSU thinking, “This place is amazing! It’s new music, and it’s new music all the time, everywhere, that new music seems to be infused into this community, I would love to get a job here!” And so, a job came up in 1998, two years later; I applied and I was still a student so…of course, wasn’t looked at. Then a second job came up in the year 2000, and I was very fortunate to then have my wish, somehow, come true, which sounds a little corny, but I was here in ’96 and I said,
“This is a fabulous place, I would love to be part of this environment!” and now here I am, quite a few years later, having been here now for 18 years. Sometimes they say, “Be careful what you wish for!” I wished for something that ended up being a really great fit for me, and new music is still as strong as ever here at BGSU. We just had our New Music Festival a couple of weeks ago, I was just in a meeting this morning, we were doing sort of our recap about things that we thought worked and what we’re going to plan for next year.

**L.K.:** [15:42]

Excellent! So, you were fresh out of school, do you feel like there was an ingredient that landed you the job at BGSU? Do you think you had a little something to offer that the other candidates may not have had?

**E.L.:** [16:02]

Uhm, that’s a very good question. I think that I can’t really answer that because it may be not wise to try to guess what the search committee had in mind. I know that there were many candidates who applied for the job, and I also know that I was not maybe their first choice! You know, when you take a look at all the people who apply for a job, there is a top tier of people, sometimes it takes a while to find that person that you think is going to be the best fit; and the person who is the best fit, maybe isn’t the person who has the best career, or isn’t the person who has the most music, or the most of this or that, sometimes it just has to do with their particular skill set, and how they come into that interview; how they relate to you and your community.

**L.K.:** [17:07]

So, apply, apply again, right?

**E.L.:** [17:11]

Apply, apply, but I think there are many things...when I look back on the process,
the doctoral process, that I did right. There are many things that I wish I had done differently, but, if I were to give people advice, if that’s what you’re saying, “Ok, how did you do it?” I was ABD\textsuperscript{13} when I was hired, which is a rarity right now. I would say that the way that I got the job: I worked very hard as a doctoral student. I was not as compositionally productive as I wish I had been, or should have been, I think. The pieces that I did write, I was fortunate to have them played on national festivals; I got my music out. I had performances on festivals and by the time I had applied for the job at BGSU, my music had already been published on some CDs, so I had already started building that professional career; I was already on that trajectory of building a professional career and becoming known in the field of electroacoustic music as an emerging composer. I had also spent a year in England studying with Jonty Harrison at the University of Birmingham, and that connected me with a whole network of people in Europe, so I was also getting international performances during that time which set me apart from other people at my same career stage that I had; I was getting performances at national events in the U.S., but also having performances in Europe. So, I pushed my career. I worked very hard to make connections and get my music played. We started an organization at North Texas when I was there called \textit{Texas Computer Musicians Network}. We used to run out to different places doing electroacoustic concerts, you know, we made it happen for ourselves. That was then a way that I could say that I was giving to the community, which is service…teaching, research, service. What are universities looking for? Those three things. How am I building my teaching portfolio? By being a teaching assistant or trying to get some part-time position somewhere. How am I building my professional career as a composer? By writing music, getting performances, getting publications, if I can, or giving papers at professional societies if I take a research track? And then service.

\textsuperscript{13} All but dissertation.
Am I a member of a national organization? Am I in any clubs? Have I started any endeavors myself? How am I looking outside myself? That’s the package.

**LK:** [20:08]

That’s gold! All of that is incredible and we need to be reminded of, so, thanks! Do you want to talk about what is happening at BGSU right now…current programs, projects, anything particular that you are really excited about in your own career?

**EL:** [20:29]

Well, I’m in between projects right now; I do have some things that are coming up that I will talk to you about. First, I want to tell you about the project I just finished, which is a piece for saxophone, percussion, and fixed media which is a little bit different for me in this day and age…that I composed for the Bent Frequency Duo which is Stuart Gerber and Jan Baker who teach at Georgia State University. This is a Barlow Commission\(^{14}\), so Jan and Stuart got together and said, “Elainie, we want you to do a piece for us!” I said, “Alright, let’s do it!” and so we applied for a Barlow, and received it, and they just premiered my piece last month. They did four performances on a tour and gave a performance here at BGSU. That was a very exciting process and project with them, that we were able to work together, some long distance and sometimes together to create a piece for them that highlights their unique performing abilities and their connectivity as a duo. So…I am coming off of that…now I am starting to ramp up into my next projects. I work with percussionist Scott Deal who teaches at Indiana University/Purdue University-Indianapolis in Indiana. He and I have done two projects together and we’re just embarking on our third project, which is going to be a short piece for my former colleague,

\(^{14}\) In 1983 Milton A. and Gloria Barlow established the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. The Endowment has subsequently been dedicated to promoting excellence in music composition with over 373 total commissions awarded.
Roger Shupe, who passed away maybe two years ago now. Roger had an idea to have all the composers write a piece for him (all the BGSU composers) write a piece for him based on instruments that could fit into a suitcase. He called it, *Suitcase Piece*. He became ill and passed away before we could do the project. I talked to Scott and I said, “Scott, I still really want to do this project.” he said, “Elainie, let’s do it.” I got together with Scott in August and we pulled out a bunch of instruments in his basement. We experimented and explored because we didn’t know what Roger was going to put in the suitcase. We just picked instruments…a very small array of instruments…and that’s my next project. After that and at the same time…I am working on a viola piece for Kurt Rohde who teaches at UC Davis. He has asked me to write a piece for him for viola and live electronics, and a percussion piece will also be for percussion and live electronics.

**LK:** [23:36]

Wow, that’s incredible; it sounds exciting! So, we’re kind of delving into the future, talking about women composers in music and now really interested in electronic music…how do you feel about gender acknowledgments in music? Some women say, “I don’t want to talk about that as much as just talk about being a composer”, but do you feel it’s important to just acknowledge some of the struggles that maybe women have experienced in the world of composition?

**EL:** [24:20]

I don’t know…

**LK:** [24:22]

I don’t know, either!
**EL:** [24:23]  
I think for the people for whom it’s important, it should be important. I think that for people who think that that’s an important thing, we should acknowledge that. I have never been someone on the forefront of being very vocal about being a woman. I think that being a woman has great advantage; that’s both a benefit and it can be a problem.

**LK:** [25:00]  
It’s a tough topic. I’m with you on that. I’ve been a little hesitant...I don’t think of myself as just a woman composer…I’m just trying to be a composer. But at the same time, you read and hear stories, and you might have your own personal experiences. I agree with you, for whom it’s important, I think it is something at least to acknowledge.

**EL:** [25:30]  
I think being a composer is a very difficult job. I think that for myself, personally, I want people to appreciate my music for its sake, not because I’m a woman. The first time I heard anything about this gender issue in electroacoustic music was at ICMC in 1995. Someone got up, gave a paper, and talked about how there should be special categories for women or their music so that we could create greater gender equity at things like ICMC\(^{15}\) or SEAMUS\(^{16}\) at the festivals, the national and international festivals, to gain greater representation by women. Someone gave a whole paper about this, and I was outraged by it! I understood where this person was coming from, but at the same time my position is: if my music is not good enough because it isn’t good enough, I don’t want to receive some sort of special exception or special consideration because I happen to be a woman.

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15. International Computer Music Association  
Either you’re going to play my music because you want to play my music, because you feel it’s valuable and should be heard, or you don’t; and if your reasons for not playing my music are because you want to play music by men then I’m going to say, “I don’t want to be part of your club anymore”. Do your thing, whatever you do, and if you want my music because you want my music, that’s great! Let’s make it happen, let’s do it. Let’s enjoy the fact and appreciate the fact that we are all different people, different composers. I went to SEAMUS in 1998 and I met Bebe Barron.17 She was a very sweet, amazing, wonderful lady and I visited with her a little bit. At that time, I was composing acousmatic music. I was composing music that was very gestural and it was very aggressive, and in some ways, I think my music remains somewhat aggressive in that regard. But this piece, this little electroacoustic piece that I had, it was very, very aggressive and it was very powerful and aggressive; and I remember talking to her after that concert and she said to me, “Well, that’s not the kind of music that women should write.” So, when you start to open this can of worms about the inclusion of women, we have to be very careful on how we manage that because everyone has preconceived notions about what music is, what music should be, who should be doing what, who shouldn’t be doing what, and when you start to probe into these biases that people either have on the surface or have below the surface, you can come up with some very surprising things! I simply smiled and said, “Well, you know, that’s okay!” [Laughter] Here is someone who was a pioneer in the field saying, “You shouldn’t be writing this...that’s not the kind of music a lady should be writing.”

L.K: [29:28]

Wow, what a story, and you know, bringing up this topic isn’t so much about just women

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17. Bebe and Louis Barron were two American pioneers in the field of electronic music. They are credited with writing the first electronic music for magnetic tape, and the first entirely electronic film score for the MGM movie *Forbidden Planet* (1956). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bebe_and_Louis_Barron
in music, there’s always some sub stories that eventually addresses other issues. It doesn’t matter if you’re a woman composer there are just still some issues in there that sometimes surface and it’s really fascinating to bring those to light. I think it’s important to also surface that a lot of women will say, “I don’t want to be thought of as a woman composer, I just want my music to be good”, and I think that’s really important to highlight that…women, yes women…they’re still pioneering and trying to push above, but it’s not because they’re women, it’s because, they know they want to do their craft well and I think that’s really great ….it’s a great thing to bring to the surface. Which you did, this is excellent! So, you talked about not having a lot direct women mentors in your life. Wikipedia lists approximately 350 to 400 women composers on their list and you’re included in that list. So do you feel that, this is a hard question but, do you think that’s a good representation of women composers and it kind of fills the gamut, or do you think that there’s just a huge insurgence that, this list could be doubled, tripled, quadrupled right now?

EL: [31:15]

Whoa! I don’t know. I would have to look at the list. I know I can say that when I was an undergraduate student, the first female composer that I learned about was Elaine Barkin, who had come to Northern Illinois University when I was a young student. She came, did a masterclass and met with us. She was fabulous! But the first electroacoustic composer, female? I didn’t know that there were any women electroacoustic composers out there until I found this CD series on compact disc, a consortium to distribute computer music, which I later found out was distributed by Larry Austin at the University of North Texas where I ended up doing my doctorate. I went to our music library and I found this CD series and on this series was a piece by a composer named Pauline Oliveros, called the Lion’s Tale. I went in there, I had my headphones on because that’s what we did at that time, you had to listen at the music library. I listened to that
piece over and over and over and over again, I think I was 19 or 20 years old, and I thought, “This is amazing…and this is a lady!” I didn’t know that there were women composers. I mean I supposed in the back of my mind, I knew there had to be some, but I didn’t know who they were, and I think now the world has gotten smaller. We know each other, technology has allowed us to connect in ways that we didn’t in the past. So, I think that we have better connectivity with each other. We can meet each other, we can have Skype visits, we can learn about other women, we can learn about other composers, periods, any composers. We can go to ScoreFollower and Incipitisfy, to look at their scores and listen to music. Our access to new music, to media, to people, it is a kind of access that we never had before and I hope that as this access evolves, that we begin to learn more about other people in the field, other women in the field, other people in small representative communities, underrepresented communities, and that we find ways to embrace them and learn more about the creative things they’re doing.

**LK:** [34:10]

Absolutely that’s beautiful! So, we talked a little bit about the future, you just had a festival at BGSU that I wanted to attend so badly. I know it just passed but do you want to talk about next year or is it too early to even plug for next year?

**EL:** [34:33]

I think it is a little too early essentially…and I do know who our featured composer is going to be but I’m not sure that I’m at liberty to share that. I don’t run that…the New Music Festival is run by our Mid-American Center for Contemporary Music. The director of that Center is Kurt Doles, my colleague, and so I don’t want to steal his fire! But he is already cooking on next year and planning some really great things. This year we had Steve Mackey and Sarah Kirkland Snider. It was the first time we had two featured guest composers and they happen to be
a couple, so we had them here with our community. We had a number of other guest composers who came as well; there was a very nice representation of people that came this year.

**LK:** [35:33]

It looked like an incredible line-up; it was just awesome. I hope to make it next year, that’s why I was plugging for that! For your program at BGSU, before we close, why don’t you tell us about what programs are available for students if they’re interested in studying at BGSU?

**EL:** [36:00]

Certainly, thank you for asking. At Bowling Green State University, we focus a lot on new music. That doesn’t mean that we sidestep all the classics, but new music, it’s something that we do very well here at BGSU and we have a wonderful vibrant composer community. Usually, we average about 25 composers who are spread out between undergraduate and masters; we also have a doctoral degree with a focus on composition that is in contemporary music at BGSU.

So, you can come to BGSU at the doctoral level and study performance, conducting, or composing; one of those three and the focus is new music in all three of those areas. Our student composers are a great community that the undergraduate students begin in classes together so they can build that community and they all compose the same projects, Then, at the junior/senior levels they study one-on-one applied lessons. Next week, we have the Toledo Symphony coming to BGSU. They come every fall and they read student orchestral works. We have five composers here at BGSU who are going to have their orchestra pieces read by the Toledo Symphony Orchestra next week. Every year along with that, we have a guest composer who comes, attends the reading session and then does a masterclass with those students in the evening.
So, in the afternoon we do the reading session, we go to dinner, and then in the evening this featured guest does a masterclass and talks to our students about their pieces. This year’s guest is Andrew Norman. The five students who are having pieces played next week, will be two undergraduate students and three masters students. So, people who would say, “Oh well, I’m an undergrad, I could never get into that reading session,” that’s not true. Every year, one or more undergraduate students are part of that cohort that have those pieces read. On the electroacoustic side of the fence, we have a residency program here at BGSU called the Klingler Electroacoustic Residency, each year. Every semester it’s a competition, an international competition, where composers make an application to come and work in our 10.2 multi-channel studio with a first order Masonic Cube. People apply with a project proposal to work in the studio for two weeks; right now we have November 17th as the next deadline for spring. We have had some amazing composers come through and we just had a five-year celebration of the composers who have been here for the Klingler residency. The eight former residents came back; we had a multi-channel concert, they gave workshops, they met with our students, we hung out, we did a concert at the Toledo Art Museum...so there’s a lot going on here at BGSU.

L.K: [39:42]

...It’s so exciting to hear about so much going on for those of us from the Midwest. We love to hear what’s happening in between the “no coasts.” So that’s just excellent! Is there anything that we haven’t covered together that you’d like to address before we wrap things up?

E.L: [40:13]

I do have two other things I want I would like to say.

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18. Andrew Norman (b. 1979) is a Los Angeles-based composer of orchestral, chamber, vocal music. His website: andrewnormanmusic.com/biography
One thing I want to say is going back to this idea of being a woman in the field of composing and in the field of electroacoustic composition, and I just want to take a minute and I want to acknowledge all of my mentors who helped me get here, none of which except for Cindy McTee and Pauline Oliveros, all the rest were men. You know, not once did any one of them ever say to me, “Oh, you’re not going to be able to do that because you’re a woman”, or they never even made me think that I was a woman, I was just another composer. So, I had some wonderful professors at Northern Illinois University who mentored me and taught me about Experimentalism. I think another big reason I’m here now is because I went to a place that embraced experimentalism. I studied with Tim Blickhan, and Jan Bach, and Robert Fleischer, all of whom had come through the University of Illinois during the Sal Martirano days and Herbert Brun with this super experimentalism and they were amazing mentors to me. Joe Penzaroni who taught me electronic music, and the late Harry Castle, and then Jim Phelps later on at Northern Illinois University. I went to UNT and I studied with Larry Austin, who was great, and John Christopher Nelson and Joe Klein and then Cindy McTee, Tom Clark, they were great! I studied with Jonty Harrison at the University of Birmingham, and I continue learning lessons from those people and from my colleagues on a daily basis. They all inspire me and none of them ever said, “you can’t do it or you shouldn’t do it.” So, I think kudos to all of those mentors for never making gender an issue, it was never an issue, so I really appreciate them. Then the other thing I want to tell you before we part company, is a complete non-sequitur, which is that there is this amazing summer program that I’m involved in called SPLICE. It is a week-long summer program for college students who want to learn more about electroacoustic music. Performers and composers, so there are two tracks, but it’s one big community where the performers are coming to learn more about performing using technology;
the composers come and learn more about composing using technology, and the composers write pieces that the performers play then at the end of the week. There are workshops, there’s concerts, there’s community events. Last year we did a laptop ensemble, this year our theme is improvisation so we’re going to focus a lot on improvisation and our guests…our guest composer is Sam Pluta who is a part of the *Wet Ink Ensemble* and teaches at the University of Chicago, and our featured guest performer is Dana Jessen, bassoonist of *Wet Ink Ensemble* who was known for contemporary bassoon performing.¹⁹ So, we have another exciting year that we’re cooking up for everybody at SPLICE and anybody who wants to get more into electroacoustic music certainly that’s a great place to come and explore all the possibilities of composing and performing towards technology.

**L.K:** [43:14]

That sounds amazing! Well you are definitely in it, and busy! As always, it’s been such a pleasure and thank you so much for taking time out of your schedule for this interview. It has just been a wonderful hour, so thank you again!

**EL:** [44:20]

Well, thank you, Liz!

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¹⁹ *Wet Ink* is co-directed by an octet of world class composers, improvisers, and interpreters that collaborate in band-like fashion, writing, improvising, preparing, and touring pieces together over long stretches of time. [http://www.wetink.org/pages/about.html](http://www.wetink.org/pages/about.html)
Composer Mara Gibson is originally from Charlottesville, VA, graduated from Bennington College and completed her Ph.D. at SUNY Buffalo. She also attended London College of Music as well as L’École des Beaux-Arts in Fontainebleau, France and the International Music Institute at Darmstadt, Germany. She has earned grants and honors from the American Composer’s Forum; the Banff Center; Louisiana Division of the Arts; Arts KC; Meet the Composer; the Kansas Arts Commission National Endowment for the Arts; the International Bass Society; ASCAP, the John Hendrick Memorial Foundation; Virginia Center for the Arts; and Yale University. Recently, she enjoyed a residency at the MacDowell Colony. Internationally renowned ensembles and soloists perform her music throughout the United States, Canada, South America, Australia, Asia, and Europe. Gibson’s music has been described as “shocking, gripping and thought-provoking… conjuring a flurry of emotions” (PARMA recordings). She is a regular cross-disciplinary collaborator, having worked with choreographers, visual artists, writers, film makers and musicians. In 2015, Gibson released her
first compilation CD, ArtIfacts, with her second recording, Sky-born, following in November 2017 through Navona/Parma Recordings. As Gramophone magazine describes, “repertoire on this recording was mostly inspired by poetry and paintings. What binds these pieces are Gibson’s concise handling of musical materials and her spectrum of sonic approaches.” Sky-born displays a compelling contemporary voice with a restless imagination, able to morph other forms of artistic expression into daring, musical odysseys.” In August 2017, Gibson was the first-annual commissioned composer for the Baroque on Beaver Orchestra led by Robert Nordling. The ensemble showcased her newest piece, Secret Sky, music inspired by the bird migration patterns on the island. Collaboration is integral to Gibson’s process; whether through her music, collaborations or teaching, she hopes to achieve a relationship between the macro and micro. Dr. Gibson taught as an Associate Teaching Professor at the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance for over ten years, where she was founder of the UMKC Composition Workshop and co-director/founder of ArtSounds. From 2015-2017, she coordinated undergraduate composition, managing to triple the Conservatory’s undergraduate composition enrollment. Gibson has also contributed to New Music Box and in fall 2017, she joined Louisiana State University as a Visiting Assistant Professor; fall 2018, Gibson became Associate Professor of Composition at LSU.20

20. Image and text provided by Dr. Mara Gibson. Used here by permission of the composer.
**Gibson Interview**  
Liz Knox (LK) | Mara Gibson (MG)

**LK: [1:09]**

Today’s date is February 3rd, 2018 and this is the second installment of *Nevertheless, She Composed: A Contemporary Video Anthology of Women Composers of the Twenty-First Century* and today’s guest is Dr. Mara Gibson. Thank you so much for taking time out of your schedule today to do this interview. We’re really looking forward to getting to know more about you and all about Mara.

**MG: [1:35]**

I’m looking forward to it too - thank you so much for inviting me.

**LK: [1:37]**

Sure! Well, the format of these interviews is “past, present, and future” so we’re just talking about anything you want to talk about…it’s all about Mara today! So, I’m going to just turn it over to you and you tell us all about what your current position is, what’s going on in your life…just a little introduction.

**MG: [2:00]**

Okay, sure, so my current position here at LSU is Visiting Assistant Professor but I found out that I will be continuing in a permanent capacity at LSU which I’m very excited about, just this morning!

**LK: [2:14]**

We’re all very excited about that!

**MG: [2:18]**

Prior to LSU I taught at UMKC\(^{21}\) for 13 years. I lived in the Kansas City area and sort of

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\(^{21}\) University of Missouri - Kansas City
prior to that worked my way west. I spent a little bit of time in Louisiana before then, in between 2001 and 2003, so it’s sort of full circle for me to come back to this area. It doesn’t feel completely foreign.

**LK:** [2:45] That’s wonderful!

**MG:** [2:48] I don’t mind the food!

**LK:** [2:49] Oh…the food! I tell you, it’s never-ending here, it’s wonderful! Just to clarify we’re on the campus of LSU in Baton Rouge, Louisiana today; in Mara’s beautiful office, new office, permanent office, which is incredible! Let’s go to the past…your background, your education, start where you want to start from and go back as early as you want to. Where’d you come from?

**MG:** [3:23] Well, originally from Charlottesville, Virginia and I was the first of three kids, the oldest. My sister, in fact, is 16 years younger than me, so there’s quite a span; my parents really spread us out. My parents are both involved in academia but not in the creative arts. My father is a doctor and my mother is a nurse; I do think that some of my community engagement comes from that and my love for bringing people together and collaborating. I really started as a pianist so I took piano lessons. I had no real love or affinity for it deeply until I was probably in high school, and it was at that point that I also got connected with music theory. I had a wonderful, wonderful music teacher, actually a jazz trumpeter, and he really liked my ideas and encouraged me to compose. So, I started by writing songs, of all things, and it was one of the most fluid processes that I’ve ever experienced. I would just sit down at the piano, whether it was to poetry or
journaling that I’d done, music would literally just fall out of me but it was always kind of folk songs, for the most part. I did dabble with a couple of short piano pieces at that point but had no idea, really, about composition.

**L.K.** [4:48]

That was all during high school?

**M.G.** [4:50]

That was all during high school. I also had a very significant piano teacher. At that point, I switched over to Marjorie Mitchell when I was 15 or 16. She was very rigorous, terrifying in fact! But she really functions, in retrospect, as a role model for me because she was one of the first female concert pianists to really make it in the 50s. She was tough, she lived by herself, she ran her own studio, so she was just a real inspiration to me. Between she and John D’earth, my music teacher at high school, I really had great, great mentorship early on.

**L.K.** [5:38]

That’s a lesson! My piano teacher, as a child, is a huge influence for me and I’ve taught piano for 20 years. Never underestimate your role as a piano teacher. It is never to be underestimated because I hear that so often...influences from that childhood piano teacher...you think you’re just taking piano lessons, but you never know where that can end up. I had to remind myself of that of those 20 years. It’s easy to think your role is small but it’s not.

**M.G.** [6:12]

Right, it’s definitely not. I remember writing my college essays on her as the person who really shaped me into who I was.

**L.K.** [6:20]

Thank you, Sarah Sergesketter from IU in Indiana! [laughter]
From there, I went to a really small high school, it was a “Friends school”. I think there were 20 of us in the graduating class, which was a big class for that school. It was a Quaker school and it was a really good fit for me; very community-based so, when I was looking at schools, I knew I didn’t want to go to a really big school because I’d been in this small environment, at least for high school. I looked at smaller liberal arts schools and I visited several. I looked at Bard and a lot of these schools in the Northeast. Then I visited Bennington and it just stole my heart. I couldn’t imagine being anywhere else. I remember very specifically being with somebody, that tour person who took us around campus and she said, “I looked at Bard too, and I looked at Bennington, but Bennington was just so full of light.” Everybody was so generous and open and I was just sold at that moment. The music building was in this old house, it’s called Jennings…an old stone house on a hill. You go in and Bill Dixon is a jazz professor there, he’d be burning sandalwood that you could smell and you walk up these grand set of stairs…

That sounds wonderful! A Hogwarts kind of thing!

It was!

Environment is so important; I really believe that.

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22. Bennington College is a private, not-for-profit, nonsectarian college located in Bennington, Vermont. It is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE).
So, I loved Bennington, and for me… I knew I was interested in music, but I was not committed to being a music major when I started. Then I got hooked with the composition bug. I had three amazing undergraduate professors there. Alan Shawn, who still teaches there, Jeffrey Levine, and Peter Golub, and they all just really pushed me to develop my own voice. I will never forget the first time I heard a piece of mine played, we had a recital every week and I had this short little viola piece that I wrote, and it was played. At Bennington, it became pretty evident that this is what I wanted to do once I started to compose. But I did, because it was Bennington, run out of money my first year, and so I had a full scholarship to Loyola school of music which is just down the road. My mother really didn’t want to see me take time off, even though that was what my inclination was, and she said, “Why don’t you just go with this full scholarship and check it out?”…I did and learned a lot, but did not have a great experience, just because it was a conservatory, it was run like a music school and I was coming from a liberal arts background, and I knew that that was what I really wanted. But, it was a wonderful experience because what it gave me was, it allowed me to know and become aware of what I didn’t know. There was ear training and aural skills…and so I was able to take that experience and then for the remainder of my time as an undergraduate, kind of build that into my own program. So, I went back to Bennington and went into debt [laughter]…but I was okay with it because I knew that this was where I wanted to be and I was able to do a couple of things. I did a study abroad that actually saved me money. I studied at London College of Music for a semester. That was really exciting…but I was actually a piano and composition double major with a minor in literature.
LK: [10:30]

Oh, wow!

MG: [10:33]

I did ceramics when I was at Bennington…I’ve actually wanted to pick that up again…throwing pots because it was so therapeutic. It is important to have something that’s not your craft or your career.

LK: [10:50]

You truly are creative...you’re really creative! [laughter]

MG: [10:58]

I knew I wanted to go onto graduate school but I was really stupid at 22 and applied to Yale, and I was wait-listed but that’s all I did and so I was initially really bummed, but it turned out that those two years I took off were some of the most productive years because I started my studio as a piano teacher. I taught out of my house and I lived in the Raleigh-Durham area in North Carolina and it was a peak time for that area. I had a studio of 40 students within a month because I was willing to drive anywhere and do anything and go to schools. I learned a lot and built my portfolio during that time. I studied with Stephen Jaffe at Duke University, privately, and Sidney Corbett, and just really worked on building my portfolio. I was able to attend a graduate seminar there and that was really fantastic. I then applied to grad school two years from then and I thought my top choice was Brandeis University. I always said if I get in there I would go because Yehudi Wyner[^23] taught there and he is a huge influence, he is a pianist and a composer, and I remember having lessons with him in Boston. I would go visit him because I met him for the first time at Duke …he was there as a visiting composer and he had come

[^23]: Yehudi Wyner is an American composer, educator, pianist, conductor, and 2006 Pulitzer Prize Recipient for his piano concerto, *Chiavi in Mano*. 
to Bennington too, so there were just all these layers. I met him in Boston and he had this incredible piano with a board, like a drafting board attached to it where he composed, all long-hand. So, I got into to Brandeis, but I didn’t go because Buffalo offered me a little more money…a lot more money! When I was looking at grad schools, I did have a pretty significant undergrad debt and so…it was difficult…it was not an easy choice. I’ll go back to that because Boston has sort of a thread in my career, too. But I’m glad I went to Buffalo, I had great teachers there and I was accepted directly into the Ph.D. program which was also a big factor. It was a shorter period, all consolidated. I was there for five years during which time I studied under David Felder and I was one of two women in the program. Amy Williams and I were there at the same time and she’s my very dear friend now and colleague. She teaches at the University of Pittsburgh, and in fact, is on a Fulbright in Cork, Ireland with her family.

LK: [13:53]

Oh, wow! That’s a terrible thing, that has to be painful! [laughter] Wow, so only two in the program?

MG: [14:05]

It was a big program, I mean we had probably 60 composers there, so it was a big program and faculty of I guess four, all male colleagues. There’s certainly a legacy of Morton Feldman and SUNY Buffalo, which I grew to love, but he was not the easiest with women, too. So, I think there was a history there, as well, and it’s just kind of now being more documented. I never had the opportunity to meet him, but I can only imagine that those cultural things sort of built into the institution over time. My major professor was not an easy man, but he was a great teacher…really fantastic, taught me everything that I know now today as a composer…specifically mapping. I’ll never forget our first lesson: he gave me a piece of manuscript paper
like the European score…this really huge [gesture] page and he said I had to fill it and I was terrified…I thought, “Really, I have to fill this by next week?”

**LK: [15:35]**

You’ve already mentioned at least three things that we have in common: having to sit out, teaching, opening a piano studio; it’s so great to see the correlations, but we love to hear about all of those experiences. Your education and everything that you have gone through…that’s important for other composers to see that process and know that it wasn’t an easy road and that everyone hits bumps along the way. You just kept going and we’re still going! Let’s move on to the present. We just talked about your new post here at LSU. Currently, I’m a PhD student here at LSU, I study with Maestro Dinos Constantinides, but obviously we’ll have much more time together now and I’m absolutely looking forward to it. We were involved in the interview process; the grad students were going to observe masterclasses and you were kind enough to look at a piece of mine.

**MG: [17:00]**

It was a pleasure; I hadn’t really been familiar with your music.

**LK: [17:05]**

I know, we’re just kind of busy, aren’t we? [laughter] But it was a great masterclass and I really appreciated it. It’s just been a wonderful week and it has been topped off with this wonderful news of the permanent position. So…present, we talked about your new academic post… what projects are you doing right now? You’ve got so much going on, holy cow!
MG: [17:26]

Yeah…I just finished my second CD which I released through PARMA Recordings. My first CD I released through CD Baby, so it is completely a do-it-yourself process. That was ArtIfacts, highlighting a lot of my chamber music, going back, as far back as 2009. Then I had this surge of work between 2015 and 2017; I was going through a lot of personal difficulties and…in retrospect, I think my music helped me cope and I wrote, I think, 82 minutes of music that I also recorded on the PARMA CD within the span of a two-year period. I mean, it was unhealthy at times, how much I was composing and working, but it really saved me. It really saved me on many, many levels. So, that I just finished up and I was really thrilled to get a review by Gramophone last week; that was sort of my main reason in using PARMA because…with the do-it-yourself CD, I could do it, I could get people to help me with the cover design… I have a great recording engineer at UMKC that helped me with both CD’s so we didn’t really need a master of recording, so we were able to cut some corners. But what I really wanted from PARMA was a review and I told them…this is what I’m willing to do…because there’s a fee involved and when I went out to the MacDowell Colony in 2016 as a resident, PARMA contacted me, they are about two hours away, and they said, “We would love to come meet you,” and so I went to their studios, and they were just a small organization really interested in promoting composers. I fell in love with it, so that’s when I committed and I signed on…so, that was a great experience for me! In terms of projects moving forward, I’m interested in doing a third CD in the next, probably, five years…give myself a little bit of time.

LK: [19:45]

You’ve been through a lot this year!
MG: [19:48]

It has been a lot. I’d like to include more of my larger ensemble works. I had one small piece that I wrote for orchestra called, *A Fanfare*, which was performed here. Really old… like a 15 or 16-year-old piece which was really fun to revisit.

LK: [20:03]

That was a fun piece to experience!

MG: [20:07]

Yeah! Then I did a wind piece a couple years back with dance, and then just this last summer I had an opportunity to be the composer-in-residence at Beaver Island Music Festival, so I wrote an orchestra piece that they commissioned me to write, the Beaver Island Cultural Arts Association, way up in Michigan.24 It’s a wonderful festival, an amazing program. I’m most impressed by the fact that the community members would just come out, essentially the festival took over the island for a week, and so I always had a host family that I stayed with; I was right on the beach of Lake Michigan, I had my own private beach…this was last August. In fact, when I was there, I got the job offer here! [laughter] So, it was a nutty time. But I really got the bug for writing orchestra music and…chamber music will always be my greatest love, but…the palette…so many possibilities! Looking forward, I’m doing a piece that came out of some folks that I met there, a commission for tuba and unusual pairings.

LK: [21:35]

Go tubas! [laughter]

MG: [21:39]

…for Brian Smith, who’s based out of San Diego.

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24. Beaver Island Cultural Arts Association - https://bimf.net/festival-info/
He has this very bizarre instrumentation…the tuba will be the consistent line throughout, but there’s also accordion, bass clarinet, cello, just very bizarre mixture, so we are doing sort of a Vaudeville theme. We’re going to be using some quotations as the backdrop for the piece, and some poetry. It’s a lot of fun, very different from what I just came out of, working on the preludes and the orchestra piece, so looking forward to that. I’ve got a couple of smaller commissions that I’m working on ironing out right now…a violin solo piece. I’m writing a piece for Brett Dietz and the percussion ensemble here.

**LK: [22:28]**

Hamiruge…they are so good.

**MG: [22:32]**

Yeah, I am so excited, and then eventually sort of down the pike, I’m hoping to write a bassoon concerto for Darrel Hale. So that’s kind of what I’m doing right now and I mean the last year has been really dedicated to marketing my CD and teaching. I think I said this in my presentation for my interview here, I think of myself as doing three things and it’s like a tricycle: so there’s always composing, there’s always teaching, and there’s always building new audiences…it’s a big part of what we do, and at any given time, there’s usually something that is dominant. I would probably say that composition has been that for the last few years, but then teaching shifted it into that dominant role, and why I truly love to teach, I get more out of teaching than I do sometimes sitting alone and composing in my silo. It feeds me, and so I can’t imagine, you know, separating those two things.

**LK: [23:40]**

You learn through teaching, absolutely, you learn through teaching, end of story.
So…I’m leading here, you’ve mentioned, earlier in the year, that sometimes you compose at 4:00 am?

MG: [23:56]

Yes.

LK: [23:57]

This the case? [smiles]

MG: [23:58]

This is the case!

LK: [23:59]

I am interested in that because, that’s just one of those dedication things and it’s going to be really critical now that you’ll be full time here. You’re going to have to carve out that time.

So, on a scale of one to ten, where does that rank for you?

MG: [24:20]

It’s precious!

LK: [24:21]

Are you a morning person?

MG: [24:22]

Well, that’s a long question! [laughter] I mean, I did not used to be until I had my son. That sort of forced me into being a morning person, but it’s interesting, whenever I’ve been on residencies…I regress into that evening person; I am just productive at night. I can make myself productive in the morning if it’s the only quiet time that I have. For me, I’m pretty liberal with myself in terms of what constitutes composing; could be listening research, playing…
it’s just my time, my special time. A couple of years ago I moved my piano in Kansas City into a separate room and that helped because I could close the door, that really helped a lot, even though I was fundamentally so opposed to it for a long time. I wanted the piano to be the focal point of our lives, but I just needed the quiet.

**LK:** [25:26]

So...the deal with you that just had me hook, line, and sinker is your collaborative visions. Talk about how important collaboration is to you. I enjoy the same thing.

**MG:** [25:40]

Yeah, …all of my career has been based on collaboration in the sense that I’ve worked with some of the same people over and over again, and my world kind of keeps getting bigger and it’s amazing, how small you realize it is, once you’re at a certain point. I just had the pleasure and honor to work with people that have had synergy with me and my ideas and are passionate about what they do, and that’s kind of my gauge. You know, I’ll work with you if you can put up with me, there’s some spark there, so there’s been a couple of critical people in my history that way. For example, I met Michael Hall in Thailand, of all things. When I heard him play, I knew I wanted to write him a piece. It didn’t happen for a couple of years, but I got a commission from the Nelson-Atkins and he came and premiered my viola piece, *Canopy*, with Expedia, …I have now written five pieces for him and he has been on both CDs…He’s coming down here in March for my faculty recital. Then other people: I met Megan Ihnen through him and in Vienna of all places…Michael and I were there on tour and Megan had just met Michael at the *New Music Gathering* which was in San Francisco the first year, it was at Peabody

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25. New Music Gathering is an annual three-day conference dedicated to the performance, production, promotion, support and creation of new concert music.
the second year and Bowling Green this last year and I think it’s going to be in Boston.

**L.K:** [27:20]

Speaking of Bowling Green...side note! If you’ve missed the first installment of *NSC/Nevertheless She Composed*, Dr. Elainie Lillios’s interview is NSC-01, you can watch her interview on Youtube.

**MG:** [27:45]

Excellent! So, the long and short of it; we met, and she met and we ended up walking around looking at the Opera House and we walked into Stephan Stone, the big Cathedral in Vienna, and Bach’s *Toccata in D minor* was playing and we were like…the three of us just looked at each other like…what is happening? [laughter] So, at that point we decided we were all going to work together, which we did, and those two really played a big role. But then I met Michael’s neighbor who was a conductor, and through my connections with Michael, Robert invited me to do this orchestra piece last year, and so…with my history in Buffalo...I was literally keeping a folder of every performer that came across my hands, and following up with those people, at least the ones that I could work with, and sending updates to my mentors. I still have letters from Yehudi Wyner. He hand-writes his letters and always puts a little bit of music in every letter he sends, it is so amazing! But I mean…just putting the time into that has been so filled with reward.

**L.K:** [29:01]

Well…I think the collaborative side as composers, I catch myself sinking into myself; so often we kind of can lead a reclusive life and depending on your personality or just what your life is in its stage, it’s so easy to do that. This project kind burst from that idea of just reaching out and connecting with people. I realized how disconnected I am from other women composers
and it’s not by choice, it’s just...your lives get filled and you realize that you’re not reaching out and that collaboration is just so important. It can be exhausting and overwhelming, but at the same time it...you continue to build bridges and links and chains down the road. Your activities just show an enormous arch of connection and collaborative creativity that I think it’s just really important for everybody, students and composers, no matter what stage you’re at in your career, I think that’s so important to highlight.

**MG:** [30:10]

Well, thanks. It has been a work in progress.

**LK:** [30:15]

I think collaborations are harder than trying to do it on your own.

**MG:** [30:20]

It’s messy! Some of the collaborations I’ve learned the most from were failures, so I really encourage students to take that risk and for me, working outside of disciplines is also really important...I’m able to bring something then back to my music. So that’s been super helpful.

**LK:** [30:40]

There’s a collaboration happening now here at LSU between the composers and the dance department?

**MG:** [30:50]

Well, we’ve got a couple of things: we have the dance department and the composing studio and then also we have a poet, Ava Leavell Haymon (poet laureate), she volunteered three of her pieces to a I think a total of 12 or 13 composers...and we paired them with singers, and in April we’ll have those pieces performed.
LK: [31:20]

So, you have three medium all together in one project...that’s going to be an amazing experience!

MG: [31:25]

We’re really excited about it.

LK: [31:27]

We’re in the second semester of this year and what you’ve accomplished here, even as a visiting professor at LSU has been just mind-boggling. The new music ensemble...the Constantinides New Music Ensemble, is underway and you’re over-seeing that, correct? Is that going well?

MG: [31:55]

I am...that’s going really well...that’s another bit of collaborative thread toward my work here for sure.

LK: [32:00]

The Laptop Orchestra...that’s an incredible program here as well.

MG: [32:07]

On that...that was totally out of my comfort zone; somebody was on leave. Steve Beck needed some help, so it was a wonderful learning opportunity.

LK: [32:34]

Obviously, the title, \textit{Nevertheless, She Composed}, is a little loaded so let’s move on to that...women in composition...or women composers. Let’s just open it up; we’re just trying to open it up and see where this conversation leads. I think we’re both on the same side of things
and so is Dr. Lillios. We’re proud to be women composers but we don’t necessarily see needing that tag to be a composer or to make us set us ourselves apart. We’re interested in being masters of our craft and being strong composers regardless of gender, but at the same time, history shows that the platform for women composers is still today slightly slanted at times. So, there is this big movement currently that we’re seeing. I’ve been in academia for what about ten years now and I see a huge shift in the last couple years about the platform for women composers, probably fueled by events like the Women’s March. I’m sure just the woman’s platform is growing there. So, we’ve talked about those things. As a teacher, as a professor, how are you seeing the numbers? You said you were at one of two, I think I was one of two or three a couple of times in my undergrad and master’s program. Where do you see the numbers in the programs, as you do these masterclasses, traveling to festivals?

MG: [34:24]

I definitely see an increase and one of the things that attracted me to LSU is it’s pretty even. I had a couple of really strong female students that, of course, I had a very special connection with. I think as a female composer…there’s something that happens there that’s deeper and I think I fought it for a long time. I didn’t talk about being a female composer for a long time and I think it was out of fear that if I started talking about it, it would dissuade me. So, in graduate school, I purposefully didn’t talk about it. I didn’t talk about it for 10 or 15 years out of graduate school and then Kristin Kuster inspired me with her article, *Taking Off [My] Pants*, a New York Times article. There were a couple of other…Ellen McSweeney did a couple of articles around the same time, this was right around 2011, and this was something I felt very passionately about and something that I was ready to do at that point. So, I wrote, *Skirt or Pants? How About Both*, which was published through the *New Music Box*. It was a really liberating
process for me. As many art historians and music historians have said, “art has no gender, but artists do,” and so there is a balance I think to talking about that. I can’t get on board with some of the more adamant female composers. I’m in complete support…I’m on the *International Alliance of Women in Music*; I adjudicated for them last year and I am a promoter of shifting that mentality in whatever way we can to move forward, but I tend to be on a more conservative end because it’s distracting. It simply takes me out of what I need to be doing which is writing music.

**LK:** [36:35]

I agree. I had a little dichotomy about starting this series just because, you know, it is going to be women composers and but at the same time, I think even if it did involve men you know it’s not about that, it’s just about women connecting and talking about our lives or background and helping to promote that composer’s music. It’s a tough fence to travel.

**MG:** [37:10]

…and you don’t want to be pegged either…

**LK:** [37:13]

It’s a kind of dangerous road sometimes, not to get into my background, but I was a tuba performance major, always the only female, and then a conducting major, in wind band for that matter. I’ve always been in that position of a male-dominated situation, as a conductor. Then in composition, it’s a little different world, because it’s becoming…of course, that’s changing all across the board you know from tuba playing to conducting to composing…thankfully!

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26. The International Alliance for Women in Music (IAWM) is an international membership organization of women and men dedicated to fostering and encouraging the activities of women in music, particularly in the areas of musical activity such as composing, performing, and research in which gender discrimination is an historic and ongoing concern. [https://iawm.org/about-us](https://iawm.org/about-us)
But the composition world, we’re really seeing a shift, a real up-tick and acknowledgement of women composers in music. In music history, they weren’t even allowed to have their music performed, and I think it is important to show the public how it used to be compared to how it is today. Maybe it’s not about focusing on the fact that we’re women, but just how far that the classical music world has advanced…maybe that’s really the reason. It’s exciting!

**MG:** [38:30]

Absolutely, and I think focusing on those positives, that’s celebratory.

**LK:** [38:38]

That’s a perfect word, ‘celebratory’, and not to take away anything from the guys at all but just to celebrate the connections that women share now and the relationships that we share and the creativity to, that women can bring through their experiences; not that the guys don’t suffer but women…our lives are complicated.

**MG:** [39:07]

We have biological dispositions yeah…having kids, and we can relate to one another on this.

**LK:** [39:15]

Oddly enough, no one ever focused on the fact that I was a woman, it has always come down to the fact that I was a wife and mother. Every time I would do something or if something wasn’t going well or something happened, “Oh well, you’re a wife, you’re a mom.” That’s a painful statement; I have written in my application essays that my family is not a detriment or a liability to me; I would not be where I am today without my family…my family has sacrificed for me. I think it’s important as women, that women of all backgrounds and that’s why we’re
here to celebrate and open up. I am a conservative and rather traditional woman, married 17 years with two teenagers, but still it’s just wonderful to open up that dialogue and share what we go through on a daily basis.

**MG:** [40:25]

Here’s where I think we can also make a difference and that is in the curriculum. I think we can include more female composers. It’s tricky because...at what point are you including them, or us, or those of our gender for that purpose, and when you think about what constitutes a masterpiece or a masterwork, it’s history. History perpetuates. The more we can bring that history and rewrite that history, I think the better. But it’s a challenge, for sure.

**LK:** [41:00]

Well, here’s that can of worms: *Well, if a woman would write something substantial worth being timeless...*well, if that’s the argument, then how do we get it to where women are able to do that, as if they haven’t already. That’s a difficult topic. Sometimes when I’m at home and having to do domestic things I think, “Well, I bet Brahms never had to wash socks or do the dishes”, and things like that cross my mind. It’s not a new thought...many articles and many interpretations have been written about those topics.

**MG:** [41:53]

I think empowering women is another critical component in role modeling. So, the more that high school girls can see that it’s okay to be a composer and a mom or whatever.

**LK:** [42:13]

I think Elainie and I both agreed that when we were in high school...I believe she said this, we didn’t know women could be composers. I had no idea.
MG: [42:22]

I know!

LK: [42:43]

I had two band directors that were men, who I adore, but all the music that we played… I never saw music by women and so, the first time I went for my undergrad I had always thought about writing my own music, of course, but when I got to college the first time out in the real world I was like, “Wow, there are no women composers in the program,” but I thought “why can’t I write music”?

MG: [42:55]

We’re kind of behind the eight-ball in music versus other careers. There was a lot of research in the 70s with visual artists…it took us a little bit longer, but music historically does that…it’s the most abstract art…so it takes us longer.

LK: [43:15]

It’s just an interesting topic…so, what are some positive contributions do you think that women can bring to the table? …I mean we’ve already sort of touched on it.

MG: [43:35]

Well, I think every composer brings something different to the table so in that way, I don’t think it’s gender specific, but I think any kind of diversity is critical for growth; that doesn’t just extend to gender, that extends beyond gender to race, belief system, nationality, worldview… all of these things. I think we have access to information in a way that we didn’t even ten years ago, and so we can we can draw on that.

LK: [44:10]

Talking about women composers opens up the whole platform for everybody. It is great.
Wikipedia lists approximately 350 to 400 women composers…but now, most recently, there is a new database27 that I am so excited about!

MG: [44:32]
   Me too!

LK: [44:33]
   …and you are friends with the creator!

MG: [44:36]
   Yes, Rob Deemer!

LK: [44:37]
   I have not had a chance to reach out to him, that’s on my to-do list! I believe the last time that I checked it, there were around 2200 women that were included. Now this database includes clear back to…the full spectrum…I don’t know who the earliest composer is on the list yet, I haven’t had a chance to study it extensively, but, if you are a woman composer, I believe it’s still open to be included.

MG: [45:05]
   Contact Rob Deemer, he is one of the kindest, most open, generous souls.

LK: [45:10]
   I think at this time the online forum is maybe closed and they’re just adding individually, but yeah, it’s just such an exciting thing. It’s all alphabetically…I think you can even change it for geographic…

MG: [45:24]
   Geographic, instrumentation…it’s a great resource.

LK: [45:29]

We’ll put a link up to that database so that you can find that. Future projects! So, the door is wide open; you’ve got a new appointment here…so what’s coming up?

MG: [45:43]

Well, immediately, I’m going to move down here permanently. This year I’ve been splitting my time between Kansas City and Baton Rouge. I’ll be very excited to be here full-time and have my son with me full-time. We’ve got four years until he goes off to college, which is hard for me to believe!

LK: [46:05]

I am in the same boat. My son is 17 at this time and our daughter will be 16 this summer so it’s unreal how fast the time goes and that whole college road! [laughter]

MG: [46:20]

I know, I just can’t even believe he will be driving soon. Anyway, you asked me about my future…

LK: [46:25]

Hey, all of this matters!

MG: [46:27]

He’s a big part of my future! Long-term projects, as I mentioned…this percussion ensemble piece. I really would like to do more in the orchestral realm. Ultimately, I’d like to write an opera. I’m in communication with an artist I attended the MacDowell Colony28.

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28. In 1896, Edward MacDowell, a composer, and Marian MacDowell, a pianist, bought a farm in Peterborough, New Hampshire, where they spent summers working in peaceful surroundings. It was in Peterborough that Edward, arguably America’s first great composer, said he produced more and better music. Not long after — falling prematurely and gravely ill — Edward conveyed to his wife that he wished to give other artists the same creative experience under which he had thrived.
We are about dreaming something up…he would write the libretto and I would write the opera and we brainstormed on a couple of ideas. I think we left it at the "death of an adjunct!"

[laughter].

LK: [47:11]

So many will relate to that!

MG: [47:13]

We like the idea of being in a non-traditional venue, so having an opera in a bar…something that was a little more portable. I am excited to do that; that’s kind of longer term, but I am more excited to continue to integrate electronics into my work. That’s been a dabbling…that’s not something I did a lot of in graduate school. I got into it after graduate school and I got into it on my own terms. It’s something that I would like to do to a bigger scale. Maybe orchestra and electronics, maybe opera and electronics…that’s something that really fascinates me.

LK: [47:50]

Definitely in the right place for that! I am blown away by the electronic music department here at LSU and the opera…it’s just unbelievable! We need to carve out a whole other 24 hours a day just to have time to do it all. …Any festivals?

MG: [48:15]

Yes, thanks for reminding me! I’m going to be a resident composer at the Charlotte New Music Festival.29 I’m hoping that I will bring a festival here, that’s one of my goals for the next

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29. Founded in 2012, Charlotte New Music (CNM) promotes the creation and performance of contemporary music in Charlotte and beyond. With primary disciplines in contemporary classical, modern, *Avant garde*, experimental, sound art, and electronics, CNM supports composers, songwriters, and musicians through unique educational experiences, compelling performances, and opportunities for collaboration across artistic disciplines and genres.
five years here at LSU. I think it could be an epicenter of new music; our band…we’ve got band
directors that promote new music. Professor Dietz is a composer as well as a percussionist, I
mean, lots of new music here already! I’m finding a way to fuse that and let the world know that
that emerges us as a center for that. That is one of my goals for the next five years is to get that
up and running. I think it’ll be great for recruitment, it’ll be great for exposure, for the city…

L.K: [49:03]

Yeah, absolutely…and not to keep driving the gender thing, but this year, Maestro of the
LSU Orchestra…he had made a commitment to perform at least one piece by a woman composer
on each program this year…which is still a nice gesture, and the music is incredible. The
creativity and the environment for women here at LSU is wonderful.

M.G: [49:52]

It’s stimulating. We as composers are lifelong learners. It’s nice to be in an institution
that promotes that right.

L.K: [50:03]

So, your website, it is…

M.G: [50:04]

MaraGibson.com. I have two CDs; my first is Artifacts, and my second is titled Sky-born.
That’s also the name of a track on the CD and that’s available through Novana records and
PARMA recordings.

L.K: [50:19]

Right, and so we’ll have links to her website, and recordings, and all about Mara and so,
thank you so much for today’s interview. It’s been a wonderful hour and enjoyed it so much and
can’t wait to see these next few years here at LSU and everywhere that you are, across the country!

**MG: [50:40]**

Thank you so much for having me!
Kate Waring is a composer and producer who has also worked as conductor, flutist, teacher, lecturer and organizer of festivals, concerts and charity events. Of her numerous works, most have received recognition through live performances, as well as radio and television coverage and recordings throughout the world. She has composed various symphonic and chamber works, ballet, song cycles, electronic music, musicals, operas and oratorio. Kate Waring was born in Louisiana where she received her Bachelor of Music (1975) in Flute Performance and a Master of Music (1977) in Composition from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, where her composition teachers were Dinos Constantinides, Kenneth Klaus and James Drew. After teaching music theory and composition at Memphis State University (now University of Memphis in Tennessee) where she studied composition with Don Freund, she moved to Paris, France, taking the form and analysis classes with Betsy Jolas at the Paris Conservatory. Further studies of formalized music with Iannis Xenakis and musical aesthetics with Michel Guiomar at the Sorbonne led to her receiving a Diplome d’Études Approfondies (1981), followed by her
doctorate in 1984. While in Paris, Kate Waring taught music with the late Alfred Loewenguth of the Loewenguth String Quartet and was musical director of one of his Orchestres de Jeunes. In summer of 1984, she was “Composer in Residence” at the summer Festival de Musique de Saint Cérè, for which she composed Ulterior Motives for two saxophone quartets and string orchestra. After moving to Germany, Waring was founder and artistic director of the annual “American Music Week” for a decade starting in 1987, promoting American music of many genres in Bonn, Cologne, Berlin, Aachen and other German cities. The annual series was generously supported by the U.S.I.S. (United States Information Service), the U.S. Embassy in Bonn, the Cultural Office of the City of Bonn, the Ford Manufacturing Company in Cologne, Rudolf Damm Corporation and others. During this time, Waring was also European liaison for the American Society of Composers Inc. and was active in the College Music Society of the U.S.A. Waring’s musical “A*B*C*America Before Columbus” and her chamber opera “Rapunzel” have received numerous performances on both sides of the Atlantic (Opera Delaware & Operaworks of Pennsylvania in the U.S.A. and the Brotfabrik Bonn, Bundeskunsthalle, Kleve Stadthalle, Ludwigsforum Aachen, etc.) Her other works have been performed at many festivals, including the German Bonner Herbst (director: Dennis Russel Davies), the International Double Reed Convention in Frankfurt, the American Music Week, the Wilma E. Grote Symposium for the Advancement of Women, Italy’s Donna in Musica, Amerikawoche in Andernach, the Cambridge Summer Music Festival/UK, Cambridge Music Conference, etc. Her mixed-media oratorio “Remember the Earth Whose Skin You Are” with texts by Native Americans was successfully premiered in 1994 at the Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany in Bonn with added performances in Cleves and Andernach. Kate Waring was appointed by the cultural office of the city of Unna, Germany, to the position of artistic director.
of both the “Fanny Mendelssohn Composition Competition” and the “International Festival of Women’s Music” in 1995, with Meredith Monk as featured composer. A very serious health problem caused Waring to curtail her musical activities in 1995. She underwent 2 years of challenging medical treatments in Germany before her family’s move to England in 1997. While in England, Waring has composed an opera entitled “Legacy of the Pioneers” with the late playwright Karin E. Seifert, a musical called “Rings of Glory” with Philippe Delamare and various chamber music works on commission. Her “Scenes of Childhood”, commissioned by the Manon String Quartet, was premiered in May 2003 in the Cologne Philharmonie to an appreciative audience. In addition to project management in various art forms, Waring served for many years on the board of Action for Children’s Arts. Recent commissions include works for the Louisiana Sinfonietta, the Cambridge Music Conference for performance at the Cambridge Summer Music Festival in England, the Manon String Quartet, the Meininger Trio and others. Waring was the artistic director of Key Works which received a generous grant from the Arts Council England to produce a music/dance theatre project exploring new technologies, in collaboration with English partners from Essexdance and the Norwich School of Art and Design and German partners from the Folkwang Hochschule and I.C.E.M. in Essen, Germany. “The Wish Fish” toured 6 UK cities in 2005. Kate’s fourth opera, “The Caravanserai” with libretto by Canadian writer Don Mowatt who was producer of radio arts for 34 years at the Canadian Broadcasting Company in Vancouver B.C., was completed in 2005. Her 5th & 6th operas are “Are Women People?” and “Porcelain & Pink”.30

30. This is Dr. Kate Waring’s biography from an active period in her career, used here by permission of Richard Tannenbaum via Keyworks Music. www.keyworksmusic.com/about
Katherine Finlay Waring, 62, of Cambridge, England, passed from this life on August 25, 2015 following a lengthy struggle with neuroendocrine tumor syndrome, NETS. Kate was born and raised in Alexandria, Louisiana and after graduating from Bolton High School began college at Oklahoma State University. Discerning that music was to be her vocation, she transferred to Louisiana State University where she received her bachelor and master degrees in the School of Music. Following a stint of assistant teaching in the music department of Memphis State University, she began her exploration of the wider world. Kate took a bite out of the “Big Apple” in NYC, followed by a visit to Paris on her way to summer study abroad in Sienna, Italy. An offer to return to Paris to teach music to children urged her to remain in Europe. She learned French by full immersion in the culture, and then applied to the Sorbonne for graduate school, where she received her Doctoral degree in Music Composition. While in Paris, she married and soon moved to Bonn, Germany with her husband, Richard Tannenbaum. The rich musical life there inspired her creativity and she forged working relationships with many fine musicians who helped her realize performances of her compositions. She founded American Music Week in Bonn, then the capital city, featuring performances of American composers.
While pursuing her musical art, she became a mother to Laura and Sam, who were from then on the most important focus of her life. After winning a heroic battle with lymphoma, Kate and her family relocated to Cambridge, England. There Kate developed the private teaching aspect of her music career, an endeavor which she found greatly rewarding. Kate took advantage of the numerous and constant musical offerings in the city, King’s College being a particular favorite, and she often stewarded at concert programs. She continued to write and produce her own music through her company, Keyworks Music Ltd. Kate is predeceased by her father, P. Albert Waring. She is survived by her mother, Laura Finlay Waring, children Laura Tannenbaum and her husband James Clary, son Sam Tannenbaum, brother Phil Waring, sister Margaret Waring and her husband Ray Braun, her former husband and constant friend Richard Tannenbaum, and extended family and friends across the globe. Memorial donations may be given to charity, preferably those organizations which foster either cancer research or music education.31

Interview with Cara Waring, Niece of Kate Waring
Liz Knox (LK) | Cara Waring (CW)

LK: [2:30]

Today’s date is Saturday, March 10th, 2018, and this is NSC-04, *Nevertheless, She Composed: A Contemporary Video Anthology of Women Composers of the Twenty-First Century*. All of our interviews for NSC are special but this particular installment has a unique and heart-felt quality to it. Today, we’re with Cara Waring, and we’re going to get to know Cara, but we are really talking about the composer, Kate Waring. We’ll be discussing the familial ties to Kate Waring; we’re honoring this interview about Kate…she was a woman composer of the twenty-first century but unfortunately, her life was cut much too short. So, we want to pay tribute to Kate’s life, her career, her music, and all of the wonderful and fascinating things that Kate has done. Cara is her niece and so Cara has agreed to this interview, and there are other family members of Kate’s that are contributing to the information that we’ll provide on Kate’s life and so, we’re really excited to get started. Thanks for doing this interview, Cara. I’ve really looked forward to talking to you about Kate’s life. I’ve had the honor and privilege of researching her life and learning about her. Let’s start out with you first. You’re no stranger to the music world yourself so tell us all about you, your life, career, education.

CW: [4:20]

Alright! My family, the entire Waring family is fairly musical. My grandmother was a church organist and a piano teacher. Aunt Kate was a flautist and a composer, herself. My aunt played the cello (and she still does). My cousins, they all play something…guitar, piano. I wanted to continue in Music Education. I fell in love with choir, specifically around sixth grade and discovered I had a voice. I thought everyone could sing! I think I spent most of my youth just singing around, assuming everyone did it, and my brother would hear me in the house and
turn to my mom and say, “Does she always sing this often?” We’re seven years apart and he had moved out, but he would come visit and he would just hear me sing all the time. It was kind of addicting, so I decided that I should probably major in Music Education, and I got my Music Education degree in 2008 at Northwestern State University. I’ve taught as well, a lot of my family has done the same. I’ve been a performer as a well as a teacher and see them as being equally important in our lives.

**L.K:** [5:36]

And just to clarify, we are in Cara’s home in downtown Baton Rouge, Louisiana, so Northwestern State University is in Natchitoches, Louisiana.

**CW:** [4:48]

After three years of teaching there, I did a little study abroad which was a great time that I spent with my aunt; I was in Malta, but I spent the summer in England so I got to see her quite a bit then, as well as other visits. So, I taught in Natchitoches for three years after that study abroad, and then I decided it was time to get my Master’s. I knew I wanted it; I just hadn’t decided if I wanted to work for before, and after that three-year mark, I decided it was time. LSU was where I decided to go after some auditions. I graduated in 2015 and again went to Europe for a short summer training program and considered staying for a while longer. It was my own heart’s desire but I have to say I think my Aunt Kate had some influence on me wanting to be there, knowing I had family in Europe. But then, Dinos [Constantinides]³² wanted to do her opera here in the states. That was a good reason to come back!

**L.K:** [7:00]

As mentioned before, Kate was a composer, flautist, teacher…as I researched her

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³² Dr. Dinos Constantinides, Louisiana State University Boyd Professor of Composition and teacher of Kate Waring.
life, I thought, “Wow, this woman, she could do anything…do it all!” The comments I read from people were just that…that she was this amazing force of a woman that was kind but really driven. She was born in Louisiana, but she ended up really living the last twenty years, at least, of her life in Europe. I found a bio online, I’m not sure how current it was, but her academic studies, she was born here in Louisiana…we mentioned Dinos Constantinides, he is my composition professor at LSU and when I approached him about doing NSC, and told him what we wanted to do, her name was the first one out of his mouth. She really meant a lot to him. Although this is a series about living women composers, and I had put my heart into that, we don’t want to forget about our past pioneers, but this was a different situation, I said, “No, she definitely needs to be featured because it was just not time for us to stop talking and hopefully raise awareness about Kate’s work and her life. Waring’s musical…I’m really interested in getting to know about this, it’s A*B*C* with an asterisk, *America Before Columbus*, so that is one work that is mentioned here. A chamber opera, Rapunzel, and her multimedia song cycle, *Remember the Earth Whose Skin You Are*. As I was reading through some of her works over the last few weeks…such an eclectic composer and so many different elements involved in her works. I was really excited about that. The list just goes on about her…*International Festival of Women’s Music*, the *Fanny Mendelssohn Composition Competition* in 1995, she was the Artistic Director of those events. We could just go on and on, this list goes on about board of directors on which she served, she was commissioned by the Cambridge Music Conference…it just keeps going and going. Although her life was shortened, she burned her candle at both ends, to accomplish what she did. We’re looking forward to focusing on all of that. Personal memories of Kate of your Aunt Kate…what do you have?
Well, she was always very good about emailing through her busy schedule. It was very exciting to get an email from her because we knew she was achieving so much. She was a go-getter; she was always the life of the party and quite the entertainer. While being the life of the party, she also had things she really believed in that she wanted to stand up for that I think you see in her works such as *Are Women People*, politically and through feminism, etc. On a personal note, she was very good about being encouraging towards me (also being a go-getter), she knew that I loved to sing, and she started seeing as I got older that I was auditioning for things and putting myself out there. Whether I heard it from her or her children and other members of the family, they would mention that Aunt Kate thought it was so great that I was putting myself out there, and no doubt I would go somewhere because I liked putting myself out there. I think she did that as well, she thought that was very important. If you have something to say or you have a skill that you want to present to the world, you have to put yourself out there. That’s kind of an early memory, I was about 17 or 18, and I went to England, and I remember her introducing me to the busking scene. She lived in Cambridge but we made a visit to London, and then a couple of years later we visited there again, there is a little café called the Crusting Pipe. They serve food but you can easily get a cup of tea or coffee. This guy, Richard, not my uncle, but a stranger at the time [laughter] was singing from *Oklahoma*, and he saw me singing along, so he pulled me up there and I started singing with him, and I remember my aunt saying, “You could do that, too!” I think it was partially her influence of saying that that got me interested. When I went in 2009 to study in Europe I realized I could actually work there under my student visa, so I was able to stay with my cousin in London and pay my rent. So, I auditioned and they let me do it sort of as a substitute. It was a great experience!
It was a little moment with her but it influenced a piece of performance in my life.

LK: [13:19]

I’m going to put you on the spot a little, but in looking at some of the younger pictures of Kate…how many times are you told that you look like your Aunt Kate? [laughter]

CW: [13:33]

It was a running comment throughout my life!

LK: [14:00]

Obviously, she had a keen insight and keen awareness of many topics.

CW: [14:07]

Yeah, and as a composer she would mention how even the composition world was “the man’s world”; she felt that women had their place, and she was trying to find her place within all of that.

LK: [14:21]

Was she very vocal about that or did she just fight against it by composing?

CW: [14:28]

With the few visits we had together, I felt she was vocal about it. That’s a question you might ask Richard, but I got the impression that she had very strong feelings about being a feminist and the woman’s place, and the man is not necessarily better than the woman, and to establish her place in the world.

LK: [14:58]

We haven’t mentioned exactly what ended her life; I have forgotten the medical term exactly, but it was listed as NETS (neuro tumors), but I assumed a specific type of cancer.
CW: [15:12]

She was a fighter. Ten years before that or so, she dealt with another kind of cancer and that one had went into remission, so we thought she was fine for so long, but then she ended up with this second go around.

LK: [15:42]

I believe she was around 62 when she passed, pretty young for today. We talked about Kate being vocal as a woman composer, she was concerned with women’s rights and recognition. Right now, at the time of this interview, we just had International Women’s Day and so there has been a lot on social media about that. It’s currently spring of 2018, a lot of the orchestras and opera companies are publishing their 2018-2019 schedules. There’s a lot happening on social media about whether those schedules include women composers and right now, the Metropolitan Opera is taking quite a bit of heat because they have not scheduled one opera by a woman for their next season. They are getting quite a bit of backlash, from what I perceive, on social media. Through these interviews, we have been talking about, from the composer’s side of things, but you being a musician as well…we’ve been talking about, do you schedule music by a woman because she is a woman? No, we’ve been talking about scheduling music because you are happy with our craft, we work hard at our craft, not because we’re women but because we’re musicians, composers. The platform for this is bringing awareness, and the composers have been talking about how they feel about that. I think that the consensus has been, “Don’t play my music because I’m a woman, play my music because it is good, it’s well written, it’s well put together”. Kate’s music was obviously well put together; she knew her craft. It wouldn’t matter her gender, she knew what she was doing.
LK: [18:18]

How important is it to your family to continue promoting Kate’s music and her life?

CW: [18:25]

I would say it’s really important. I think even something like this, we’re grateful that you want to put her in your project. We do believe she wrote some beautiful music that it meant something to her. She had political ideas, she had funny ideas. I remember one of the last ones…I’ve mentioned already People but there was also, Porcelain in Pink, which I remember her mentioning that as being one that she thought could be successful. I think people as far as a people pleaser, it was one that was entertaining and light-hearted. We would like people to hear more of her music, so the more we get her name out, the better. I’m pretty sure my Uncle Richard is compiling a catalog for her that hopefully will come together.

LK: [19:25]

What else about Kate? Are there any other memories, or what would you like people or future generations that may see this interview to know about her?

CW: [19:40]

For extra comments, I wanted to reflect with my family; my grandmother wanted to mention that she was the life of the party as I said before. I think that she was quoting my Aunt Margaret that she was so entertaining since she was a child. She would hear music and wanted to pick a part and know which instrument was doing this, how did the piece come together, at a young age, as early as ten years old. Always a performer, she did tap dancing, all the siblings all did musicals along the way.

LK: [22:11]

Well, thank you so much for this morning, and inviting me to your beautiful home.
This has been wonderful. We just honor you Kate and we thank her for making that path back in the 70s or 80s when she was active; we’re glad to be able to honor her life.

**Interview with Richard Tannenbaum, husband of Kate Waring**
Liz Knox (LK) | Richard Tannenbaum (RT)

**LK:** [22:57]
Today, I’m with Richard Tannenbaum, and we are continuing our discussion about composer, Kate Waring. Richard, it’s so nice to have you today, and thank you for taking time out to meet with me and to discuss Kate’s life and work.

**RT:** [23:12]
I’m very happy to do so!

**LK:** [23:13]
Richard, you are in Cairo, Egypt right now, is that correct?

**RT:** [23:18]
It is correct. There are reasons which would probably not fit in with this particular discussion. [laughter]

**LK:** [23:30]
Well, it’s nice to know that we can connect no matter where we are…so, the internet connection may be a little touchy today, but we’re going to continue, thank you, again. Richard, could you give us just a brief background of who you are, and how you’re connected to Kate?

**RT:** [23:48]
Okay. It is probably the best idea to tell you where we met because I was working in Paris at the time, as an Englishman would always be doing.
I was working for the American State Department which makes everyone think I was a spy or something. [laughter] So I was working for the U.S. government, and I was living in a nice little flat on the top floor of a _tepchen de bonne_ as they call them in Paris. I was doing a job for the U.S. government in Ghana, so I lent my flat to a Canadian friend of mine and I said to him, “You know, it’s all yours, I’ll be back in three weeks.” I came back basically two days before I was due and I found a party going on. They said it was a surprise party for me but I hadn’t told anybody I was coming home [laughter]. There was one beautiful lady standing on top of my piano playing the flute which attracted my attention. This was Kate Waring in all her glory. If you like, that was the first I had come across the home delivery of a wife. We got together; it was quite exciting. She was a very beautiful young lady. We got married within the year and lived in Paris for a little while, then we moved straight to Germany. She was happy to move to Germany because of course, music and composition was far more active in Germany at the time than in Paris and France. There was a lot going on in Paris but not quite like in Germany where every city has an orchestra, an opera house, a lot of activity. So, she was willing to up-root her French Parisian life and write her PhD for the Sorbonne, while living and starting a new life in Germany. We moved to Bonn, where I had setup a computer company, so we were in the center of Bonn; she was very happy. It was very quiet; she was able to write her thesis which was a ballet based on the story of Actaeon and Diana. Actaeon who observed Diana bathing, was struck by her and turned into a stag, and was then hunted by his own hunter, and was then destroyed, as some of these gods tend to do. [laughter] So, that was her full-length ballet, which I think confused Sorbonne a little bit; I don’t think they had ever come across a PhD of which was a creative work. They are only used to people analyzing other people’s creative works. I think that posed an interesting problem for the Sorbonne, but I think they got over it eventually.
because she did an analysis of her work which was plain enough. That ballet, although totally orchestrated, has never been performed by an orchestra. It has a two piano, four hand reduction, which actually did see the light of day, at a concert a few years later in Germany. We then were located in Germany; she was being very productive, always writing music and I supposed the 22 years we were together, I would say she was happiest when she was in the middle of writing. I think just like all creative people, when not creating, they become somewhat depressed and only get back to a good frame of mind when they get back into a creative mode. In Bonn, she was writing quite a lot and involved with a lot of musicians who were happy to play chamber music and so every year we had what was called “American Music Week” …There is an association of American music overseas, I think, I can’t remember what it was called immediately…but she became chairman of the organization and organized a concert of American music every year, to which a lot of her friends played some of her music. She was hosting others, but it was a good vehicle I think that was a huge energy process of producing these festivals and getting it all together, the place, the audience, but we had a lot of cooperation from America house and the American government in Bonn. They had an embassy where they collaboratively help to publicize, organize, and be part of the organization…I think possibly contributing a little bit financially to getting it over the media. In conjunction with her creative pursuits and getting these music links and hassles and politics that occur, we had probably four months of nervous energy, preparing these concerts and three months of analysis of what people thought of them. [laughter] You shouldn’t look at the critics too much because they can undermine confidence sometimes, especially a famous nasty critic once said…this stayed with her for a long time, she was described as a [sic] “housewife composer.”
LK: [31:32]

Oh, boy!

RT: [31:35]

So, the guy was always critical of any woman, so he was to be ignored. It couldn’t be taken, by most people he was ignored.

LK: [31:50]

At least we can be thankful for that!

RT: [31:55]

She wrote quite wonderful music based on a piece by an American writer called $A*B*C*$, *America Before Columbus*. The music involved my four-year-old son and eight-year-old daughter. My son was on someone’s shoulders and was playing the giraffe, and had a wonderful line to say which was, “Giraffes can’t speak” because he was asked, “Why aren’t you saying anything?” [laughter] Silly things like this. I was singing one of the main roles and it was a wonderful production. It was a very family-oriented thing and that was a lot of fun. She wrote a few others which got produced. *Rapunzel* was set for coloratura as Rapunzel; we had a fabulous singer for that…that went down very well. Then she did a few more operas which you probably have written down about that. All of those got pretty good reviews and then in the latter stages of life, she got back into writing chamber operas. Just before she died, she had about three chamber offers produced in Cambridge and those worked out fine, too. That’s a potted version of the music and her creativity. As they say, she played the flute; she was very enthusiastic about that. In Paris she did lots of flute concerts and she was working with Monsieur Loewenguth, who was a big mover in youth music. Kate was involved with that to a considerable extent. Some things are sort of itching to come out but I can’t remember. [laughter]
Who she played flute with and who she was accompanied by, things like this. She has had a lot of big supporters in the past. Some wonderful musicians have graced our doorstep and played in our house. Basically, I think it influenced our children to become good musicians. I was singing in Bonn for ten years; I was in the chorus there. I got both Sam and Laura, Sam being the younger one, he was the youngest member ever of the children’s chorus in the Bonn Opera, at five years old. Laura actually went on stage and was a princess and sang. Both of them had big exposures to music, very much with the support of Kate who got them involved. Sam is now a professional musician; he is a brilliant almost-concert pianist, limited only by his repertoire. Laura is an equally good musician and played the keyboard and sang for a pop group. I think she is getting back now to her music. I think her granddaughter, who is 15 months old, is showing signs of enjoying music as well.

**LK:** [36:39]

Wonderful! The legacy continues! One thing that struck me as I was looking through Kate’s discography was the amount of music that she wrote.

**RT:** [36:57]

She wrote about 120 works.

**LK:** [37:00]

I wasn’t surprised, but I was impressed by the number of pieces. As I tried to sift through her music, I found some of her flute music. I came across a piece, *Alapana* for flute, cello, and piano which was just gorgeous. I love her harmonic language; it’s intriguing and captivating. You can’t stop listening, it’s wonderful! I was curious, can you give us any insight into how well her music is still being circulated? Are there areas where that could be improved?
I did see her name on many CDs with very prolific composers like Libby Larsen. I do see that it’s there, but I was just curious of what your outlook is on that.

**RT: [38:11]**

Well, my outlook, first of all just a comment on the content of the music you’ve been listening to. I would classify nearly all of her music to having a serious element but with a lot of humor. I think you’ll always find a movement or two amongst anything serious, enlightened and amusing, or makes a joke somewhere. One of the characteristics of Kate was that she had a good sense of humor, and that came out in the music very much. I think if you listen to any of her pieces, especially *Variations*, I loved that piece. One of the pieces that I did really like was the setting of *Remember the Earth Whose Skin You Are*. That is an absolutely fabulous thing, it would be perfect for Cara to sing! [laughter]. As for waving the flag and trying to get things played, I have some friends who play in the Symphony Orchestra of Portugal. I’m speaking to them, trying to diffuse her music there. It needs time and energy to do anything like marketing, and you come across dead ends all the time, but the first stage to getting her music out there is to get this library done. It’s not good enough just having a list of 120 works, I’ve got to have the physical content to say, if somebody wants one of those, that I can send it to them. There are some electronic versions…in Finale which is what she used to write all of her music with, so I have some electronic versions of that. I’m not a Finale person so I’ve never got into that area, so I need to sort of speak to somebody who is. It was quite a long distance for me to get into the marketing of the music. The first step to doing that is actually getting this catalog and the library together. I think once I’ve got that and people start trying her pieces, and due to the nature of the music, many of the pieces have got flutes in them, so I’m going to buy a flautist to have a look at these things and get a taste for it and say, “We want more.”
Jennifer Higdon Biography

Pulitzer Prize and two-time Grammy-winner Jennifer Higdon (b. Brooklyn, NY, December 31, 1962) taught herself to play flute at the age of 15 and began formal musical studies at 18, with an even later start in composition at the age of 21. Despite these obstacles, Jennifer has become a major figure in contemporary Classical music. Her works represent a wide range of genres, from orchestral to chamber, to wind ensemble, as well as vocal, choral and opera. Her music has been hailed by Fanfare Magazine as having “the distinction of being at once complex, sophisticated but readily accessible emotionally”, with the Times of London citing it as “…traditionally rooted yet imbued with integrity and freshness.” The League of American Orchestras reports that she is one of America’s most frequently performed composers. Higdon’s list of commissioners is extensive and includes The Philadelphia Orchestra, The Chicago Symphony, The Atlanta Symphony, The Cleveland Orchestra, The Minnesota Orchestra, The Pittsburgh Symphony, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, as well such groups as the Tokyo String Quartet, the Lark Quartet, Eighth Blackbird, and the President’s Own Marine Band. She has also written works for such artists as baritone Thomas Hampson, pianists Yuja Wang and Gary Graffman, violinists Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, Jennifer Koh and Hilary Hahn. Her first
opera, *Cold Mountain*, won the prestigious International Opera Award for Best World Premiere in 2016; the first American opera to do so in the award’s history. Performances of *Cold Mountain* sold out its premiere run in Santa Fe, North Carolina, and Philadelphia (becoming the third highest selling opera in Opera Philadelphia’s history). Upcoming commissions include a chamber opera for Opera Philadelphia, a string quartet for the Apollo Chamber Players, a double percussion concerto for the Houston Symphony, an orchestral suite for the Made in America project, and a flute concerto for the National Flute Associations’ 50th anniversary. Higdon received the 2010 Pulitzer Prize in Music for her *Violin Concerto*, with the committee citing the work as “a deeply engaging piece that combines flowing lyricism with dazzling virtuosity.” She has also received awards from the Guggenheim Foundation, the American Academy of Arts & Letters, the Koussevitzky Foundation, the Pew Fellowship in the Arts, The Independence Foundation, the NEA, and ASCAP. As winner of the Van Cliburn Piano Competition’s American Composers Invitational, Higdon’s *Secret & Glass Gardens* was performed by the semi-finalists during the competition. Higdon has been a featured composer at many festivals including Aspen, Tanglewood, Vail, Norfolk, Grand Teton, and Cabrillo. She has served as Composer-in-Residence with several orchestras, including the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Fort Worth Symphony. She was honored to serve as the Creative Director of the Boundless Series for the Cincinnati Symphony’s 2012-13 season. During the 2016-17 and 2017-18 academic years Higdon served as the prestigious Barr Laureate Scholar at the University of Missouri Kansas City. Most recently, Higdon received the prestigious Nemmers Prize from Northwestern University which is awarded to contemporary classical composers of exceptional achievement who have significantly influenced the field of composition. Beginning in 2018, Higdon will complete two residences at the Bienen School of
Music as the Nemmers Prize recipient. Also, in the 2018-19 season, Higdon will be in residence at University of Texas, Austin, as part of the Eddie Medora King Award. Higdon enjoys more than 200 performances a year of her works. Her orchestral work, *Blue Cathedral*, is one of the most performed contemporary orchestral works in the repertoire, more than 600 performances since its premiere in 2000. Her works have been recorded on over 60 CDs. Higdon has twice won the Grammy for Best Contemporary Classical Composition: first for her *Percussion Concerto* in 2010 and in 2018 for her *Viola Concerto*. Dr. Higdon received a Bachelor’s Degree in Music from Bowling Green State University, an Artist Diploma from The Curtis Institute of Music, and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. She has been awarded honorary doctorates from the Hartt School and Bowling Green State University. Dr. Higdon currently holds the Rock Chair in Composition at The Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Her music is published exclusively by Lawdon Press.33

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www.jenniferhigdon.com
Higdon Interview
Liz Knox (LK) | Jennifer Higdon (JH)

LK: [6:00]

Today’s date is January 21st, 2019, and this is Nevertheless, She Composed, a Contemporary Video Anthology of Women Composers of the Twenty-first Century. This is NSC-10 and I can’t think of a better way to break into the double digits of NSC than with Dr. Jennifer Higdon. Welcome! We are just so excited to have you on NSC today and just want to thank you so much for taking time out of your unbelievably busy schedule to do this interview.

JH: [06:38]

I’m honored, actually, and I’m flattered that you feel it’s important! [laughter]

LK: [06:43]

So, as I was just telling you, when we rolled out NSC and were sharing it in our smaller circles, I was bombarded by you! The first name out of everyone’s mouth, “Are you going to interview Jennifer Higdon?” And I said, “Whoa, whoa, whoa!”

JH: [07:02]

I can’t believe that people are that enthusiastic, that is kind of amazing!

LK: [07:07]

I said, “We’ll get there, but I’ve got to figure this out. I have to figure out what I’m doing before we go to Dr. Higdon.” [laughter]

LK: [07:15]

And so, it’s not that you weren’t at the top of the list, but it’s just so exciting to break into the double digits of NSC and it’s an honor for all us to be here. I want to say thank you to Eric Sheffield today for running our sound and video for us. A great, great service to us both. So, this is an unscripted interview.
I don’t ask necessarily prepared questions, but we follow the form of past, present and future. So, a nice biographical landscape of your life. It opens up the door for you to talk about whatever you want to talk about, what’s important to you, what’s on your mind, and so on. Before we go to the past, I love connections and I love building relationships. I did some digging and we talked about this a little bit, but I found a few connections that I thought I’d share that connects us in some ways. This is our first-time meeting in person. Besides NSC bringing us together, I found this picture. Here we go, and I like to give shout outs to people that were a big part of my life, too. Here we have Master Sergeant at the time, Christopher Rose. I’m sure he has enjoyed many, many promotions since then. Dr. Jennifer Higdon in the middle, and this is Colonel, now Professor Michael J. Colburn. This is from 2009, the premiere of your percussion concerto with the U.S. Marine Band.

JH: [09:03]

The “President’s Own”! Yeah.

LK: [09:05]

I think it mentioned something about you looking very “civilian.” Colonel, now Professor Michael Colburn at Butler University was my instrumental conducting teacher through my Master’s program at Butler. So, I really, really treasure and will always treasure this picture. That’s the most recent one. We’re going to travel back in time. So, we’re going to go back. That was 2009; this is also 2009. I was a student at the University of Indianapolis, a little “older” student, let’s put it that way. Your Violin Concerto premiered with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra on February 6, 2009, under the baton of one of my heroes, [Maestro] Mario Venzago.

JH: [09:58]

A sweetie, truly a sweetie. A gentle soul.
LK: [09:59]

Oh, he was such an influence. And I was there!

JH: [10:06]

Wow, that is amazing!

LK: [10:08]

That was also the semester I started formal composition studies with John Berners at the University of Indianapolis. That piece had a profound effect on me. In fact, one of my first two pieces was for violin and piano.

JH: [10:28]

That’s totally cool.

LK: [10:29]

It was really incredible.

JH: [10:30]

I always think of that as a watershed moment for me because it was the birth of the piece that won the Pulitzer. A violin concerto is a big thing for any composer. We look at a composer’s piano concertos, their violin concertos and operas, it feels like you get judged on those three things. But I remember being...I was pretty nervous...although it was in the hands of Hillary Hahn...so!

LK: [10:53]

Oh, my goodness! Just unbelievable. And then traveling even further back...this was pretty obscure, but in 1996 at the Indiana State University Festival of Contemporary Music, your piece *Shine* was written for the Oregon Symphony, the 100th anniversary of the Oregon Symphony, and the Morton Gould Commemorative.
I was at Indiana State University as an 18-year old freshman, from 1995-1996. I did not catch this festival because I was a performance major at the time. I didn’t finish at ISU but I was there that year. I saw that and I thought, “Wow.” But I had a profound interest in composing, even at that age. And I thought, “What if I had been at this festival?”

**JH:** [11:49]

That’s kind of amazing!

**LK:** [11:50]

How would that have changed my life? [playful banter] So anyway, those were just some of the connections that I found.

**JH:** [12:03]

That was really early in my career. I mean, I was like two years out of graduate school.

**LK:** [12:08]

Oh, wow!

**JH:** [12:10]

That was the first major commission I had after graduating. So if I think back I can draw a line...how I got the violin concerto from *Shine.* Actually, you can kind of see it clearly.

**LK:** [12:24]

So those connections, that’s what we’re looking for, it’s just so important, from growing composers and students and so great, great stuff. That’s all I have to say! I’m going to turn it over to you. We just want you to go back as far as you want to go. We were talking about the hundreds, maybe thousands of interviews you have done...but if you think there’s something that you’ve missed or something that you want to share differently, you just go right ahead.
And if you think of something I’m missing...I have to admit, sometimes I can’t remember what I’ve talked about! But, my beginning was really unusual just because I was self-taught on flute. I just picked up a flute at home. It was my mom’s flute; it was a pawnshop flute that she got for one hundred dollars or something and I found it in the attic. There was a beginning band method book there and I taught myself to play. I joined the high school band, this was in East Tennessee...which was primarily marching band, actually thinking back on this, mostly a marching competition band, but we had concert band in the off-season when football wasn’t happening. But, I loved playing in band so much, that kind of a camaraderie, that I decided I wanted to major in music. I didn’t know anything about music, though. I knew zero classical repertoire. I grew up in a household that had a lot of rock and roll. My dad was a commercial artist who worked at home, he had a studio at home, so we always had...let’s see it would’ve been the Rolling Stones and Bob Marley Reggae, The Beatles. The Beatles were a big influence for me, but it wasn’t really classical. So, my way to classical had more to do with playing the flute, but I really didn't know a lot of repertoire. Now when I look back on how little I knew, thinking I would go off and major in music, I should not have...I don’t know what I was thinking! But it’s good I didn’t know that. This sounds funny, but the level of cluelessness kind of helped me dive in headfirst into what was actually a much bigger pool of water than I had originally thought it would be. Which is kind of an interesting thing. My parents have always raised me to think, “Well, you could just go out there and do it, if you want to do it,” you just have to figure out how to make something happen. At no point in time did they ever say I couldn’t do something.
LK: [14:48]

So, maybe that is an interesting point for current professors and teachers. Sometimes you say, oh, no, it’s too late. You know, the kid is 18 years old and they’re like, “oh, no, it’s too late.”

JH: [14:59]

Yeah, it’s not too late. When I go to talk to schools, I often talk to the students about the fact that they’re in reality, all a lot further along than I was at their age. Always. I mean, always. When I entered Bowling Green, I had to start in all the remedial classes...this is an interval, this is a chord, this is how you spell a major chord, a minor chord. So, I was at the very bottom; I didn’t even know the Beethoven symphonies. I didn’t know any classical music. The thing was, I knew I loved the music; I felt like a whole world was opening up. I’d always done creative stuff as a kid growing up because my Dad was an artist. But I have to admit, classical music just wasn’t it. So, I started teaching myself when I was in high school, and I enjoyed marching band. That was the main thing I enjoyed was the marching band, kind of the camaraderie. I went off to Bowling Green. I applied to a lot different schools and that was the only one I got into. There was a phenomenal flute teacher there, Judy Bentley, and she was very influential. I knew absolutely nothing. I mean, Mrs. Bentley must have thought, “oh, boy”, this kid coming from east Tennessee. But she didn’t say anything, she just started assigning me pieces. I took all the remedial classes. I mean, I was at the bottom. I think if you took all the kids that entered Bowling Green that year, I was the one with the greatest level of just ignorance in general. But, I had the enthusiasm, I was disciplined, had curiosity, and I just loved learning about music. It felt to me like an incredible world opening up. So, I dug in those times when I was discouraged. I just could not do ear training to save my life. I couldn’t remember harmonic progressions too well either. [laughter] I just kind of kept going.
Every time something happened, I’d get knocked down, I didn’t do as well as I thought I should have, I just got back up and kept at it. I was doing a flute performance degree; I wasn’t in composition, but I must have said something to Judy Bentley. I think if I remember correctly, actually...not many people have heard this story. In high school, I did a little bit of dabbling, very primitive dabbling in composition, and by primitive, I mean not a lot…sixteen measures or something. When I went in to do my audition at Bowling Green during my senior year of high school, I took in this little manuscript page that had these sixteen measures. I showed it to the gentleman who was Dean at the time, Richard Kennell. He looked at it, he nodded and said, “Oh, this kind of reminds me of a composer, do you know who Stravinsky is?” And I was like, “No”. [laughter] Had no idea who Stravinsky was, now, looking back on what I took in to him, there was no resemblance to Stravinsky at all! Looking back at that I think, "Holy cow, I didn’t even know who Stravinsky was." I had no idea. I remind Richard Kennell of that every once in a while, “Remember when I came and I had no idea who Stravinsky was”, but I was 18 wanting to major in music, really coming from ground zero. But I stayed consistent and persistent in my learning. I must’ve picked up on something because she had me write a little piece. I think I must have been a sophomore in college. Harvey Sollberger was coming in to do a flute masterclass. Normally with a flute masterclass, the teacher tells you what to prepare. You’re going to play for whoever was coming in. She says, “I want you to write a piece,” and I had no idea how to do that. But, this is the thing about Judy Bentley, she’s really good at picking up on certain things in students. She showed me how to do a six-note...it wasn’t a twelve-note row. Maybe I couldn’t handle twelve notes. [laughter] So, I did a little piece for flute and piano called *Night Creatures*. But that one thing, I played the flute part, that one experience was really amazing. The piece isn’t outstanding at all.
Pretty, yuck. There’s not a lot there in the piano part, but I had a really good time doing it. It was literally like a spark that just kind of started to smolder and then the fire grew. So, I finished my performance degree, but I kept writing and I think approaching my last year, I knew I was going to want to switch over to composition for the advanced degrees. While I was at Bowling Green, I met a young conductor who came in to take over the orchestra there. He was twenty-two, just out of Curtis, Robert Spano; kind of amazing that we met there. He had the orchestra and I asked to take his graduate conducting class. He was a phenomenal teacher, just amazing, Just incredible! I learned a lot and I remember when I applied to lots of schools again, I didn’t get into a lot of schools because I didn’t have a very big composition portfolio, and I was now applying in composition. But somehow, I got into Curtis, I think it was a year that they didn’t have many people apply. I remember Robert Spano telling me...I said, “Alright, I got into this school, this school and this school...which one should I go to?” And he said, “You have to go to Curtis.” And I said, “Really?” I remember I went into his office and he went over to the door and closed the door, says, “You must go. You have to go to Curtis. That is the right choice.” He was so adamant about it...I knew he was such a good teacher for him to say that, then I thought, “OK, this must be a smart move.” Some of the other teachers in the school didn’t think it was a good move. They said it’s not really a school, I don’t know why they said that...it’s a really good school. [laughter] But, you know, sometimes people don’t have much of an idea, right? So, I went to Curtis and I didn’t see Robert Spano again, it must have been 10 years or so. It was another 15 years before we worked together again. I went off to Curtis and again, I was still catching up to all the students there who were pretty brilliant; had been playing instruments since they were three. They had theory and counterpoint ear training. So, I was back still in the lower ends of the theory classes, but I plowed through and I was a composition major there.
I was still playing flute, but I was a comp major. I took a year off in between the Artist Diploma from Curtis and graduate school. Then I went to the University of Pennsylvania to study with George Crumb. I got a master’s and a doctorate, but even that was a struggle for me. I was still struggling through the classes, catching up on stuff and the dreaded PhD, drop-the-needle-exams. When you grow up on rock and roll, you have a lot of repertoire to learn. I think I took those exams four or five times because I just didn’t know standard repertoire. This is not the way my brain was wired and it’s not what I had been around. I spent years just going through standard repertoire to the point when I finished the doctorate, I couldn’t stand to even listen to standard repertoire. But it was interesting. When I was at Penn, I did go up and ask the conductor who had the wind ensemble if I could come in and conduct rehearsal.

LK: [22:03]

Well, I have to tell you, I’m a little selfish because of the conductor side of me is interested! Because all of the interviews that I’ve watched with you, I mean, you touch on it but I’m a little curious!

JH: [22:18]

Most people don’t know about my conducting side!

LK: [22:24]

Honestly, that gets sort of skipped over and I know a little bit. So, I guess they’re always just asking about composition side of you, and maybe I’m being a little selfish here because of my conductor’s side, so how did that happen?

JH: [22:39]

It was an amazing experience. First of all, my undergrad, I had a good band director at
Bowling Green, Mark Kelly, who was just phenomenal! He’s legendary ...he passed last year... but he was a legendary teacher and has educated literally hundreds of band directors that are everywhere. And people often say to me now, “You studied under Mark Kelly?” Yes. I played in the band under Mr. Kelly and I had conducting under him because everyone was required to take conducting. Spano came in and he was doing this graduate conducting class...it was like a seminar. I was still an undergrad so I remember the first day of class, I poked my head into his office and said, “Mr. Spano, can I take your class?” and he said, “Yeah!” And it was incredible! It was hardcore training like you do with orchestra conductors. He would play Bach chorales; you’d have to identify the mistakes. You’d have to say, what they would play wrong, what it was supposed to be, you had to play three voices and sing one voice and with four different clefs, which is fairly standard. He put us up in front of the orchestra. This was interesting...I had forgotten about this. No one ever asks me about the conducting stuff! Mark Kelly took me into his office one day and said, “You seem like a really natural conductor, have you had training?” And I said, “No”. And I had not. I don’t know. Maybe my gestures? I’m not really sure what prompted him to say that but studying with Spano was interesting. First of all, it was a good example of a professional musician. I was impressed by his preparation for everything, and I think all the things he said to us have stayed in my head. He was always telling the conductors, “Have the score in your head, don’t have your head in the score.” The kinds of things a lot of people say, but I think it was his intensity, and the fact that he puts us up on a podium and he had us conduct, and he gave us comments. He had a lot of expectation, which is pretty amazing considering that he was 22; he was just out of school, himself.\footnote{In 1985 (at the age of 22), Robert Spano left Curtis to take his first professional position, Director of Orchestral Activities, at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio. \url{https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Spano}}
The other thing I noticed: he really made that orchestra sound incredible. I had been at Bowling Green for a while and so I knew what the orchestra sounded like; I’d been in the orchestra. But when he got up on the podium, it actually sounded different immediately. Not just after a time of working with him, there was a noticeable difference. I realized how important the person is on the podium. You have to know the scores really well.

LK: [25:03]
Right. I’m just kind of passionate about composition students having conducting experience. I know they’re usually required to take a basic conducting course, but maybe dig deeper!

JH: [25:19]
It augments your musicianship in general.

LK: [25:23]
Absolutely, because you are considering line by line. I was really fascinated by that.

JH: [25:30]
Curtis let me actually conduct my orchestra pieces while I was there!

LK: [25:34]
I saw that!

JH: [25:36]
They called Spano up and they said, “Can she really conduct? I mean, you know, this may not be the best thing”. He said, “Oh, yes, she can!” So, it was good, but very scary. A good experience, but really scary. When I went to Penn, I’m not sure what prompted me to go…the conductor of the orchestra and the wind ensemble was not really connected to the music
department. The music department is basically musicology, theory, and composition. They don’t have a conducting or instrumental program there. But because it is an Ivy League, they have all these kids who are pre-med, who want to play in orchestras. They’ve been playing since they were really young. And so, Claude White was his name, he let me actually take over quite a few things. Then he started inviting me to do pieces on programs. I graduated from Penn and he left before the school year started. I had just graduated. So, they called me and said, do you want to take the orchestra and the wind ensemble for a year? And I was like, yeah! I mean, kind of an amazing experience.

**JH:** [26:38]

Jennifer Higdon, the conductor!

**JH:** [26:39]

I know! There are people out there that only know me as a conductor! Believe it or not, people who were in my band or my orchestra come up to me and they say, “So where are you conducting?” I say, “I’m not conducting anymore.” I still get this. They’ll say, “Why aren’t you conducting?”

**JH:** [26:56]

Yeah. When was the last time you’ve conducted?

**JH:** [26:59]

Good question! I had to do a little bit during a rehearsal in Santa Fe for my album, but I usually don’t tell people about it because people ask for it. [playful banter] It was amazing, auditioning all the kids and getting them in their seats and figuring out the repertoire. I had a tendency to want to do newer repertoire. I mean, not even the newest, it was usually Copland, Barber, things I thought the kids could handle. The school wasn’t used to that. They would say,
“Well, we don’t really have a budget for new music,” which actually has ties to my decision to self-publish. This is something most people don’t know about. I had so much trouble running music, being able to afford it when I was conducting. I only conducted for one year because I realized in studying, I could hear Robert Spano saying, “You’ve got to have that music in your head,” but I realized that I was also learning standard rep, keeping all that stuff in my head, while trying to get a composing career going; it was a lot to balance. I didn’t feel like I should be on the podium unless I was 100 percent committed. But the year that I spent doing that, which kind of helped me come to that realization, was a revelation in how hard it was to get music from publishing houses. That year, I was still playing flute and I did some playing for the Chamber Music Society of the Lincoln Center. I did a program, Edgar Meyer and I did a program; it was repertoire that had the composers playing, but it was to be really hard repertoire. So, I did my piece Rapid Fire up there and they called said, “We want to put this Elliott Carter piece on the program. Are you game to do that?”

JH: [28:42]

And I was like, “Oh, sure, yeah, I’ll do it, but you’ve got to give me the music in advance. I can’t prepare this in two weeks, I don’t play as regularly as a regular flutist would.” I went to the library to check out the music and Boosey & Hawkes was the publisher, and we couldn’t get the music from Boosey. Actually...it wasn’t even the library that had it...the Chamber Music Society had some Xeroxes. They sent me the Xeroxes, but we couldn’t get the actual music from the publisher. Actually...it wasn’t even the library that had it...the difficulty...Elliott Carter is not an unknown composer, I mean, I was kind of shocked. You need that music in advance. So, I ended up playing off of Xerox’s because we couldn’t get it from the publisher. But, those two things and this meeting with Philip Glass, in my undergrad during
a new music festival, he talked about keeping your copyright. The combination of these things started kind of coalescing in my head. I thought, “You know what, maybe I should just handle this stuff.” I don’t want my music to be unaffordable to people at university levels who want to do a work. So, it all came down to that. But the conducting full-time, I think was in 1994 or 1995, that was the last time I really conducted with any kind of regularity. I get asked every once in a while, and I’ve had to step in a couple of times when there have been emergencies. A conductor was in an accident on the way to rehearsal so I took over the rehearsal, and occasionally in universities I’ll conduct a chamber performance or something that needs some sort of guidance. Every once in a while, I’ll go and do something with a band.

LK: [30:25]

I double majored in my Master’s in instrumental conducting and composition. I’m completely on board with you about trying to do both. It was the hardest part of my life. It was wonderful, everything went great, but that was just definitely the hardest thing I’ve ever done. So, I agree with you. I switched over to composition full time, but I get so many conducting opportunities still. It’s wonderful. I just kind of conduct on the side and so, I’m just really passionate. I think it’s just great to be able to have both skills at a decent level.

JH: [31:00]

It’s a good thing to do because, I often say composers need to experience what it’s like to be on the other side of the podium to see either the podium or the music-stand one way or the other. We are assembling music in a rehearsal setting because it causes you to think about preparation of parts differently. Even the score or how the score is laid out. I mean, you know that if you’re staying at the podium, you’ve got to have those rehearsal numbers big enough so they can glance down and say quickly what measure to start at. Because if they have to stop and
lean down and look for a measure because the composer thinks it looks nice, that’s not helping anybody and you’re losing time in the rehearsals.

**L.K.** [31:36]

That’s a great point. Oh, see, I knew we would find plenty to talk about! I knew there had to be something that was new. [playful banter/laughter] The one thing I didn’t do was Google if there were videos of you conducting!

**J.H.** [31:57]

I don’t think there are any videos!

**L.K.** [31:59]

Do you have any secret ones? [laughter]

**J.H.** [32:00]

I don’t think that I actually do have any! I don’t think I had the presence of mind to record myself. It’s an amazing thing though to feel...this is going to sound funny, but to feel beats and time in the air. Sometimes when I’m composing, I will sit down and figure out how does this feel?

**L.K.** [32:27]

Absolutely. If you can’t conduct your own music, someone else is really not going to be able to conduct your music. It’s a very good tool.

**J.H.** [32:42]

Absolutely. Absolutely. You’ve got information I don’t think I’ve ever talked about! [laughter].
LK: [32:49]

Fabulous! That’s kind of the one reason we leave these open ended with just past, present and future because we find then if it’s not so specific, maybe the brain recalls memories.

JH: [33:03]

That’s it exactly!

LK: [33:04]

So, that’s wonderful! How about we segue into the present? Today...oh, what a fabulous thing. It’s Martin Luther King Day and we are in beautiful downtown Atlanta, Georgia. What an amazing, amazing day. And so, what are you doing here? [laughter] What’s going on in your life?

JH: [33:32]

Over the past couple of days, I’ve been judging a composition competition called *Rapido*, which is a national competition where people write pieces...they’re given instrumentation and they have two weeks to write a little chamber work with that instrumentation; usually a short work around six minutes. They do it regionally first; they get a lot of people that apply, and they do it. Then they take the winners of the different regions and they bring them basically to Atlanta for a second round. Before they arrive here, two weeks before they arrive, they’re given, I believe, it’s the instrumentation and a duration, again. Yesterday’s competition was for flute, clarinet, and cello; everyone wrote for that combo, short works based on some form of dance. So, what happened, basically, we picked one. They were live performed by members of the Atlanta Symphony...the Atlanta Chamber Players, which I think draws its players from the Atlanta Symphony. Robert Spano and Michael Gandolfi...Robert Spano was there. He’s the music director there. But it was interesting to hear all of these; everyone had a different language and
the way they handled the instruments was different. So, we judge it and the winner gets a commission with the Atlanta Symphony. They also get a commission to expand their chamber piece and they get a residency at an artist colony in Georgia. So, it’s a pretty nice opportunity. That was this weekend and now I’m about to start rehearsals for my viola concerto with the Atlanta Symphony this week. I have had a long relationship with them since 2000. Robert Spano had just gotten the job here. We finally met up, I think it was in the late 90s; he came through and was conducting in Philly as a guest conductor, and I went backstage and saw him. It was amazing to see him! At that time, I was teaching at Curtis, I’d started teaching again around, I think it was 1994, 1995, or something like that. I had finished at Penn, and Curtis had a 75th anniversary and they wanted to commission a couple of their alumni, so they asked me for an orchestra piece. That’s when I wrote Blue Cathedral and they came to me and said, “Oh, we’ve engaged with our alumni; Robert Spano is going to conduct the premiere!” They didn’t know, I don’t think Gary Graffman realized, there was a connection there. I said, “Oh, that’s great!” But by some strange coincidence, Robert had just gotten this orchestra. He hadn’t started yet, he was getting ready to. I know when he came to conduct the premiere in Philly of Blue Cathedral, we got on a plane the next day after the premier and he was doing a big publicity launch. So, by an amazing coincidence, nothing that anyone could have planned out; we met in Bowling Green. This orchestra was doing a lot of recordings at the time for Telarc. So, he comes on board as the music director, which means he’s going to be recording. He says to me, “We want to record Blue Cathedral.” I mean, it’s amazing because there weren’t that many orchestras recording in the United States. But for him, who I had had a decade and a half earlier as a teacher, to have this position where there’s a label that records them, you can’t plan this stuff at all.
LK: [36:38]

If you’re a student watching this, this is a big deal! I think, especially when you’re going through your education and you think, “I’m on my own. When we’re graduated, I’m doing my thing”...you have got to foster those relationships!

JH: [36:57]

They’re everything!

LK: [36:58]

Because, you don’t know who’s going to be appointed where.

JH: [37:01]

It takes usually 10 to 15 years. I discovered this even with Hilary Hahn when I wrote the violin concerto for her, I think she’d been out of Curtis ten years at that point. I’ve noticed that it usually takes that long, but here’s the thing, I think someone told me this: You don’t ever truly know, you don’t know what thing you do is going to make an impression on someone down the road and affect them. They may come back and ask for a piece or to come talk at a university. It could be anything, but half of my life has been accidental path crossings. You want every interaction to be a good interaction because you don’t know which one of these things is going to turn into something that’s real.

LK: [37:43]

Absolutely. It’s just such an incredible point to make. That’s fabulous. Your relationship with him is incredible.

JH: [37:53]

I know...it’s like, a singular mind. He was so young. When he was at Bowling Green, I remember he had applied to Tanglewood. He couldn’t get in. I applied to Tanglewood.
We couldn’t get in. Neither one of us, we were both young and inexperienced...which sounds funny now because he runs the Aspen Music Festival. [laughter].

**LK:** [38:10]

Well, that gives everyone hope that, you know, you just try, try, try again.

**JH:** [38:15]

I’ve had some teachers confess to me that they don’t remember me coming through their schools. I was not a standout, not the “A” star. [laughter] But, you know, I don’t think I have extraordinary talent; I think I have some talent. I work really hard and I’m really persistent about it, and that makes a big difference. I tell students that all the time. Now, a lot of times they’re a lot farther along than I was at their age or their level. I mean, it’s amazing how much farther along they are. I was thinking about that yesterday during the competition. These guys were really...they were amazing! They all were really high level. And I’m thinking, “Boy, when I was at each of their ages, I wasn’t nearly at this level”, but I stuck with it and kind of kept at the learning and growing. Even now, I feel like there’s so much to learn. I have so much to learn.

**LK:** [39:04]

Yeah, I will be quite honest with you. I’m two days away from my PhD general exams when I get back and I feel like I know nothing. I’ve been studying for ten straight years. But, that’s the beauty of music... It’s just ever evolving and so much...

**JH:** [39:20]

There is so much! [laughter]
LK: [39:22]

One of the professors said, “You’ll never know more than what you know right now in studying for those things.” But that’s incredible.

JH: [39:30]

It’s actually an amazing journey. I mean...even with the performances here in Atlanta, my harp concerto is being done in Oklahoma this week. Helsinki Philharmonic is actually doing one of my orchestra pieces. We also have my tuba concerto which is being done by Curtis this week. So, I have seven orchestras doing works this week.

LK: [39:51]

Is that Craig Knox?

JH: [39:52]

Yes, it is, Craig! [playful banter/laughter]

LK: [39:54]

Yeah, I saw it! When I first saw him, I was like, “Oh, another Knox!”

JH: [40:00]

Are you all distantly related?

LK: [40:01]

I’m starting to get that question lately! No, but I was a tuba performance major!

JH: [40:06]

No way!

LK: [40:08]

Way! [laughter] Yeah!
**JH:** [40:08]

Ok, so I have to tell Craig this when I go home for the concert next week!

**LK:** [40:12]

I think we might be Facebook friends now. I haven’t had time to reach out to him, but I thought that was really cute.

**JH:** [40:19]

I wrote that tuba concerto for him!

**LK:** [40:22]

I know! I remember that! I’m a retired tuba player, that was in my undergrad. But, I loved it!

**JH:** [40:38]

It’s fun to write for that instrument; it was an interesting challenge. I’m like, “They need some repertoire. They need some concertos!”

**LK:** [40:44]

Some always say, “I can’t believe you haven’t written more for tuba?” When you play, I think it’s harder to write for that instrument. I know I want to do it, but as I said, you know, I want to have time to really use the strengths of the instrument and really have time to sink my teeth into that. So yeah. That’s great.

**JH:** [41:05]

Craig was great though. I’ve been talking to him about this...what you should and shouldn’t do for that instrument. It was different than writing like a violin concerto. I mean, the thing about the embouchure, not overtaxing the player, and enough time to breathe. It’s a bigger bore, more air.
LK: [41:24]
Which is why I’m retired! [laughter] Anything else in the present that comes to mind?

JH: [41:36]
Oh, there’s so much going on!

LK: [41:38]
I can’t even imagine; your schedule just blows my mind.

JH: [41:39]
It’s a great schedule to have. I’m within days of turning in half of an opera, a chamber opera. My second one. I think I’m supposed to turn it in three days.

LK: [41:52]
You know, the one thing when people in our circle knew I was coming to interview you, the people that we share as friendships…Mara Gibson sends her regards, by the way!

JH: [42:08]
Oh, Mara, she’s so great!

LK: [42:08]
Everyone says that in all of your interviews...you’re so down to earth.

JH: [42:19]
This is the more important aspect of one’s life. I think someone asked me that... what’s the most important lesson you’ve learned through all of this music and I’m like, “be kind!”

LK: [42:28]
I agree! I’ve actually had comments that, “you are too kind.” [laughter] There’s no such thing! There is no such thing. I don’t care what it might hold you back in, and it never will in the long run. I don’t know where people come up with that. But there is nothing wrong with being
friendly, having a good time, and being nice! Sometimes on the podium as a conductor, it gets in
the way a little bit.

**JH:** [42:59]

But, that’s conducting and that is actually a different thing.

**LK:** [43:02]

Right! In life though, so many people just...nothing but good, you’re so loved.

**JH:** [43:09]

I think helping as many people as you can...I feel this stage I’m at now, I’m responsible
to help women. We’ve got to get them on the stage. I know there are thousands of fantastic
women composers out there!

**LK:** [43:25]

Great segue because this is the portion where we highlight in the present, this topic. It’s
not a formal question, but the one topic that we’ve talked to each of the interviewees is this topic
about composers who happen to be women, as they like to say. The title of this project is a little
controversial... “women composers,” but it’s kind of hard...it’s already a terribly long title. So, it
is just trying to get it on the front cover is what it is...I’m sure you’ve given so much commentary
about this, but what does it make you think of? How do you feel about the current climate in this
movement?

**JH:** [44:05]

Yeah, it’s important because it has taken too long. There are so many women composers
out there. I think about it. I never think about being a woman composer, but I know it is actually
an issue because I get asked about it...I think weekly, I mean, literally weekly,
but is an important question. It doesn’t matter to me one way or the other how I’m labeled, I know whatever works for the situation is fine for me. I just think of myself as trying to write the best music that I can. But, it is extremely important because there’s so much talent out there and it’s not getting programmed. I think part of my job is to advocate when I’m with orchestras to talk to them, to pass along women composers' works. I’m constantly talking to people about this and saying, “Why haven’t you programmed any women? You’ve got an entire season here. How can you not have any women here?” Half of the population is women and you’re complaining that you’re losing audiences. But you know, you see all these little girls and concerts and they’re not seeing anyone as an example. It’s kind of imperative.

**LK:** [45:14]

I’m sure you’ve experienced this. I’m still meeting freshman undergraduate students, young women, coming and saying, “I didn’t know I could compose”. Not as much, but...

**JH:** [45:26]

But it does happen. It’s stunning how many people actually say that, though. I knew we had hit a nerve. I don’t think this really hit me in the same way until the violin concerto was being done by Baltimore, this was after the premiere. The Baltimore Symphony was one of the co-commissioners; Marin Alsop was conducting. So, we did a post-concert talk each evening afterwards and it was me, Hilary Hahn, and Marin Alsop...and it came early in the talk back...we basically let people ask questions. Someone would stand up and say, “It’s amazing to see three women up there on the stage!” Then the entire audience would erupt into applause. We all looked at each other. Somehow, I didn’t make that connection. I don’t think they did either. Although Marin gets asked about this all the time. It was obvious because it happened every night. There was such a reaction from the audience that to them, this was a monumental moment.
And I’m like, we’re in the twenty-first century and we’re just now reaching this point? We’re a little behind on that. Then I realized that I need to step up my game in advocating. That’s what I was thinking I need to do. I was with a group of lawyers with ASCAP, we went down to talk to congressmen and senators about changing the copyright laws so that people who create and write music are compensated by the streaming services. We haven’t been getting it...they’re making a lot of money, but the people who create the music are not being compensated. So, there’s been a lot of work to get the law changed to actually get it adjusted. It just changed, recently, called the Music Modernization Act, it just passed about three or four months ago. When I get calls like that and you need to go to Washington and advocate, you drop whatever you’re doing! So, I consider part of my job now is to advocate on behalf of living composers and on behalf of women. These two things are imperative for the art form to survive.

**LK:** [47:22]

Absolutely. Absolutely. Sometimes from my male colleagues about this particular project, there’s been a couple of comments, that it causes a divide. I said, “No, the divide has been there for hundreds of years.” I look forward to the day that it’s a coed anthology. That’s a huge goal, I can’t wait for that. But for right now, in this moment, you know, our anthologies...will always need to be updated as women begin or continue to compose more.

**JH:** [48:00]

I think that’s true. There are so many women out there, that’s the thing. I often talk to music directors who say to me, “Oh, I just don’t know any women composers”. All right, you have to check out this person. I try to reel it all out for them.
LK: [48:14]

The one other project that we always mention in almost every video is Rob Deemer’s, *Women Composer Database*! [playful banter]

JH: [48:23]

Yeah!

LK: [48:24]

I always just try to mention that in almost every interview. If didn’t mention, anything we talk about today...if they have a web presence, we’ll go through and on the NSC page, and we’ll have links. So, if she mentioned a composer or a program or something, then you can go and check out what she was talking about or what we mentioned. So, there are plenty of resources out there now.

JH: [48:57]

It’s out there...just open your ears because the thing is it draws people in...it draws people in.

LK: [49:04]

The orchestra management can no longer use the excuse that they’re worried about their patrons.

JH: [49:10]

People are starting to ask for it!

LK: [49:14]

So, you’re going to have to find another excuse! [laughter] That one’s no good anymore. That’s fabulous. So, busy present. It’s just a wonderful, wonderful thing. I can’t wait to see...I don’t know...however many great years we have left on this sphere. Looking back, how will we
perceive this time? You know, you never know history is being made. Maybe we do know history is being made, but seeing it down the road...

**JH:** [49:48]

Here’s the good thing: I think everybody...everybody affects history. I think the other thing is...sometimes you think you’re not affecting history, but you will affect history down the road.

**LK:** [50:01]

Absolutely. It’s just not history right now, but it will be. That is a big thing now. Speaking of down the road...how about the future?

**JH:** [50:12]

Yeah. I’ve got a lot on my plate.

**LK:** [50:15]

Where do you see yourself in five years? I hate that question! [playful banter]

**JH:** [50:18]

I actually have all my commissions set up for the next five years. I have to keep a calendar with this stuff logged in so I can make sure I’m delivering things on time. So, there’s actually like a wait list. I have to finish this chamber opera, but I think I have three or four concertos coming after that. There’s an orchestra suite based on *Cold Mountain*, my opera, my first opera. I know there is a double percussion concerto, a mandolin concerto, a flute concertino and a flute concerto in that. I’m talking to a fabulous bassoonist about a bassoon concerto, and I’ve had a few discussions with the Metropolitan Opera. I’ve got stuff plugged in, there is a lot! I’ve literally got a five-year calendar lined up with the start dates and the delivery dates for each of these pieces so I can stay on track. So hopefully writing better music. I’m constantly pushing
myself, constantly pushing myself to write every piece, to put some sort of challenge in there, something I’ve got to overcome. Often when I’m writing for like mandolin or when I wrote for tuba or for the harp concerto, I study that repertoire. I really get to know everything written for that instrument and try to figure out what would add to the repertoire for that instrument, that’s reasonable for the player. It has to be different. What Hilary Hahn can do on a violin is much different than what Yoland Kondonassis can do on a harp, which is different than Craig Knox on a tuba. They’re really different instruments. Last year, I wrote a little brass concerto for the Chicago Symphony, Baltimore, and Philadelphia Orchestra. They were co-commissioners and there aren’t really any low brass concertos to look at. So, my whole system is literally going in the library and finding all the orchestral repertoire that has great low brass moments and working through the score, trying to figure out, why does this sound good here? Why does the audience get revved up? What is that? So, I study these things as I am prepping.

**L.K:** [52:17]

And you still do that after all these years?

**J.H:** [52:20]

Oh, yeah, a lot. It’s more interesting to study, though, because I get to select what I’m studying! [laughter] So, I’m studying chamber operas right now because I’m in the middle of a chamber opera; to make sure the balances and everything are appropriate, that they’re working. So, I am always studying. Always.

**L.K:** [52:39]

So, the teacher side...that’s been coming up a little bit about composition pedagogy. What’s your take on that for the future?
JH: [52:52]

Right. The biggest thing I think is, composition is the one thing you teach...that you can’t plan out with a syllabus. Every student comes at this differently. And if you look at my background, I didn’t even know a composition teacher when I started. I’m thinking about it now because I know my background is so drastically different...I didn’t have a lot of classical music in it. I really have to look at each individual student, where they are, where they are hoping to go five years down the road...ten years...I’m trying to figure out what works for them. What are their issues, how to get them to overcome their issues. What tools can I give them so they can learn to teach themselves? That’s a big one. That’s what schooling should be. Teaching someone to learn how to teach themselves, because that’s where you spend the majority of your life...you’re not in school a majority of your life. You’re actually just out there in the world, but you’re always going to run against problems and you have to figure out how to problem-solve. So, I look at every student, I try to figure out what works for them. I don’t think I teach any student the same way. I think they’re all different.

LK: [54:03]

That’s fabulous. Any upcoming festivals this year or something, some big, big event that maybe we didn’t mention?

JH: [54:12]

For this academic year, for this concert season. What are we? 2018-19? I have just blown through a whole bunch of residencies in schools. Last year I had six premieres. I have a premiere...I think it’s in four weeks at Northwestern that I can’t get to because I’ll be in an opera workshop, Poetic Soprano Sax for saxophone and piano.
Taimur Sullivan is premiering it. But I think I have a bunch of CD releases coming out, pieces coming out on disks. The harp concerto, I just finished editing it last week.

LK: [54:47]

We do highlights on CD’s like that. That’ll be great!

JH: [54:52]

A big string orchestra piece, too, Dance Card in Chicago, that’s also coming out and a song cycle for piano trio and sopranos is also coming out. I think there are like six pieces coming out in the spring.

LK: [55:04]

We’ll highlight those as well. There’s a couple of new books out there, too!

JH: [55:14]

Yes, I had forgotten about that! Christina Reitz did an amazing job, analyzing quite a few substantial works. Everything from my bluegrass concerto to Blue Cathedral to Cold Mountain. It was a couple of years to do that! All I keep saying is, “Is this really interesting? Do you really want to spend this much time knowing this?” [laughter].

LK: [55:39]

Absolutely! Well, we definitely will highlight all of those things so they can reach those links. I tell you what, if there’s anything left out, you can go right ahead, but this has just been such an amazing time, and we just appreciate you taking time out of your schedule again for this interview!

35. Taimur Sullivan is Associate Professor of Saxophone at Northwestern University, and a member of the acclaimed PRISM Quartet. His performances have taken him from the stages of Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Knitting Factory, to engagements in Russia, China, England, Germany, and throughout Latin America.

http://www.taimursullivan.com/
JH: [56:06]

I’m glad this worked where we could get into the same city!

LK: [56:07]

Absolutely!

JH: [56:15]

I was supposed to be in Louisiana in the fall for the harp concerto. I couldn’t get down, there was a conflict going on.

LK: [56:22]

Well, that makes me feel better, because when I saw that, I thought, “Wow, did I miss her...?”

JH: [56:28]

I just wasn’t able to, but your mentioning Mara made me think about that.

LK: [56:34]

Well, it’s just been an incredible time with you, and I just can’t wait to see what more you bring to classical music.

JH: [56:46]

Well, I should say you will soon be Dr. Knox, and that’s pretty good! [laughter]

LK: [56:50]

Well, let me get through the next few days. Yeah, we’ll see! I appreciate the time to be able to prepare for that as well.

JH: [57:00]

Well, listen. You’ll do fine. Don’t worry about it!
Well, thanks so much again, and again, if you’ve enjoyed this interview, there are several others coming up and before so check out: NeverthelessSheComposed.org for the website...

Cool title, can I just say that? [laughter]

We’ll have the links to the discussion that we had today. Dr. Higdon’s bio, pictures, and information for you to access. So, thanks again, Dr. Higdon!

Thank you very much. I appreciate it. Ya’ll go out there and write music!

Write music!
Clare Shore Biography

Clare Shore, the second woman to earn the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Composition from The Juilliard School (1984), has received critical acclaim for her works, with reviewers from the New York Times, New York Post, Boston Globe, Washington Post, and others hailing her works as “provocative” “immensely dramatic”, “unpretentious”, “ingenious and evocative”, “intriguing”, “romantic to the core”. While at Juilliard, Ms. Shore studied with David Diamond, Vincent Persichetti, Roger Sessions, and subsequently with Gunther Schuller. She was granted the Irving Berlin Fellowship in Memory of Jerome Kern during her doctoral studies at Juilliard, as well as the Alexandre Gretchaninov Memorial Award. Since then, she has received numerous commissions, awards and grants, among them the 1983 Grant to Young Composers, annual ASCAP Standard Awards since 1982, Composers Assistance Grants from the American Music Center, a MacDowell Colony Fellowship, a fellowship to the Atlantic Center for the Arts, an Artist-in-Education Grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the
Colorado Commission for the Arts, a grant from the Contemporary Record Society, numerous Meet-the-Composer Grants since 1980, a Composer Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Shore’s works have been performed in Carnegie Recital Hall, Lincoln Center’s Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Concert Hall, the National Gallery of Art, the Barns of WolfTrap, Charleston’s Spoleto Festival, as well as throughout the U.S.A., Europe and Australia. She has served as Composer in Residence at Palm Beach Atlantic University, has done residencies with the Colorado Recorder Festival, Hanover County School System, Dakota Wind Quintet, Charles Ives Center for American Music, was a Composing Fellow with Pierre Boulez at Carnegie Hall, a MacDowell Colony Fellow, a resident composer at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, an alternate in the Luce Scholars Program for Asian Internships. Shore received the Bachelor of Arts degree, cum laude, with Honors in Music, from Wake Forest University in May 1976, earning a Teaching Certificate as well. While at Wake Forest she studied composition with Annette LeSiege, voice with Donald Hoirup and oboe and saxophone with Davidson Burgess. She earned the Master of Music degree in December 1977 from the University of Colorado at Boulder, studying composition with Charles Eakin and Cecil Effinger, and voice with Louis Cunningham. In addition to her work as a composer, Shore has led an active career as mezzo-soprano soloist and conductor. She performed with the Robert Shaw Chorale in Avery Fisher Hall and at Princeton University, and has been employed as alto section leader with the Delray Beach Chorale, Miami’s Bal Harbour Church-by-the-Sea, St. John in the Pines Episcopal Church, Wellington, FL, and currently serves as Director of Music at Calvary United Methodist Church in Lake Worth, FL. Clare Shore holds memberships with ASCAP, the American Music Center, NACUSA, SCI, IAWM (serving on the Board as Director of Concerts from 1995-1997), and was on the Board of its predecessor, AWC from 1983-1995 (President of the Virginia
Ms. Shore was awarded two teaching fellowships at Juilliard, and has taught at Fordham University, Manhattan School of Music, the University of Virginia, George Mason University and Palm Beach Atlantic University. She currently holds an exclusive publishing contract with E.C. Schirmer Publishing. Other of her works are found in the catalogs of Arsis Press, Plucked String Editions, and Subito Music (formerly Seesaw Music). Her works are recorded on CRS, Owl Recordings, and Opus One, produced by Grammy Award-winning Elite Recordings.36

36. Image and text provided by Dr. Clare Shore. Used here by permission of the composer.


**Shore Interview**

Liz Knox (LK) | Clare Shore (CS)

**LK: [1:46]**

Today’s date is December 8th, 2018 and this is NSC-07. Today, I am so excited to be here with Dr. Clare Shore, welcome Clare!

**CS: [1:58]**

Well, hello, Liz! It’s nice to be with you.

**LK: [2:00]**

It’s so great to visit with you today and thank you so much for taking time out of your busy schedule to do this interview. Currently, we are in downtown New Orleans…

**CS: [2:12]**

My home away from home!

**LK: [2:14]**

This is our second time to meet in New Orleans. I’m currently near Baton Rouge and you’re in Florida, so you have a little farther to go than I do! [playful banter] We were just talking about the format of these interviews, *past, present, and future*, so we’re just going to turn it over to you and you can go back as far as you want to tell us about your past.

**CS: [2:46]**

Oh, my past! Well, it’s been quite colorful, I have to tell you. I was born in the northwest part of North Carolina, the daughter of a Protestant minister, in a very rural area…tobacco-farming country…so it was quite colorful. As a matter of fact, I’m working on a piece that we’ll talk about later that will show some of those colorful people that I grew up with.
CS: [3:20]

My beginnings in music were at the church that I grew up in the little Forbush community in the Yadkin County and my mom was minister of music at the church …and I don’t even remember learning to read music. I was in the children’s choir, adult choir, etc. and of course, taking piano lessons, and then my senior year of high school, I talked her into letting me quit taking piano lessons and to play in the band. I started on the alto saxophone, and then studied also in my undergraduate degree. I studied sax, oboe, and also a bit in the different instrumental classes. I got a teaching certificate, so I was required to take the different method classes which was a wonderful background for a composer. I got my undergraduate concentration in voice and I still make some of my bread and butter singing in some wonderful groups in Florida.

LK: [4:35]

Coming from a small rural community in southern Indiana, originally growing up…my background is much the same. I know that I meet some people who want to completely cut from the past and have no looking back, but I have to say I think that our past is what…it is really just a building up.

CS: [5:03]

I think when we’re younger it’s a little bit difficult to face that, but you might as well embrace it and go with it. That’s the thing with this upcoming opera, *Skippin’ Down Shacktown Road* (that’s going to be the name of it). I’ve written some scenes of it…different scenes I’ve produced. I need to get back to that.
LK: [5:23]

Well, both of my parents were music leaders in the church, and myself as well, so American hymnody is very important to my music…it’s just a part of the fabric of my life.

CS: [5:42]

Where I grew up everybody in the churches knew how to read music, they sang four-part harmony, and I walk into church now and they don’t even have the music…we read from words. It’s like, “How dare you assume that nobody reads music?” It’s sad.

LK: [5:58]

It’s changed a lot, so we’ll have to do another interview about those times!

LK: [6:07]

What about your education? What’s your background and your educational experience?

CS: [6:11]

I got my undergraduate degree at Wake Forest University in North Carolina, and my Master of Music in Composition at the University of Colorado at Boulder, and then my Doctorate in Composition at Juilliard in New York.

LK: [6:27]

Wow, so you’ve been all over the place from the start. Well, reading through your bio and history, I was really blown away! We met because of NSC. You were one of the first people to respond when we rolled this out, and you were so supportive and when I looked at your history, you were the one that I thought, “Wow, I am really out of touch with other women composers. I’m living in my own little world.” I couldn’t believe your background! Why don’t you drop a few names for us. You’ve studied with some pretty big names.
Well, you might put it that way. Yes, my very first composition instructor was Annette Lesiege who is now deceased. She came on to the faculty at Wake Forest when I was a senior undergraduate, and then at the University of Colorado, I was very fortunate to study with Charles Eakin who, oh my gosh, what a wonderful teacher. Charles is still alive living now in Texas. I also studied with Cecil Effinger there, and then in New York at Juilliard, I studied primarily with David Diamond. Also, with Vincent Persichetti, and just a little bit with Rogers Sessions.

It’s amazing! I’m a big Persichetti fan from my wind band days. I loved his wind band and choir works, and so I saw that, and it’s just so rare to actually meet someone who studied with him. It is really exciting to see such a diverse background.

I studied primarily with David Diamond who was a wonderful composer and wonderful teacher. The contrapuntal techniques that I learned from him and just all sorts of things...he was quite a good mentor. David had a sort of prickly personality, and I think that’s possibly why his works aren’t played more often than they are; I think there will come a day that he will be more widely recognized than he is now.

That’s an interesting perspective as I learn more about his music because of you, and obviously came across it within studies and things, but very interesting work.

Gerard Schwarz did a whole series of recordings of Diamond’s works some years ago with the Seattle Symphony, so that’s a really good place to go to look for his works.
Also, while I was at Julliard, I didn’t study with Elliott Carter, but I was in contact with him, and I became quite a fan of the formal principles of his writings, and that had a great influence on me as well.

LK: [9:36]

I can only imagine, that’s excellent! That led to an extensive teaching background for you, as well?

CS: [9:48]

I was a teaching assistant while I was at Julliard. I also taught at the Manhattan School of Music, and Fordham University. That led to a formal placement at the University of Virginia at Charlottesville and George Mason University. My last teaching stent was at Palm Beach Atlantic University. I was there for five years, and now I’m freelance.

LK: [10:18]

Nice, and going towards the present…before we do that, I can make mention to whatever we talk about, all of these names and facilities and programs, we link to those items on your NSC page, and then if someone is watching this interview and they are more interested in David Diamond’s music, then there will be links to anything that may bring up more resources. So, be sure to check out those resources, and you can kind of dig deeper into Ms. Clare’s background. So, the present, speaking of freelancing, you’re pretty busy [playful banter] you’re all over the place, which is great! Of course, we’ve connected through social media so it’s wonderful to see your excursions and all of the great things happening. Most recently, we met at the University of New Orleans in person for the first time at a concert with Project Fusion, the alto saxophone quartet. They were all from Eastman, correct?
They all got their degrees from Eastman.

And so, your piece was…

Evocations: Four after Matisse and the Project Fusion saxophone quartet played that…their first time performing it was at the University of New Orleans.

Yeah, I don’t know how they did but it was magnificent in my world.

They did a marvelous job! I had not even had a chance to work with them.

That concert was life changing. I mean, it was just wonderful, it was a marvelous concert. I am a total girl fan, now. [laughter] So anyway, that’s kind of where we are personally. And so, you want to talk about the present? What are some of your favorite things happening right now?

Okay, well, I recently finished a consortium, commissioned for flute and piano and the name of that piece is Intensities of Degrees, and all three movements have not been premiered yet, the first movement has. I am not sure when there will be a premiere, but I think we have an exciting performance of that event in October of next year, in which each of the three commissioners will be playing one movement in Florida. Most currently I am working on a consortium commission for soprano saxophone and fixed media.
There are six commissioning parties on that piece and the name that most people would recognize from that is Tim McAllister. Grammy Award winner and he’s up for another Grammy Award this year, and very well known in the saxophone world. As a matter of fact, some of the other commissioning parties are students of his or they certainly all know him. He’s currently head of the department at the University of Michigan, and of course, he has worked with John Adams closely, and he commissioned John Adams’s alto saxophone concerto and I got hear that live with him in Florida.

LK: [14:12]

That just sounds like an awful time. Life is so rough right now! [laughter]

CS: [14:18]

I’m fortunate to get to travel to different places to hear different premieres of my music.

LK: [14:33]

I guess maybe this is a little bit of a tangent, what drew you to New Orleans so much, was it the performances? You just love the atmosphere? Is there an inspirational aspect to this city?

CS: [14:53]

Well, as a matter of fact there is an inspirational aspect of the city and I just really love the atmosphere here. Of course, there’s music non-stop in the streets, and everywhere. I began coming here on a sort-of regular basis a few years ago it It seems like I come down every six months or so. I record sounds in the environment, and as a matter of fact I will be using quite a few of these sounds in the upcoming piece for soprano saxophone and fixed media. So, that’s what is on my mind these days.
LK: [15:32]

These days there are plenty of soundscapes to work with in this city. You may be hearing a few of them in this interview, but that’s perfect, that’s fine, sound is our life, so not a big deal. Me being here, you know it’s kind of a little bit of a new world from my home in Indiana. I love the diversity and the culture here. It does definitely feed into the creative process, being in a new place kind of getting into new scenes.

CS: [16:10]

So, I really do enjoy the diversity, and it’s sort of that way in the funky town that I live in, in Florida, Lakeworth, Florida. It’s such a mixed bag. I love it. It’s just a little piece of paradise.

LK: [16:28]

So, what else right now?

CS: [16:31]

There are so many projects that need to be...I’ve just done an SSAA arrangement of my three acapella carols, which were written just a few years ago, as a matter of fact the SSAA arrangement will be performed for the first time this coming Tuesday, December 11th, in Florida, by the Women’s Chorus of Park Vista High School. It is a very difficult piece for a high school group but I’ve attended rehearsals and they are doing very well. As a matter of fact, December 16th, two of those carols will be done in the SATB arrangement here at Trinity Episcopal church, conducted by Paul M. Weber. I just missed that performance here, and I will be doing a Men’s chorus arrangement for that, as well, for my publisher, E.C. Schirmer. I am very fortunate to have an exclusive publishing contract. It’s just wonderful.
LK: [17:37]

Well, I meant to have it pulled up, but when we first rolled out, *Nevertheless She Composed*, you were one of the first ones to put out a comment on your feelings towards this project and particularly about publishing. That hasn’t been talked about in some of the interviews yet. What are your feelings...you had a pretty strong comment about the publishing...is that too dicey to get into?

CS: [18:08]

I think my comment had to do with frustration over these critics for newspapers, other publications, have come up with lists of the top thirty or one hundred women composers, and they’ve based so much of their critique on how many recordings these composers have gotten out there, and I think I said with my comment, “Here we are with the one percent again”, because recordings are very costly to embark upon, and those of us who are underwhelmed in the financial realm really, really suffer there, and we haven’t had many recordings. Why not look at the publications, how many publications, and things like that? I guess it’s very easy for them to get that information.

LK: [18:58]

And in preparing for today, that had crossed my mind...your comment...for those who are trying to self-publish and do that is just a difficult world...just curious about your comments, so thank you for that.

CS: [19:22]

You know, more and more people are self-publishing, and that is not to be discouraged at all.
One of my major considerations, truly, I thought at one point of going that route, but because you potentially can make more money, but I don’t have any children. When I die, what’s going to happen to these works? So, that’s a good feeling knowing that they will be out there.

**L.K:** [19:48]

That’s a really good point because, not wanting to think about that at any age, but you do have to think about what happens to everything? Do you want to leave that on your family? It’s a lot to consider in that area for a composer. Which is wonderful, because we love a variety of topics at NSC, so that’s why we leave it open-ended and organic, because you get so many great topics.

**CS:** [20:19]

And if there is someone in your family who is heavily involved in the music business, it might make sense to go that route, but otherwise, who’s got the time to take care of that type of project?

**L.K:** [20:35]

So, the one thing that we do ask in the interview, it’s kind of the “elephant in the room” topic…is about women composers, or like we like to say “composers who happen to be women.”

**CS:** [20:53]

I know I hate to use the term “woman composer.”

**L.K:** [20:55]

And that’s our question, what feelings do these topics bring up in each interviewee. We’ve had and we’ve had a lot of some of the same responses. So, let’s just open that up. It’s kind of a hard topic, but we like to see where it goes.
Well, first of all, when telling friends that I was coming here and having this interview with you, I think I said to most of them, “She’s doing a project on women who write music.” I just can’t use that term, “she’s a woman composer”. She’s a composer. This has been going on for decades. Each of us that enters into a new decade has it a little bit easier than our sisters before us, but I said a little bit easier. There are so many composers now, which means there are a lot more women who are composers these days. It’s particularly good for the young women who are just entering the scene because it’s the younger composers that are looked to, when people are looking for commissions, and so it’s great for them, and some of the others of us have paved the way. For example, one of the big efforts in terms of working for women in music, period... was I think, in the 90s, the International Alliance for Women in Music, put on a big effort, this is when the internet, the world wide web, was just coming to form, and we used women in various music fields all over the world to put together an effort to have the Vienna Philharmonic allow women in the orchestra. We gathered in New York for their appearance in Carnegie Hall and had a very, very peaceful protest. The police were all there, they expected something crazy. Pauline Oliveros was there, and several of us from different cities within the United States. I was at that time living in Washington D.C., and then from different countries Austria, Germany, and we just wanted to raise awareness that there weren’t any women in that orchestra, and they would not allow it. And we did raise awareness peacefully, and then when the concert began in Carnegie Hall, we went across the street to Cami Hall, and put on concerts of women’s music. So that was a great effort and it did have some effect, but very, very slow.
LK: [23:52]

Well, I’m sure it at least prompted a lot of thought and consideration.

CS: [23:57]

Exactly, and not only for women in orchestras but for diversity.

LK: [24:02]

I’ll leave the orchestra unnamed, but this week there was an orchestra that was touting that the rest of their upcoming season was probably going to be 80-90 percent of music by women composers. The lists of composers were…

CS: [24:28]

Very dead? [laughter]

LK: [24:29]

Well, not all, but very typical, like Fanny Mendelssohn, Amy Beach you know, they were really making a big deal about it, and a few living woman composers which is great, but yet, we’re still kind of seeing…there is just so much out there. I guess I’m leading here, but just trying to open up the fact that it is wonderful, I don’t want to sound ungrateful, but if you’re going to program music by women composers, there are so many wonderful options out there, you just have to dig deep.

CS: [25:15]

Here we go back to the whole issue of new music. So many, especially large groups like orchestras, will not program new music or very little new music because they say, “we’ll lose our audiences.” And this has been proven to be not true, and on the chamber music level as well, that exists, but some of us are creating organizations to break through this and it’s pretty exciting.
LK: [25:45]

Do you have a name of anyone who is?

CS: [25:49]

Yes, I’m co-founder and co-director of an organization in south Florida called Zimmermann’s Café Chamber Music. We do have a strong Facebook presence and you can just look it up and you’ll see what sort of things we do. We create a very informal environment for these events, I won’t call them concerts, but events to take place in the Parish Hall of a church that is located very close to downtown Lake Worth, Florida, and we encourage our audience members to dress casually, come in their shorts if they want, and we have food, wine, and coffee. We tell them they can eat and drink during the performance, but be very courteous to the performers as well, and we play exclusively the music of living, south Florida composers, and we can talk a little bit about that in a minute, but this works extremely well. We have round tables set up, Cabaret style, and we have a composer’s table, and all of the composers represented are there. We don’t have to try to seek out women who write music or people of different ethnic groups, it just happens, and we do try to make an effort to have an age spread from the young composers to…we generally have an octogenarian or a nonagenarian on the concert. We are especially pleased to feature those works because it is very difficult. As one of our well-known composers said at one of the events recently:

In places away from large cities like New York, if a composer teaches, he or she is likely to hear some of their works performed at the school they teach at to maybe an audience of fifteen. Otherwise, you have to go to another state or another country to hear our work performed.

There’s just a lack of performing new music and a feeling that if you were any good, you would live in New York. So there’s a built-in inferiority complex of these local areas, and so we are here to dispel that and the character of the music we present is widely-varied and we use the best
professional performers in South Florida, which are very good, and they rehearse a lot with the composer, and our performances have been excellent. The reception has been just fabulous.

We are on a shoestring budget now, but this is our third season; we do two concerts a year, one in October, one in April, and that’s as much as we really can have time to put on with no staff except really the two of us, and we do have a board though and a non-profit status, everything is in place. We just keep presenting these and we’ve not had to repeat composers yet. There are so many fine composers in South Florida. It’s primarily Palm Beach County, Broward County, Dade County, and Miami. We have not extended beyond those areas yet but there’s plenty to draw from.

LK: [29:40]

We’ll definitely link to all of that so they can become more aware that. I’ve looked forward to making it over to visit, I would love that.

CS: [29:50]

Absolutely, I should mention that the way we work it is that before each person’s piece is played, the composer stands up and says a little bit about the piece, and after it’s played we open up the forum to the audience, so they can ask questions or make comments to the composer and performers, and all of us there. So, it’s just been wonderful.

LK: [30:13]

You know, it’s just too bad that these large orchestras can’t recognize the magic that happens when the composer is sitting in the seats. There, where people can physically interact with the person who created the piece that this giant orchestra just performed. It’s magical for the composer. It’s magical for the audience. It really is. I think it’s just too bad that we are missing
out on some of the greatest larger works, but the chamber ensemble that’s where our access lies at the moment, which is great. The relationships that it builds and fosters. You can’t beat it.

**CS:** [31:03]

I think people, they get the idea of new music and they’re thinking of twelve-tone music which doesn’t have to be inaccessible in itself. Perhaps they are thinking about more gnarly music perhaps that began in the 50s or so…and among all genre of music now the boundaries are so blurred, you really just can’t peg a piece music is just music. The younger composers now are finding ways to…I possibly shouldn’t say this but…I’m not sure that the training in the conservatories and universities is what it used to be where a craft was really, really stressed. You can take craft and use any sort of musical material and make a very fine piece of it and so I think we need to not ignore that.

**LK:** [32:05]

I agree completely…

**CS:** [32:07]

Have you found that to be the case?

**LK:** [32:09]

I believe that very strongly now. I have had wonderful teachers, but coming down to Louisiana to Dr. Dinos Constantinides, he’s all about the craft and going back and studying the inner workings of those big major composers and their processes. Making sure if you want to, you can write a twelve-tone piece. Making sure you know how that works and have and understanding how to write a fugue. I agree with you completely and there are some great efforts that I’m starting to find of people that are trying to develop more compositional pedagogy and
either go back to the way it was, or not back to the way it was but at least a nod to the past and what is pertinent to us today.

**CS:** [33:11]

I’m not faulting the students and they’ve got to be exposed and for example, you mentioned writing a fugue, you can write a fugue or a canon and have it masked so that no one really hears it as a traditional fugue or canon but the structure is there. You can use music of whomever…or anything updated and have layering and everything else and have it work; but the young composers that haven’t been taught craft are finding very clever ways to make pieces work, but it would be nice if they had a combination.

**LK:** [33:57]

Yeah, that is a passionate topic and I agree completely agree. This is wonderful. Well, we might have touched on a future a little bit so what do you have coming up?

**CS:** [34:09]

Oh my gosh, I have projects lined up and I’m going to have to get to them! I have a work planned in the future for viola and piano and this will probably be a consortium commission, I’m not sure. Also, a work for soprano saxophone and harp that’s probably going to be just a single commission party and things lined up in the future so I better get to work! [playful banter]

**LK:** [34:56]

What about any festivals? Do you have any festivals on the horizon that you’ll be attending?

**CS:** [35:07]

I love going to the New Music Gathering and I have gone to the last three.\[^{37}\]

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\[^{37}\] *New Music Gathering* is an annual three-day conference dedicated to the performance, production, promotion, support and creation of new concert music. [https://www.newmusicgathering.org/](https://www.newmusicgathering.org/)
There will not be one this coming year…but I’m looking forward to the next one and honestly, I can’t remember now if there is a specific festival or not but I do have my work cut out for me with these works that I’m working on.

LK: [35:40]

I saw a picture…I guess this is kind of going back to the past which we do, we go back a little bit. I saw a picture of you at the New Music Gathering, I believe in the past, am I right?

CS: [35:51]

I’m not sure what I was doing in the picture.

LK: [35:55]

I think you were just around in the outdoor café or maybe that was something else?

CS: [36:00]

Oh! I think that might have been the Festival of New American Music in Sacramento, California. I was with Alan Theisen, alto saxophonist and composer, and Jennifer Reason, pianist. They were premiering my River Songs, for alto sax and piano. As a matter of fact, they just recorded that work this past August and that’s still being edited; I’ve got a recording that would be coming out on PARMA on the Navona label with the Trio Casals. We recorded that in October…fairly recent…and that’s still under work.

LK: [36:50]

Oh, excellent! So, thank you again for joining us today, and if this is your first time to experience an NSC video, there are plenty others that have come before and there’s going to be plenty in the future, so the website is NeverthelessSheComposed.org. Thank you again, Clare, for being here and we just wish the very best in all of your endeavors!
List of Resources

**Lillios Interview Resources, pp. 112-131**

Bowling Green State University  
Splice Institute  
Western Michigan University  
Ligeti’s *Volumina* - scrolling score and recording available on Youtube  
University of North Texas  
Cindy McTee, composer/educator - [https://cindymctee.com/](https://cindymctee.com/)  
BGSU New Music & Art Festival -  
[https://www.bgsu.edu/musical-arts/maccm/new-music-festival.html](https://www.bgsu.edu/musical-arts/maccm/new-music-festival.html)  
Jonty Harrison - Emeritus Professor of Composition and Electroacoustic Music -  
Univ. of Birmingham (Europe) -  
[https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/music/harrison-jonty.aspx](https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/music/harrison-jonty.aspx)

Texas Computer Musicians Network  
Bent Frequency Duo - [http://bentfrequency.com/bf-duo-project](http://bentfrequency.com/bf-duo-project)  
Stuart Gerber, Associate Professor of Percussion at Georgia State University -  
[http://stuartgerber.net/about](http://stuartgerber.net/about)  
Jan Baker, Associate Professor of Saxophone at Georgia State University -  
[https://thearts.gsu.edu/profile/jan-berry-baker/](https://thearts.gsu.edu/profile/jan-berry-baker/)

Georgia State University  
Barlow Commission - [https://barlow.byu.edu/](https://barlow.byu.edu/)  
Scott Deal, percussionist - [https://scottdeal.net/main/](https://scottdeal.net/main/)  
Indiana University/Purdue University-Indianapolis  
Roger Shupe, composer  
Kurt Rohde, composer/violist - [https://kurtrohde.com/](https://kurtrohde.com/)  
UC Davis  
ICMC - International Computer Music Conference -  
SEAMUS, Society for Electro-Acoustic Music - [https://www.seamusonline.org/](https://www.seamusonline.org/)  
Northern Illinois University  
Larry Austin, composer/educator - [https://larryaustin.music.unt.edu/biography](https://larryaustin.music.unt.edu/biography)  
Pauline Oliveros (*Lion’s Tale*), composer - [https://paulineoliveros.us/](https://paulineoliveros.us/)  
Mid-American Center for Contemporary Music -  
[https://www.bgsu.edu/musical-arts/maccm.html](https://www.bgsu.edu/musical-arts/maccm.html)  
Kurt Doles, Director of MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music  
Steve Mackey, composer - [https://stevenmackey.com/](https://stevenmackey.com/)  
Sarah Kirkland Snider, composer - [https://sarahkirklandsnider.com/](https://sarahkirklandsnider.com/)  
Toledo Symphony Orchestra  
Andrew Norman, composer - [http://andrewnormanmusic.com/](http://andrewnormanmusic.com/)  
Klingler Electroacoustic Residency -  
[https://www.bgsu.edu/musical-arts/area/composition/electroacoustic-studios/kear.html](https://www.bgsu.edu/musical-arts/area/composition/electroacoustic-studios/kear.html)  
Toledo Art Museum
(Lillios Resources - cont.)

University of Illinois
Harry Castle, composer/educator -
Jim Phelps, Associate Professor of Music at Northern Illinois University -
https://composition.music.unt.edu/phelps-james
Herbert Brun, composer/educator - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herbert_Br%C3%BCn
Joe Penzaroni, composer/educator
John Christopher Nelson, composer/educator - https://jcnelson.music.unt.edu/
Joseph Klein, composer/educator - https://josephklein.music.unt.edu/home
Tom Clark, composer/educator - https://www.music.txstate.edu/facultystaff/bios/clark.html
Sam Pluta, composer - http://www.sampluta.com/biographyText.html
Wet Ink Ensemble - http://www.wetink.org/pages/about.html
University of Chicago
Dana Jessen, bassoonist - https://www.danajessen.com/home

Gibson Interview Resources, pp. 132-159

Marjorie Mitchell, pianist/educator
Sarah Sergesketter, pianist/educator
Bennington College
Loyola University
London College of Music
Stephen Jaffe, Professor of Music Composition at Duke University
Yehudi Wyner, composer/educator - http://www.yehudiwyner.com/
Univ. at Buffalo - SUNY
PARMA Recordings - https://www.parmarecordings.com/
CDBaby.com
MacDowell Colony - https://www.macdowellcolony.org
Beaver Island Music Festival - https://bimf.net/
Bryan Smith, tuba - https://westwindbrass.org/about-us/artists-bios/
Brett Dietz, LSU Associate Professor of Percussion -
http://www.brettdietz.net/index.html
Hamiruge, LSU percussion ensemble - https://www.facebook.com/LSUpercussion/
Darrel Hale, LSU Assistant Prof. of Bassoon
https://www.lsu.edu/cmda/music/people/faculty/hale.php
Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art - Kansas City, MO
Michael Hall, violist - http://michaelhallviola.com/
(Gibson Resources - cont.)

JoDee Davis, Professor of Trombone - UMKC Conservatory -
https://info.umkc.edu/cmad-roottrombones/dr-davis/
Trevor Thornton, pianist - http://www.trevorthorntontpiano.com/about-me/
Emily Trapp, pianist - https://www.facebook.com/emilymtrapp/
Constantinides New Music Ensemble - https://www.facebook.com/constantinidesNME/
Women Composers Database, now known as Composer Diversity Database -
https://www.composerdiversity.com/
LSU Experimental Music/Digital Media Dept. - https://emdm.cct.lsu.edu/
Charlotte New Music Festival - https://charlottenewmusic.org/
LSU Symphony Orchestra -
https://www.lsu.edu/cmda/music/resources/student/ensembles/orchestra.php
Navona Records - https://www.navonarecords.com/
New Music Box - https://www.newmusicusa.org/

Waring Interview Resources, pp. 160-177

Northwestern State University (Natchitoches, LA)
Dr. Dinos Constantinides, LSU Boyd Professor of Composition -
https://www.lsu.edu/cmda/music/people/faculty/constantinides.php
International Festival of Women’s Music
Fanny Mendelssohn Composition Competition
Cambridge Music Conference - https://www.cambridgemusicconference.org/
Metropolitan Opera - https://www.metopera.org/
Sorbonne University - https://www.sorbonne-universite.fr/en
Symphony Orchestra of Portugal

Higdon Interview Resources, pp. 178-212

Christopher Rose, percussionist, U.S. Marine Band -
https://www.marineband.marines.mil/Members/Musicians/Percussion/
Professor Michael Colburn, Director of Band, Butler University -
https://www.butler.edu/directory/user/mcolburn
U.S. Marine Band - The “President’s Own” - https://www.marineband.marines.mil/
Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra
Maestro Marió Venzago, conductor - https://www.mariovenzago.com/
John Berners, Professor of Music/Composition - University of Indianapolis -
https://johnberners.wordpress.com/
Indiana State University Festival of Contemporary Music - https://www.indstate.edu/cas/cmf
(Higdon Resources - cont.)
Oregon Symphony
Morton Gould Commemorative
Indiana State University
Bowling Green State University
Judy Bentley, flutist/educator
Richard Kennell, musician/educator - https://www.bgsu.edu/musical-arts/faculty-and-staff/faculty-emeritus.html
Harvey Sollberger, composer/educator - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvey_Sollberger
Robert Spano, conductor of the Atlanta Symphony - http://www.robertspanomusic.com/
Curtis Institute
George Crumb, composer - http://www.georgecrumb.net/
University of Pennsylvania
Mark Kelly, Director of Bands at BGSU from 1966-1994
Claude White, Director of Bands at University of Pennsylvania from 1973-75, 1978-1994
Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center - https://www.chambermusicsociety.org/
Elliott Carter, composer - https://www.elliottcarter.com/
Boosey & Hawkes Publishing
Rapido Competition - https://atlantachamberplayers.com/rapido/
Atlanta Symphony
Gary Graffman, pianist/educator - https://www.curtis.edu/academics/faculty/gary-graffman/
Helsinki Philharmonic
Craig Knox, tubist - http://www.craigknoxtuba.com/
Baltimore Symphony
Marin Alsop, conductor - https://www.marinalysop.com/
Hilary Hahn, violinist - http://www.hilaryhahn.com/
ASCAP, American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers - https://www.ascap.com/
Yoland Kondonassis, harpist - https://www.yolandaharp.com/
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra
Northwestern University
Taimur Sullivan, saxophonist - http://www.taimursullivan.com/

Shore Interview Resources, pp. 213-232

Wake Forest University
The Julliard School
Annette Lesiege, composer/educator
(Shore Resources - cont.)

Cecil Effinger, composer/educator
Seattle Symphony
Charles Gillilan Eakin, composer/educator
Manhattan School of Music
University of Virginia - Charlottesville
Florida Atlantic University
University of New Orleans
Project Fusion (Sax Quartet) - http://projectfusionsq.com/about
Eastman School of Music
Timothy McAllister, saxophonist - http://timothymcallister.com/
John Adams, composer - https://www.earbox.com/
City of Lake Worth, Florida
Trinity Episcopal Church of New Orleans
International Alliance for Women in Music - https://iawm.org/
Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Carnegie Hall
Zimmermann’s Café Chamber Music - http://zimmcafemusic.org/
New Music Gathering - https://www.facebook.com/newmusicgathering/
Festival of New American Music -
https://www.csus.edu/college/arts-letters/music/spotlight/fenam-festival.html
Alan Theisen, saxophonist/composer - http://alantheisen.com/
PARMA Recordings - https://www.parmarecordings.com/
Trio Casals - https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Artist/Trio-Casals-246759862503118/
APPENDIX A. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST

TO: Elizabeth Knox
    School of Music/Composition

FROM: Dennis Landin
      Chair, Institutional Review Board

DATE: September 25, 2018

RE: IRB# E11229

TITLE: Nevertheless, She Composed: A Contemporary Survey of Women Composers of the Twenty-First Century


Review Date: 9/25/2018

 Approved X Disapproved

Approval Date: 9/25/2018 Approval Expiration Date: 9/24/2021

Exemption Category/Paragraph: 2b

Signed Consent Waived?: No
Re-review frequency: (three years unless otherwise stated)

LSU Proposal Number (if applicable):

By: Dennis Landin, Chairman

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING – Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:
1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU’s Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submission of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
8. SPECIAL NOTE: When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation.

* All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU’s Assurance with DHHS, DHHS 45 CFR 46 and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at http://www.lsu.edu/irb
Interview Consent Form

Project Name:

Nevertheless, She Composed: A Contemporary Survey of Women Composers of the Twenty-First Century

Project Director:

Elizabeth A. Knox, Graduate Assistant | PhD Student
Louisiana State University | School of Music
102 School of Music, Baton Rouge, LA 70803
email: elknox6@lsu.edu | PH: (765) 891-9127

Dr. James Byo, Director, School of Music
Carl Prince Matthies Professor of Music
Louisiana State University
102 School of Music, Baton Rouge, LA 70803
office 225-578-4905 | mobile 225-405-3114
jbyo@lsu.edu | lsu.edu

Project Overview

You have been invited to be featured via a live interview as part of the named project, Nevertheless, She Composed: A Contemporary Survey of Women Composers of the Twenty-First Century. The purpose of the NSC Series is to provide opportunities for women composers to:

- Share biographical information, promote their music, and focus on topics important to them through video interviews
- Connect with current listeners, capture new audiences, and expand their circle among other composers
- Acknowledge and discuss topics, resources, or projects that highlight Otherness and diversity in the arts
- to be a widely available academic resource for now and in the future

Initially presented as “Nevertheless, She Composed: A Contemporary Anthology of Women Composers of the Twenty-First Century” will feature video biographies of women composers. Each NSC interview will be carefully video recorded and transcribed for a printed anthology in the future. The first edition of “Nevertheless, She Composed: A Contemporary Anthology of Women Composers of the Twenty-First Century” would have a target publishing date during the spring of 2020. However, at this time, there is not a formal publishing company or contract established. With a goal of featuring a minimum of 100 women composers, each
video interview will be transcribed for print, and will include profile pictures and biographical information of each featured composer. Readers will be directed to available online resources for each composer as well as the NSC video series. Additional interviews will be included in the printed anthology of those that wished to not participate in a live recording. By special order, a DVD series will be available of the online video interviews following the completion of the printed anthology.

Note: Five composers will be featured to complete my PhD dissertation at Louisiana State University. The project will then continue to include 100 composers to establish a full anthology as described above.

**Project Procedures**

- The interview time commitment is approximately 1-2 hours, with 45 minutes of that devoted to the interview itself (allowing a few extra minutes for settling-in, sound checks, potential trouble-shooting, etc.)
- The video interview can be done in person or via Skype and is recorded via a SONY HD video cam/monitor
- In special circumstances, if a video interview is not desired or possible, an interview by email/print may be included in the final printed anthology
- The final edited video will feature sound excerpts of one or two of your original compositions (of your choosing) by sending:
  - a recording - .mp3, .wav, or .aiff files of your piece(s), email
to: shecomposed@gmail.com
  - info of the piece: title, year of composition, and any album or CD cover art if possible. If none available, you may provide a JPG or PNG that you would like to represent your piece (copyright compliant).
- Once edited, the video will be uploaded to Youtube, posted on the NSC website, and will be shared through other social media outlets.
  - *You will receive a copy of the video to review for approval before any publications are made.*
- Eventually, your interview will be transcribed for a printed anthology
- At your earliest convenience, you may share your bio, list of compositions/discography, and any other information you would like to be included with your printed interview.
- The printed anthology will direct readers to a Youtube channel or other ways to access your video interview. The printed version will be a work in progress over the next two years, but the videos will be published immediately.
- A format of "Past, Present, Future" will guide the interview, but the questions will reflect your personal career and accomplishments. You will receive an outline of potential questions/topics prior to our interview.
- As you will notice, we try to make the interviews casual, informative, and uplifting. If there are specific topics that interest you or in need of a platform, your input is greatly encouraged
• Scheduling your interview. We have flexibility for choosing an interview date. Editing and final rendering should be complete approximately 7-10 days once your CD, artwork, and recordings are received.
• If you would like to participate, please let me know of some potential days/times that would work best with your schedule according to your earliest availability.

Project Risk

This project should not pose more than a normal minimal risk to participants. All interviews will be submitted to participants for approval before being published. Participants have the right to request edits, inclusions, or omissions of any part of the interview. Participants may also choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which one might otherwise be entitled.

Privacy Protection

Due to the biographical nature of this project, the participant will control the nature of information provided. Personal information will only be distributed in agreement between the investigator and participant. The participant’s contact information will only be featured with permission, and solely for publicity purposes. Participant information will never be shared or sold to a third party.

Study Approval

This study has been approved by the LSU IRB. For questions concerning participant rights, please contact the IRB Chair, Dr. Dennis Landin, 578-8692, or irb@lsu.edu.

Acknowledgment of Consent

Project Director/PI, Elizabeth A. Knox

Signature

Date Jan. 4, 2020

Participant

Signature

Date 16 January 2010
• Scheduling your interview: We have flexibility for choosing an interview date. Editing and final rendering should be complete approximately 7-10 days once your CD, artwork, and recordings are received.
• If you would like to participate, please let me know of some potential days/times that would work best with your schedule according to your earliest availability.

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Acknowledgment of Consent

Project Director/PI, Elizabeth A. Knox

\[Signature\]

Date Jan. 4, 2020

Participant

\[Signature\]

Date 1/4/2020
• Scheduling your interview: We have flexibility for choosing an interview date. Editing and final rendering should be complete approximately 7-10 days once your CD, artwork, and recordings are received.

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Acknowledgment of Consent

Project Director/PI, Elizabeth A. Knox

[Signature]                  Date Jan. 4, 2020

Participant

[Signature]                  Date 1-13-2020
Re: NSC Interview Request

Richard Tannenbaum <rtannenbaum1@gmail.com>
Wed 6/20/2018 11:26 AM
To: Elizabeth A Knox <eknox6@lsu.edu>

Hi Liz,

No problem - I'd be happy to chat BUT on June 23rd I will be travelling to Cairo.
Sunday I may well be free but not absolutely sure - however if we say 4pm on Sunday that would be 11pm my time - I'm sure I'll be available.

All the best,

Richard

On 20 June 2018 at 14:09, Elizabeth A Knox <eknox6@lsu.edu> wrote:

Dear Richard,

First, please accept my apology for the 'lag' in communication about our earlier discussions for an interview to celebrate Kate. I did complete Cara's interview and then the end of the semester engulfed me! I have continued gathering information for Kate's episode, and would still love to meet with you via Skype if you're available/interested.

I have forgotten the time difference between us, but here are a few blocks that I have available in the coming week. If it is too soon or not compatible with your schedule, we can go from there and look a little farther into the future.

Central Standard Times
Saturday, June 23 (anytime between 12-3)
Sunday, June 24 (between 2:00-5:00)
Monday, June 25 (after 6 pm)

Thank you again for any assistance, I look forward to "virtually" meeting you!

Liz

Liz Knox, BM, MM
PhD Student, Music Composition / Graduate Assistant to
Dr. Dinos Constantiades, Boyd Professor of Composition

Louisiana State University / College of Music & Dramatic Arts
Re: Skype Info

Richard Tannenbaum <rtannenbaum1@gmail.com>
Sun 6/24/2018 2:36 PM
To: Elizabeth A Knox <eknox@lsu.edu>

Hi Liz,

All should be ok for a call in around 90 mins time.

All the best,

Richard

On 24 June 2018 at 18:17, Elizabeth A Knox <eknox@lsu.edu> wrote:

Hello Richard!

I just wanted to send a quick note that 4:00/11:00 still works for me today, if it is convenient for you. My Skype information is listed as:

Liz Knox
Email: lknox@butler.edu

I did not prepare a typical outline but perhaps we can just chat for a few minutes before we begin. I’m really more interested in topics that you feel will best serve to honor Kate’s life and work, how are the efforts to circulate her music going, etc.

Thanks again!

LK

Liz Knox, BM, MM
PhD Student, Music Composition Graduate Assistant to
Dr. Dinos Constantiades, Boyd Professor of Composition

Louisiana State University | College of Music & Dramatic Arts
• Scheduling your interview: We have flexibility for choosing an interview date. Editing and final rendering should be complete approximately 7-10 days once your CD, artwork, and recordings are received.

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Privacy Protection

Due to the biographical nature of this project, the participant will control the nature of information provided. Personal information will only be distributed in agreement between the investigator and participant. The participant's contact information will only be featured with permission, and solely for publicity purposes. Participant information will never be shared or sold to a third party.

Study Approval

This study has been approved by the LSU IRB. For questions concerning participant rights, please contact the IRB Chair, Dr. Dennis Landin, 578-8692, or irb@lsu.edu.

Acknowledgment of Consent

Project Director: PL, Elizabeth A. Knox

Signature Date 1-21-19

Participant

Signature Date 1-21-19
• Scheduling your interview: We have flexibility for choosing an interview date. Editing and final rendering should be complete approximately 7-10 days once your CD, artwork, and recordings are received.
• If you would like to participate, please let me know of some potential days/times that would work best with your schedule according to your earliest availability.

Project Risk

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Acknowledgment of Consent

Project Director/PI, Elizabeth A. Knox

Signature

Date January 13, 2020

Participant

Signature

Date January 13, 2020
Transposed Score

Sax Simile
for alto saxophone and piano

Liz Knox

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Program Notes

Sax Simile for alto saxophone and piano was composed from 2018-2019 from a simple concept of motivic and melodic variation among three voices: the saxophone, the right hand, and the left hand of the piano.

The piece celebrates the friendships and collaborative activities of Dr. Dinos Constantinides, Boyd Professor of Composition at Louisiana State University, Dr. Athanasios Zervas, Professor of Music Theory and Creation at the University of Macedonia in Thessaloniki, Greece, and Dr. Maria Asteriadou, pianist and Professor of Music - Manhattan School of Music and Kutztown University.

Performance Notes

Sax Simile is a collection of passionate, chromatic conversations. Each statement is a development or variation of a previous statement in some way. There is a lot of arguing, some contemplating, the occasional agreement, etc.

Alto sax - the introduction should be smoky with lots of blues and rubato. There are several directions for different styles of vibrato. By m. 9, the heavy chromaticism begins, and the piece enters into a more neo-classical style. The effect of m. 13 is more important than the accuracy. The accented tones create the true line and should be highlighted. There are several verbal directions throughout the piece for various nuances.

Piano - as mentioned, all notes are natural unless otherwise indicated. Several courtesy accidentals have been included. They usually apply to a long series of natural pitches. I have relatively large hands and tend to write as though everyone does. If something does not fit well for your reach, feel free to take minor artistic liberties. There are several passages such as m. 47, the effect is more important than note accuracy. These should be very fast and thunderous. The glissando in m. 26 should be a series of any ascending and descending waves of white notes as indicated by the line.

...and yes, the final chord should be C Major! I have always wanted to end a piece in C and today is the day!

Thank you for performing Sax Simile and promoting new music! - Liz Knox
Composed in celebration of the friendships among Dr. Dionis Economou, En. Panayiotis Zervas, and Dr. Markus Astonhausen

Sax Simile

for alto sax and piano

Liz Knoy

(IRM)

Transposed Score | Written Pitches

Alto Saxophone

Captivating, Patient \( \text{j} = 60 \)

soft, fast vib., exaggerated cresc.

sustained

slight accel., growing intensity

Piano

\( \text{j} = 60 \)

Alto Sax

Captivating, Patient \( \text{j} = 60 \)

soft, wide vib., warm, slow, emerging vib.

slight accel., growing intensity

Perc.

\( \text{j} = 60-72 \)

suddenly softer but moderate exaggeration of accented notes

Suddenly softer but moderate exaggeration of accents

Quick but steady, \( \text{j} = 128-132 \)

Quick but steady, \( \text{j} = 128-132 \)

Perc.

\( \text{j} = 8 \)
BIBLIOGRAPHY


VITA

As a composer of acoustic and electroacoustic music, versatile conductor, and passionate teacher, Liz Knox has served in several capacities within the academic and new music community. As an active composer, her music frequently contains elements inspired by nature, American hymnody, symbolism, and the abstract, derived from her eclectic life of faith, rural heritage, diverse education, and love for the unexpected. As an active conductor, Knox has led numerous ensembles spanning hundreds of years of repertoire from early Baroque to the latest world premieres of new music. While pursuing a PhD in music composition at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, she served as a graduate assistant to Dr. Dinos Constantinides, LSU Boyd Professor of Composition, with a secondary focus in Experimental Music & Digital Media with Assistant Professor of Experimental Music, Dr. Edgar Berdahl. She holds a Master of Music degree with a double major in instrumental conducting, obtained under the direction of Col. Michael J. Colburn, retired conductor of the U.S. Marine Band in Washington D.C., now Director of Bands at Butler University in Indianapolis, and music composition, under the direction of Drs. Frank Felice and Michael Schelle. Prior studies were completed through a Bachelor of Music degree in tuba performance with a concentration in composition from the University of Indianapolis, with composition studies under the direction of Dr. John Berners.