

# Composer USA

THE BULLETIN OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMPOSERS, U.S.A.

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## Conductor David Amos

***Sage advice for American  
composers who want to keep  
composing and to be performed***

**by Jeannie Pool**

**M**any are concerned about the future for contemporary composers who want to write for orchestra. American conductor David Amos has a solution: composers should be writing for community orchestras, where their efforts are appreciated, where they will receive more rehearsal, and loving kindness from musicians who play for the love of music. OK, so the works can't be agonizingly difficult, requiring large forces of the more exotic orchestral instruments, but they will be performed if they are well written, well orchestrated works. You can attend the rehearsals and performances (from which there is much to learn) and receive the honor and respect of a devoted community of music lovers. Composers, if they are going to survive, need to stop writing for one another and to please the academic theoreticians, and start writing real music for real music communities. "National recognition and immortality will take care of themselves!" says Amos.

Over the last 30 years, Amos has made an impressive career reviving neglected works by some of America's most important twentieth century symphonic writers--Norman Dello Joio, Alan Hovhaness, Arnold Rosner, Gian Carlo Menotti, Nicolas Flagello, Isidor Achron, Lazar Saminsky, Ernest Bloch, Walter Piston, Morton Gould, Quincy Porter, Paul Creston, Vincent Persichetti, Miklos Rozsa--and has conducted many world premiere recordings for the Koch, Naxos, Harmonia Mundi, Helicon, Albany, Kleos, CRS, Laurel Record, IBWP, Cambria, Crystal, Centaur, Vox Classics Artek, and Fleur de Soir labels. He has conducted the London Symphony Orchestra, the City of London Sinfonia, the Royal Philharmonic, the Scottish National Orchestra, the New Russia Orchestra, Slovak State Philharmonic, the Moravian Philharmonic, the Philharmonia Orchesra, the Crystal Chamber Orchestra, the Polish National Radio Orchestra, the Israel Philharmonic, the Krakow Philharmonic, the Jerusalem Symphony, and the Lithuanian Philharmonic.

Amos' research and development home base is the San Diego Tifereth Israel Community Symphony, celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> season this year. For the 2003-04 season, the orchestra has taken on a slightly different focus: commissioning three new works by film and television composers. In fact, says Amos, "We have made this the theme for our entire season and we think we have three wonderful works as well as two traditional classics from film for our series."

When asked about the criteria for commissioning new works, Amos responded: "Being a high caliber community orchestra of volunteers, we have to take into consideration, first, our audience, and, secondly, the capacity and technical ability of the players involved. While that may be a limiting factor, there is a plus side to all this because when we commission a composer, we are not concerned that it will affect our budget or how many people will attend the concert. Community orchestras can plan two, three, four years ahead without wondering what the finances will be at that time because community orchestras are far more stable in that manner. Professional orchestras have to think from season to season, depending on the gifts, donations, and how well they did at the box office the previous year."

He continued, "We are also looking for music that the orchestra can play, music that audiences will enjoy, and will find a positive experience. Any orchestra should do this—not only community orchestras, but also the big professional ones and the regional ones. You do have to mix the repertoire on the program and give them some of the standard repertoire, the war horses that they enjoy. Musicians look very much forward to playing those, and at the same time, given them something new, something fresh. We have to refresh the repertoire and not just play the same old tired pieces over and over again."

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**ComposerUSA**

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NACUSA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. It was founded by Henry Hadley in 1933 as the National Association of Composers and Conductors. It is one of the oldest organizations devoted to the promotion and performance of American music. Many of America's most distinguished composers have been among its members. NACUSA presents several chamber concerts each year that feature music by its members.

All changes to membership status, address changes, or delivery of *Composer/USA* should be either mailed to the

National Office in California or sent via the internet to the  
NACUSA website.

## President's Greeting

### by Deon Nielsen Price

## NACUSA On The Move

**I**n the Fall of 2003, NACUSA members elected three at-large directors to the Board: John Winsor, Nancy Bloomer Deussen and Jeannie G. Pool. Jeannie and I were selected by the Interim Board to be Secretary and President, respectively, on the Officers' Council. It is an honor to be the first president since the 25-year "reign" by Marshall Bialosky. I look forward to continuing to work with the other officers and with the newly established Board of Directors who represent all the chapters, including Gary Knudson founder of the new Tennessee Chapter!

We can all be grateful to NACUSA leaders for outstanding resources they are providing all of us:

1. Al Benner for editing *Composer/USA*, which is the lifeline of NACUSA and provides documentation of all the NACUSA concerts, as well as notice that you send him of your professional activities.
2. All the Chapter officers for producing NACUSA concerts in six States.
3. David Lefkowitz (and formerly Marshall Bialosky) for producing the Young Composers' Competition which is encouraging many outstanding composers.
4. John Winsor, webmaster, for establishing a member's catalog which is available for use of all members with a current list of 1394 works by 101 composers; and for setting up and continually improving the internet system of communication which will make possible the effectiveness of our geographically diverse Board of Directors.
5. I'lana Cotton and other leaders of the San Francisco Chapter for successfully applying for NACUSA's non-profit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status with the IRS, which makes possible the receipt of grants and contributions.
6. Marshall Bialosky and the Officers' Council for streamlining the By-laws.
7. Daniel Kessner and Tony Wardzinski, who helped me apply for grants. Awarded so far are: a) a 2002 grant in the amount of \$1000 from Copland Supplemental Fund for general operating expenses; and b) a 2003 grant in the amount of \$1000 from the City of Culver City (CA) Arts Commission for NACUSA concerts to be held in Culver City during 2004. NACUSA's Young Composers Competition 25th Anniversary Concert, March 19, at West Los Angeles College is being supported in part by this grant. I strongly encourage all NACUSA members to help chapter leaders identify local arts grant possibilities to help fund local NACUSA concerts.
8. Barbara Bennett for running the general election.
9. The Board of Directors established in 2004, who have already made many recommendations for NACUSA. Here are some of them. Please consider where you might volunteer to help accomplish them:
  - a. Submit to *Composer/USA* a short report/review of each concert, in addition to the printed program.

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**IN MEMORIAM:  
LEROY SOUTHERS**



On November 9, 2003, composer Leroy Southerns died of heart failure at the age of 62. Most of you might not know who he was, but those of us who had the good fortune to hear his music, which was stylistically square in the company of Roy Harris and William Schuman, know that an endearingly self-effacing and therefore sadly under performed composer of rare talent has left us. Those of us who were lucky enough to know him personally, his encyclopedic memory (necessary for managing his 20,000+ piece LP and CD collection), his creative humor, and his dry, off-color wit, will miss him terribly. I'm going to have a hard time getting used to not being able to call him up and for hours about Toscanini re-issues and the relative talents of minimalist composers. He was, all in all, a great musician and an even greater friend.

--Tom Schnauber

Leroy Southerns was the national Secretary of NACUSA for many years during the late seventies and throughout the eighties as well. A graduate of USC in Los Angeles, he was a fine oboist and a reliable producer of an annual concert at Loyola Marymount University of NACUSA music. An outstanding judge of new music, he served on the committee that evaluated the NACUSA composition contest for every year that he was in Los Angeles during my presidency before he moved to New England to accompany his then wife who had accepted a teaching position in New Hampshire. Out there he became a faculty member of the Berklee College of Music in Boston to which he commuted from New Hampshire. He sent me news of his life at Christmas time every year, his last notices containing the sad news that his marriage had broken up.

He was a chain smoker and I imagine that contributed to his very early demise. His service to NACUSA, Loyola Marymount University, and the Berklee College of Music was of a very high order and those of us who worked closely with him will note his passing with great regret.

--Marshall Bialosky

**IN MEMORIAM:  
KENT KENNAN**

*Kent Kennan was a long-time NACUSA member and a former Board Member.*

Kent W. Kennan, professor of music emeritus at The University of Texas at Austin and a prominent figure in the composition of American classical music, died November 1, 2003 in Austin, Texas. He was 90.

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**FROM THE EDITOR**

**AL BENNER**

I don't know if members are having trouble getting information to me via e-mail; depending too much upon the "old" way of sending information to the California address and then relying on Marshall to forward that information to me; or just didn't have the time or didn't have any information to send. Regardless, the result is that you will see there is the least amount of member information in this issue than in any issue since I started as editor ten years ago. I hope this is an anomaly and not the beginning of a trend. Without member information, there really is no need to publish this bulletin—so get your news to me.

Readers might remember my "Point of View" column from the Spring 2000 bulletin entitled "The Cost Factor" about the growing trend of charging a fee for entering competitions or just to submit a score for performance consideration. Since that time, I notice that fee charging is pretty much the norm. Thus it was with interest that I read this year in the NewMusicBox (web magazine of The American Music Center) an article by Molly

Sheridan entitled "You Don't Pay, We Don't Play? Questioning Entry Fees" that says practically the same thing. Either reread my article on the NACUSA website or go to the AMC website and read Ms. Sheridan's—but I would be interested in your thoughts on the subject in the four years between articles about the increasing trend of fee charging and whether or not you are an active payer of such fees.

I want to thank John De Chiaro and the University of Southern Mississippi for hosting the recent CMS Southern Conference. I especially want to thank Stephen Redfield, Rosaro Torres, Michael Kimber and Alexander Roussakovsky for an excellent performance of my string quartet *Into the Jungle: An Interval Exploration*. It was a performance where the players not only obviously worked on the music, they also took great care in following the performance markings in the score. Bravo! My only regret is that it was not recorded.

On another personal note, I don't know how many of you either knew or knew of J. Bunker Clark, but he was a great advocate for Early American Music. He was active in the Society for American Music (the old Sonneck Society) and many other music organizations. He was also a long time editor for Harmonie Park Press dealing with Early American Music. My association with him began almost 10 years ago as the publisher of A. P. Heinrich's *The Sylvania* of which Bunker compiled the music and wrote the introduction. It had been ready to be published years earlier by Da Capo Press, but they discontinued their Early American Music series and thus Bunker approached me as a possible publisher. I would like to say that it was a successful venture but to date, school libraries that had the earlier Opuses 1 and 2 of Heinrich (*The Dawning of Music in Kentucky* and *The Western Minstrel*) have been reluctant to complete the entire collection of Heinrich with this Opus 3. It could be that this

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book came out at a time when academic institutions, in order to be perceived as more pc, have moved away from teaching musicology courses in American Music; or it could be that there truly is no interest in Heinrich. Nevertheless, my years of both speaking to Bunker through phone calls or e-mail messages have been worth the investment. Besides, maybe there will be a revival of Heinrich. In which case, I have plenty of books ready to go.

You might recall my column "10 Things I Think I Think" (Fall 2002) where I talked about my experiences at the CMS/NACUSA National Conference in Kansas City. It was on the very last day that I found out that Bunker was also at the same conference as an exhibitor for Harmonie Park Press. Unfortunately by the time I found out, he had already left. Like so many things in life, I certainly thought there would be another opportunity for us to meet face-to-face. Unfortunately that did not happen. J. Bunker Clark died on December 26, 2003 at the age of 72. God bless you Bunker. Thank you for the invaluable experience we had together. ...

## Amos *Continued from page 1*

What about funding for commissioning projects? Amos said it comes from, “. . . Angels, mostly members of our congregation, who are willing to support it. We went on a campaign with our committee. We raised more money than we ever had before. We had raffles and other fundraising projects. Being an orchestra with a rather small budget, the cost of these three commissions exceeded our entire budget for the year. The Orchestra Committee includes an equal number of orchestra members and members of the synagogue. Three of the committee members are ex-Presidents of the orchestra so they are not only enthusiastic about what we are doing, but they are “doers.” They are able to raise money and to call the right people, and they put in a lot of work themselves.”

Asked if he had advice for composers who want to write for orchestra, Amos said, “There are many things you, the composer, can do to help these works into creation. First, think of audience friendly music, not music that will keep people away. People will come back to programs with which they are comfortable, and let’s face it, most of our paying audience today, and our patrons today are older people. Most professional orchestras will not touch a piece over 20 or 25 minutes long because it interferes with too much of the rest of the program, and this also applies to community orchestras.”

He continued, “You also have to write using instrumentation which does not make it more expensive to be able to produce such a piece. I always make fun of a piece that calls for 17 harps and three ocarinas. You have to write for an instrumentation which is available and if there is an exotic or less usual instrument, they should be easily available. Composers have to be sensitive to that and if they ignore these factors, they are going to find many stumbling blocks to having their music performed. With community orchestras, obviously the difficulty of the music and the accessibility are important. Not only do we have to sell it to our audiences, but we have to sell it to the musicians who will play it. I’ve talked to professional musicians of some of the world’s greatest orchestras who tell me the greatest resistance sometimes comes from the musicians themselves. Composers cannot be ignorant or insensitive to the situation if they want their music to be performed during their lifetime.”

Amos added that it is very important for a composer to know the community and university orchestras in his or her area. “Probably university orchestras are a happy medium between professional and regional orchestras and community orchestras because they have a younger group of musicians and many times, but not in all cases, have very stable personnel. So you can start with the university. Meet the conductors. Ask questions. You will be surprised. One contact will provide you with ten other contacts.

“Most importantly, you have to listen. You cannot be in your little ivory tower, writing your own music, having your own thoughts and thinking they are purer. You are a part of your community, add Amos. “You are part of the world. Whether or not we like to admit it, we are all salesmen of our art form and our causes. Any campaigns we do about our music mean that we have to meet people and ask questions and keep our eyes and ears open and listen to what’s being played on radio. Talk to the announcers and those running the radio stations. They have many contacts. They know the orchestral literature better than most of us.” &

*Jeannie Pool is a Los Angeles composer and NACUSA Board Member. David Amos and the Tifereth Israel Community Orchestra can be reached by writing them at 6660 Cowles Mountain Blvd., San Diego, CA 92119.*

**Welcome to NACUSA Tennessee!**

## President’s Greeting *Continued from page 2*

b. To make organizational news available to all members, post NACUSA By-laws on the web site; and within two weeks of meetings of the Board or the Officers’ Council post official minutes.

c. Establish a Chapter Coordinator position on the National Advisory Council.

d. Establish a newsletter subscription category for libraries, ensembles, and other organizations.

Other issues under discussion include -- making *Composer/USA* available on the web site; persuading a few wonderful, but dead-beat members, who we would dearly like to remain members, to stay current with their dues(!); re-establishing those excellent awards luncheons of years past where many distinguished American composers and performers were honored -- where, when, how?

NACUSA is evolving and a work in progress. Please contact me, other officers or your chapter leaders if you would like to help us move forward with these projects. ♪

### Composition Competitions

The **AUROS GROUP** for New Music, a Boston based contemporary ensemble in its twelfth season, announces its seventh annual COMPOSITION COMPETITION open to all composers. Prize: \$300 and a performance during the 2005-2006 season. Duos and trios drawn from the following instrumentation will be considered: flute, oboe, clarinet, saxophone, violin, viola, cello, bass, piano, percussion (2 players), guitar, soprano, electronic sounds (tape/CD). Works may already have been performed. There is no minimum/maximum length requirement. There is no age requirement. Submissions should not be anonymous. The winning composition will receive a prize of \$300 and a performance during Auros’ 2005-2006 concert season. All works may also be considered for future programming. An entry fee of \$20 per work submitted is required for entries postmarked by **May 1, 2004**. A \$30 entry fee per work applies for submissions postmarked between May 2 and June 1, 2004. Checks should be in US dollars and made payable to the Auros Group for New Music. Send scores, recordings (it is highly recommended, but not required, to send a recording -- MIDI is acceptable), bio, fee, and SASE (if materials are to be returned) to:

**The Auros Group for New Music \* 639 Weld Street \* Boston, MA 02132.** Inquires may be made to the address above or to [auros@auros.com](mailto:auros@auros.com). Web: <http://www.auros.com>. Please do not send entries by registered, return receipt, or signature required mail.

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**EARPLAY 2005** announces the fifth annual Donald Aird Memorial Earplay Composers Competition. Composers of any age or nationality may submit works for one to six performers, of any duration, selected from the following instruments: Flute (Piccolo/Alto flute), Clarinet (Bass Clarinet), Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello. Works with electronics will also be considered. A prize of \$500 will be awarded to the winning work, which will be performed during the spring of 2005. The winner will be announced in June, 2004. The judges reserve the right to not award a prize if no composition is deemed prize-worthy. All entries may be considered for performance. There is an entry fee of \$25 for one score, or \$20 per score if more than one is submitted. Please make check or money order payable to Earplay. The postmark deadline is Monday, **April 14, 2004**. Please send: score(s) [anonymous]; recording(s) (CD, DAT, or cassette), if available [anonymous]; a sealed envelope containing an information sheet with the work’s title, composer’s name, address, telephone, and e-mail, program note, and curriculum vitae; entry fee; and a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return of materials (international submissions cannot be returned). Please send entries to:

**Earplay 2005 Composers Competition \* P.O. Box 192125 \* San Francisco, CA 94119-2125.**

<http://www.earplay-sf.org> \* [earplay@earplay-sf.org](mailto:earplay@earplay-sf.org)



# Career Development 101

by Benjamin Boone

As a student, my teachers taught me how to write effective music, but for the most part, I had to learn the business of composition the hard way. Following are a few practical suggestions and insights that I wish I had learned much earlier. I hope they will help young composers as they begin to enter the professional world of composition.

## Who to Write For

If you want your music to be performed, then write music for those individuals or ensembles that are most likely to perform your music. Take a look around you. Write for a church choir, community wind ensemble, the best trumpet player from school, your pianist friend who lives in NYC, an ensemble at your school (or alma mater) or a former teacher or a colleague. In return, you will get multiple rehearsals and an adequate performance that you can record and then shop to others. For those interested in computer or commercial music, add to this list a local video production company, advertising agencies, local radio/television stations, recording studios and art galleries. You will develop relationships with performers, directors and producers that have a web of connections into which you can tap. Members of your community will come to know your work and will support your activities in the future. By writing for those around you and those you know, you will gain experience, make contacts, develop an audience and form valuable relationships.

## What to Write

From a marketing perspective, it is wise to create a product that fills a niche, and to maximize the potential shelf-life of that product. So ask your performer/commissioner what holes they have in their repertoire. Perhaps you are writing for a trumpet choir and the director says, "There really aren't any good one-minute encores for this ensemble." Then you have struck gold! Write a good one-minute encore, and it is more likely to be picked up by other groups, performed widely and published. Tip: I have recently become aware (through a colleague) that there is a lucrative market for "good" music for intermediate and beginning musicians and ensembles.

## Presenting Your Music

If the score doesn't look professional, it will be assumed the music isn't either. Create a score and parts that are user-friendly. Include descriptive adjectives, measure numbers (at least for each staff), rehearsal letters and appropriate directions for a performance. When printing, use heavier paper stock to eliminate bleed-through on double-sided pages and use cardstock for the cover page and back or use a laminated cover and back. Make sure the binding allows for easy page turns and make sure the parts have page turns in appropriate places (not in the middle of a run!) and appropriate cues. If using a notation program, use a quality printer. For parts, you can copy onto 11x17 sheets, folded in half to create 8 1/2 x 11 booklets. Scores printed on legal paper can be enlarged to 11x17 (121%). Scores should include the following sections in the front: "Program Note," "Performance Notes," and "About the Composer" with your contact information. It is very important that people can contact you easily.

## Reward Performers

Thank your performers with a card, a box of chocolate, a bottle of wine or a dinner. Let them know you appreciate them and they will be willing to help you in the future. If they feel appreciated, they will be more likely to perform your music again, may share the music with other musicians and may even commission a work. Even if they did not render a stellar

performance, it is simply bad form to criticize the people who took the time and effort to perform your piece. The poor performance might actually be partially your fault (score and parts not delivered on time, technical demands beyond the capability of the performer, unclear part, etc.) or the performer may not be well.

## Publicity /Audience Development

Have a mailing/email sign-up list at every performance where it is feasible and ask those attending to sign it. Send announcements of your concerts, or other concerts of interest to those on your list. If your piece appears on a group's concert, then see if you can get their mailing list for use in the future. When you send out notices, perhaps include other news so that it is a document people will view as a source of valuable information. Well in advance of a concert, send a press release to media outlets such as radio, internet, television and print publications. Most have an "arts calendar" listing. Here are other ideas: Offer to appear on radio or television shows; give a pre-concert talk at area colleges or at the hall; give some tickets away on the air; offer to speak at local club meetings; start your own new music group and/or ensemble; get to know all directors and performers in your area; start a new music newsletter; identify local arts/music reporters and establish a relationship; have works performed on public access stations; write music reviews for the local paper; send recordings to the local public radio or classical music station for broadcast; send flyers to local school directors; give a memorable reception; and send any commercial CDs to appropriate outlets for review. Follow up on every contact you make. Persistence pays off!

## Get A Good Recording of Your Piece.

Don't rely on "live" recordings, particularly of large ensemble works. See if you can schedule a recording session during a normal rehearsal time, perhaps after the concert, so that you can get the best recording possible. Then have it burned onto several CDs with professional labeling. Include the names of the performers (so future performers will know you will publicize them if they record your work) as well as contact information.

## Professional Marketing Tools

Unless you are a superstar, you must present yourself and your work in a professional manner. So before you can think of soliciting commissions or performances, assemble a professional portfolio. You need professional looking scores and a demo CD that represents your best work. Other handy business tools include business cards, a readily available biography, works list, discography, artistic statement and web site which include the former plus sound files, sample score pages, links to commercially available products, upcoming events, links to publishers, ordering information and contact information. Assemble your portfolio in a way that says to the client, "I am a professional."

## Develop and Retain Professional Contacts

Make a list of all area musical professionals, and introduce yourself to each one. Artist colonies, music festivals, summer composition programs, concerts and conferences are all wonderful places to make contacts outside of your immediate area.

Attend instrumental/vocal/conducting conferences as well. For example, if you are interested in writing for flute or have written for flute, go to a National Flute Association conference and shop yourself. You will have an opportunity to meet some of the best flutists in the country, and hear several new works for flute. Have several copies of your flute works to distribute.

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Visit the display area where you can make connections with publishers of flute music. Many will review your work there at the conference. Attend performances and introduce yourself to musicians you think might enjoy your music. If it is around mealtime, hang around. They might ask you to join them for dinner, and if not, why not ask them?

If you admire a living composer, contact them and see if you can get a lesson. What is the worst he or she can say? How else will he or she come to know your music? Once you have established a relationship, keep in contact.

**Disseminate your work**

Using your newly established network, send out your music and follow through. If you met a flutist at a conference who told you, "I'd like to hear your work," then send it to him or her. Your goal is to get your music into the hands of directors and performers. Answer calls for scores in the AMC newsletter and elsewhere, submit scores to appropriate new music ensembles (see the AMC publication *Contemporary Music Ensembles: A Directory*), send scores to friends who have connections and send scores to leading professionals. Follow through a few weeks later by asking if they received the materials, and whether they have had an opportunity to listen to your work. If you are a young composer you might ask what advice they might have for you. Your goal is to follow through and provide them with an enjoyable experience. Never give anyone a reason to be irritated with you.

**Valuable Resources**

As most know, a wealth of resources awaits composers on the web—everything from grants, calls for scores, new music sound files, interviews, biographical information, composer catalogues, helpful copyright and publishing articles and commissioning opportunities. If you haven't already taken advantage of the Internet, start by checking out these sites and their many links: [music-usa.org/nacusa](http://music-usa.org/nacusa), [amc.net](http://amc.net) (a gold-mine), [meetthecomposer.org](http://meetthecomposer.org), [nyfa.org](http://nyfa.org), [composersforum.org](http://composersforum.org), [societyofcomposers.org](http://societyofcomposers.org), [under.org/cpcc](http://under.org/cpcc), [ascap.com](http://ascap.com), and [bmi.com](http://bmi.com).

**Enter Select Competitions**

Send your works to every legitimate competition you can and then forget that you ever sent the package. It does you no good to fixate on the outcome. Send your materials and then let it go. Realize that every competition is a crap-shoot. If you win, it doesn't mean your piece was the best (each of three judges may have ranked a different piece as #1 and #2, but your piece was #3 on everyone's list, so you won), and if you lose it doesn't mean the piece isn't worthy. I submitted the same piece with the same recording to a prestigious national competition three years in a row. It lost the first two years, but won the third. Same piece, same recording, different judges. Also realize that by submitting to competitions, there is a good chance your music will be heard by leading professionals. For example, a famous composer once called me out of the blue to tell me he liked a piece of mine he had heard while judging a competition (though the piece did not even place).

On the other hand, there is always the unfortunate possibility that your submission won't even be heard. When I was in graduate school, a group of composers wound the leader tapes of their submissions so that they were in the middle of the cassette. If the tape was listened to or rewound, it would be easy to tell. We submitted these to various competitions and programs and discovered that some of the most select competitions did not listen to the tapes.

Be wary of competitions with fees. If 100 composers enter a competition that awards a \$1,000 first prize, and the entry fee is \$25,

then the organizers are making a \$1,500 profit, and paying the prize out of entry fees. Hmm . . .

**To Publish or not to publish, that is the question**

Unless there is a commercial or pedagogical application, one doesn't publish music for the money. Print publishers have been selling less since the advent of the Xerox machine, and the Internet is making traditional publishing even less profitable. What can an average composer expect? At most, 10-15% of the retail price of the product. In return, you give up the copyright (usually) and 50% of performance royalties. It is rare (unless you famous) to be given money up front for print publication. So why do it? There is the potential to reach a greater audience and you have a more professional looking score to include in your portfolio.

Bigger isn't better. I have a friend who was overjoyed when G. Schirmer published one of his pieces about 10 years ago. I was jealous, because I had received a contract from a lesser-known publisher at that same time. It turns out that ten years later, his work has sold very few copies, being lost in a large catalogue and not actively "shopped," while mine has sold hundreds of copies, been performed across the country, appeared on multiple CDs and has been required repertoire in a national competition—all because the publisher shopped the product. If you are unknown and interested in performances, my recommendation is to find a small specialty publisher (one for brass music, flute music, etc.) that attends regional and/or national conventions, develops relationships with teachers and performers and takes an interest in their composers. They will introduce your music to performers. Another option is to self-publish (you then keep all royalties and profits).

**Contract advice:** Attach a rider stating that if the company does not sell a single copy of your piece in a given year, fails to list the work in its catalogue, dissolves without selling its catalogue to another party, etc. the copyright will revert back to you (unless some nominal amount is paid to you per year). This keeps your work from dying without hope of resurrection if the publisher sits on your piece or dissolves. Also, be aware that many contracts have a line stating that the publisher can appoint an attorney to defend your work, and that you are liable for resulting fees. Attach a rider stating that you will not pay unlimited attorney's fees (if any at all).

**Commissions**

Tell my students that if a good performer asks them to write a piece for them, then do it, no questions asked. Getting another piece under your belt, writing for someone you know will perform your piece well is enough payback. But once you've written several pieces, you can begin negotiating a price. For instance, when someone suggests you write a piece for them, say "I'd love to do that . . . let's look for some funding." This is an indirect way of saying you would need to be paid. Where do you start? Perhaps you have an affiliation with a town/university/honor society/orchestra that is having an anniversary celebration. Why not sell them the idea of a commemorative commission? Perhaps you could suggest to a friend who is giving a recital that you could provide them with a work. Or if you attend a concert by an outstanding vocalist, why not give them your portfolio and let them know you would love to write a work for them?

The only way performers will come to you is if they hear your music or if you are recommended by a trusted contact. The more your music is performed and recorded, the more groups will want to play your music. The more music of yours that is commercially available and performed, the more likely it is you will be approached for a commission.

Other ideas: apply for new works grant, apply to competitions that give a commission, seek private or corporate funding, ask music organizations for suggestions, approach

*Continued on page 14*

## Meet NACUSA's East Coast Chapter President:

**MAX LIFCHITZ**

**M**AX LIFCHITZ has been an active member of NACUSA since 1981 when he was elected Secretary of the East Coast Chapter. Since 1992, he has served as President of the Chapter and has been responsible for over 50 New York City concerts featuring music by NACUSA composers.

In addition to his activities as a composer and concert producer, Lifchitz is also a much-sought after performer and record producer. His works have been performed throughout the US, Asia, Latin America and Europe. They are available on the Classic Masters, CRI, New World and North/South record labels. As a pianist, he has released 7 solo albums featuring music from the Americas. The last one *Diversions*, was nominated for a Grammy.

A graduate of The Juilliard School and Harvard University, Lifchitz's creative and performance activities have been funded by grants from, among others, the ASCAP, Ford and Guggenheim Foundations; the University of Michigan Society of Fellows; the Copland Fund for Music; The Virgil Thomson Foundation; the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. His appearances as pianist throughout Latin America have been underwritten by the US Fund for Artists at International Festivals.

Lifchitz taught at Columbia University and at the Manhattan School of Music before joining the staff of the University at Albany, SUNY in 1986. At this institution, he served as Chair of both the Music Department and the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Department where he holds a joint appointment.

Lifchitz was awarded first prize in the 1976 International Gaudeamus Competition for Performers of Twentieth Century Music held in Holland. Robert Commanday, writing for The San Francisco Chronicle described him as "a young composer of brilliant imagination and a stunning, ultra-sensitive pianist." The New York Times music critic Allan Kozinn praised Lifchitz for his "clean, measured and sensitive performances" while Anthony Tommasini stated that he "conducted a strong performance." Payton MacDonald writing for the American Record Guide remarked, "Mr. Lifchitz is as good on the podium as he is behind the piano."

His CD album devoted to the piano music of Mexico elicited the following comment from Fanfare Magazine: "After several listenings, North/South Recordings No. 1010 is recommended to more than just a specialist audience because of the wide variety of attractive and challenging music that it contains. Lifchitz is a poetic pianist with requisite power to make the many granitic climaxes register. Easily, the most interesting new piano disc so far in 1996"

The American Record Guide commented as follows on his release *The American Collection* (North/South Recordings 1014): "suffice it to say that it would be hard to find a better snapshot of what American composers have been writing for the piano in the past decade than this collection. Lifchitz plays everything with sensitivity and force, where appropriate; and recorded sound is vivid and natural."

## Meet NACUSA's Virginia Chapter President:

**LEIGH BAXTER**

**L**EIGH BAXTER is President of the Virginia Chapter of NACUSA. He teaches Music Theory, Music Appreciation, American Music History, Applied Piano, Class Piano, and Chorus at John Tyler and J. Sargeant Reynolds Community Colleges in Richmond, VA and is also a piano tuner and technician. A handful of

**MEET THE COMPOSERS**

works have been published by Seesaw Music. His *Lewis and Clark* Symphonic Poem was premiered in 2003 by the Richmond Symphony, and is scheduled for another performance in May, by the St. Charles, MO Symphony. The concert is part of the National Bicentennial Celebration of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Baxter has also written for band, jazz band, chorus, pipe organ, piano, sax quartet, guitar, percussion, voice and piano, and various instruments with piano. He holds a Master of Music degree in Composition and Conducting from Virginia Commonwealth University, where he studied composition with Allan Blank and Jack Jarrett, and piano with Sonia Vlahcevic.

Baxter is married to Cindy, who teaches 5th grade, and has a 5 year old daughter named Kelly, both of whom he adores. He is an avid fisherman with "Expert Angler" status in the state of Virginia, and has a typical love-hate relationship with the game of golf.

**Opportunities**

**Music04** is a unique and intensive 9-day music festival which focuses on the music of three principal guest composers, a selected group of young composers, as well as a group of well-known works from the last several generations. The festival is now in its ninth year; this year the dates are: June 12-20. The three principal guest composers are: Kaija Saariaho, Chen Yi and Frederic Rzewski. Guest performers include eighth blackbird, Emanuele Arciuli and Frederic Chiu, among many others. Application deadline: **April 5, 2004**. Please contact Joel Hoffman, Artistic Director of the festival at (513) 556-9504 or [joel.hoffman@uc.edu](mailto:joel.hoffman@uc.edu) for details and information, as well as to request a brochure. Works by young composers will be performed during the festival. In addition, young composers will have access to the three principal composers and the other guest artists through master classes and other meetings. Instrumentalists and vocalists are also welcome to apply. All application materials can be found on the Music04 web page; the address is <http://www.ccm.uc.edu/musicx>.

The **New Music Festival in Cincinnati**, **Music04** and its corollary program for younger musicians, **Accent04** are together sponsoring a composition competition for a short piece (min: 2 minutes, max: 5 min.) for a young string quartet. The piece must be written for the usual configuration of two violins, viola and cello, and should be performable by high school string players. It should be comparable in difficulty and no harder than William Grant Still's *Danzas de Panama* (Southern Music Publ., distributed by Presser), or Igor Stravinsky's *Three Pieces* (Boosey & Hawkes). Application deadline: **April 5, 2004**. Three finalist works will be chosen for performance during Music04, and will be performed by participants of Accent04. After the performance, one work will be awarded the 1st prize: \$700. The 2nd prize winner will be awarded \$200. The third prize winner will be awarded \$100. The competition is open to all composers; the **application fee is \$20**. Composers already participating in Music04 or Accent04 will have the competition application fee waived. For complete information and application materials, please go to the festival website <http://www.ccm.uc.edu/musicx>.



The following reflects performances that took place through December, 2003

## PERFORMANCES

**Al Benner:** Dec. 24 – Premiere of *Go Tell it on the Mountain* (arr) by the Hudson Valley Brass (James Osborn, Peter Bellino, trumpets, and Paul Bellino, David Winograd, trombones) on a Christmas Eve service, Church of the Epiphany, New York, NY.  
Dec. 7 – Premiere of *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* (arr) by Adam

Mar. 22 – *Otoño* and *Verano Blues* from *Four Seasons for Clarinet and Piano* by The Price Duo CSU Stanislaus.

**William Price:** Nov. 17 - *The Cat* for voice and piano on a Mid-South NACUSA Concert, LSU Recital Hall, Baton Rouge, LA.  
Nov. 7 -- *Let Freedom Ring* for tape, Electric LaTeX Conference, University of North Texas, Denton, TX. Also on Oct. 8 on the Mid-South NACUSA Concert, LSU Recital Hall, Baton Rouge, LA. November 17, 2003 - Oct. 10 - *Three Diminutive Movements* by Joe L. Alexander, tuba, on the Louisiana Composers Consortium Concert #17, Treen Auditorium, Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts, Natchitoches, LA.

## COMMISSIONS

**Dinos Constantinides** was commissioned by Linda Strommen for the work *Threnos of Creon for Oboe and Strings*; and by Iwona Glinka for *Piccolo Concerto*.

VocalEssence has commissioned **Tina Davidson** to write a large new work for their 26 member Ensemble Singers under the direction of Philip Brunelle. The work, entitled *Hymn of the Universe*, is based on the writings of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, an ardent Christian, an internationally known scientist and prolific religious writer who died in the 1950s. Using texts from his hymn-like prayer, "The Mass of the World," and his riveting "Hymn to Matter," Davidson delves into the spirit of Chardin's writing, revealing "the essence of things – a living heart beating with the fiery energy of love and compassion." *Hymn of the Universe* is scored for SATB chorus, English horn, string quartet and marimba, and received its premiere on March 13, 2004 in Minneapolis.

**Nancy Bloomer Deussen** won a commission from the Foundation for Universal Sacred Music for a new choral work to be premiered in New York City in Fall, 2004.

## BROADCAST MEDIA

**Nancy Bloomer Deussen's** compositions were heard throughout the year on radio stations: WNYC-New York City, WCYN-Syracuse, NY, WPRB-Princeton, NJ, WOMR-Provincetown, MA, WGDR-Vermont and KUSP-Santa Cruz, CA.

## AWARDS

**Dinos Constantinides** received an ASCAP Plus Award.

## PUBLICATIONS

**Dinos Constantinides:** *Family Triptych* (#DCC8) for soprano or tenor saxophone or clarinet and strings by Connors Publications.

## RECORDINGS

**Beth Anderson's** new CD from Pogus Productions is out entitled PEACHY KEEN-O, an all recording of her text-sound, graphic, electro-acoustic, and electronic music from the 1970's including *Torero Piece*, *Tower of Power*, *Peachy Keen-O*, *Ocean Motion*, *Mildew Mind*, *Country Time*, *Yes Sir Ree*, *I Can't Stand It*, *Joan*, and *Ode*. The performers include Beth and Marjorie Anderson, Linda Collins, Kitty Mraw, Ana Perez, Wharton Tiers, Michael Blair and Spec Edwards. Pogus Productions-P21030-2 is available at <http://www.pogus.com> or call toll-free, 877.692.7999 or write Pogus, 50 Ayr Rd., Chester, NY 10918-2409. The current price is \$14.00 plus S&H. There is more information and an MP3 at <http://www.pogus.com/21030.html>.

**Brian Conn:** Classical Angst Records heralds the latest release by The Brian Conn New Music Ensemble: *Requiem for chorus and chamber orchestra*. Conn's work, based on the Latin mass for the dead, was completed in 2000 and was recorded in October of

Smith (alto sax) and Christine Meche (piano) on a LSMSA Chorale/Chamber Ensemble/Encore! concert, NSU Fine Arts Auditorium, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, LA.

Nov. 11 – *For Honor* by Amanda Cassidy, Janice Hartner (clarinets) and Adam Smith (alto sax) on the LSMSA Veterans Day Program, Treen Auditorium, Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts, Natchitoches, LA.

Oct. 19 – *The Request* by Lisa Benner (soprano) and the composer (piano) at the First United Methodist Church, Natchitoches, LA. Also by the same performers on Oct. 10 on the

Oct. 10 – *Mary and Her Little Lamb* (four-hands piano) by Lisa Benner and the composer and *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* (arr) by Lisa Benner (soprano) and the composer on the Louisiana Composers Consortium Concert #17, Treen Auditorium, Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts, Natchitoches, LA.

**Dinos Constantinides:** Nov. 18 – *Lenna in Minneapolis* by Chase Ziemann (trumpet) on a LSMSA Student Recital, Treen Auditorium, Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts, Natchitoches.

Nov. 17 – *Olga's Song* for voice and piano, Mayumi Yotsumoto (sop) on a Mid-South NACUSA Concert, LSU Recital Hall, Baton Rouge, LA.

Nov. 2 – *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* by the Louisiana Sinfonietta.

Oct. 19 – *Tale* for trumpet, trombone and piano, and *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra* in Athens, Greece.

Oct. 10 – *Family Triptych* by Adam Smith (alto saxophone) on the Louisiana Composers Consortium Concert #17, Treen Auditorium, Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts, Natchitoches, LA.

**Nancy Bloomer Deussen:** Dec 20 – *Good Cheer to All* (music by the composer) performed at Christmas at Vanessa's, Santa Fe, NM. Also on Dec. 17, 18 & 19.

Nov. 2 – *Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano* at chamber music concert at Temple B'nai Emonah, San Francisco, CA.

Nov. 1 – *Reflections on the Hudson* (orchestra) by The Knox county Symphony of Gambier, Ohio, conducted by Benjamin Locke.

Sept. 7 – *San Andreas Suite* by The Salmon Brook Trio Plus at the Timexpo Museum in Waterbury, CT.

Aug. 9 – Premiere of *Celebration Octet* at the Mu Phi Epsilon Centennial Convention in Cincinnati, OH.

**Daniel Kessner:** Oct. 10 – *Symphonic Mobile II* by the Cal State Northridge Wind Ensemble, conducted by the composer, CSUN Performing Arts Center.

**Liduíno Pitombeira:** Oct. 8 – *Suite for Clarinet* by Yos Vaneeson at the LSU Recital Hall, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Jeannie Pool:** Oct. 5 – *Verano Blues* for clarinet and piano performed on a concert tour in Ohio by the Price Duo. Also on Oct. 1, 3 & 4. Oct. 3 – Canadian premiere of *The Secret Life of Paper Cranes* and premiere of *Trio for Clarinet, Cello and Piano* performed by Kaye Royer, clarinet, Ronald Royer, cello and Janice Lin, piano at the University of Toronto on the LesAmis Concert Series.

June 22 – Premiere of *The Secret Life of Paper Cranes* for string orchestra, Church of the Lighted Window Chamber Orchestra, Joel Lish, conducting.

May 6 – Premiere of *Fantasia for Anne Boleyn* by pianist Beverly Sera-Brooks, Fullerton College.



2003 under the direction of William Chin for Conn's independent label. *Requiem* is a tonal work full of captivating melodies and harmonies that not only showcases its soloists and chorus but displays Conn's innate ability for orchestration. William Chin, director of the Arianna Singers, deftly conducts soloists, Mary Ann Beatty, Kristi McGonagle-French, John Eskola, Kevin Hall and a 40 member ensemble in this fifty minute work of operatic proportions. *Requiem for chorus and orchestra* can be purchased at [www.classicalangst.com](http://www.classicalangst.com), [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com), [www.itunes.com](http://www.itunes.com), and other on-line retailers and music download sites.

**Dinos Constantinides:** "Antigone" – Opera in 3 Acts on Vestige Records; "Music for Solo Flute from LSU" with Iwona Glinka and "Musical Stories for Children" by the Louisiana Sinfonietta on Magni Publications.

## MEMBER NEWS

**Beth Anderson** had a concert on November 19 at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in New York City entitled *Swales and Angels -- An Evening of the Music of Beth Anderson*. Performed on that concert was *Flute Swale* for flute solo, *January Swale* for string quartet, *March Swale* for string quartet, *Pennyroyal Swale* for string quartet, *Rosemary Swale* for string quartet, *Piano Concerto* for piano, strings and percussion, *The Angel* for soprano, harp, celesta and strings, and *New Mexico Swale* for flute, percussion and strings. The names of the performers were the Rubio String Quartet, Jessica Marsten, soprano, Joseph Kubera, piano and celesta, Gary M. Schneider, conductor, Andrew Bolotowsky, flute, Andre Tarantiles, harp, David Rozenblatt, percussion, and Darren Campbell. The repertoire on this concert (except for *Flute Swale*) will be out on a New World CD this year.

**Nancy Bloomer Deussen:** Lecture/Recital on her compositions on Nov. 19 for San Jose Music Study Club in San Jose, CA. Another Lecture/Recital on Sept. 17 at Westminster Presbyterian Church (noon concert series) in Sacramento, CA. She had a World Premiere on Feb. 14th of her new orchestral work *TICO* by The Mission Chamber Orchestra conducted by Emily Ray in San Jose, CA (with more to follow). She also received a grant from The American Composers Forum for my work on *TICO*.

## Conners Publications CP Press Publications

has music of Dinos Constantinides, James Chaudoir, Liduino Pitombeira, William Price, Robert Rathmell, Mitchell Turner, Mickie Willis, John Winsor and 26 other composers  
<http://hostnet.pair.com/conners/>  
<http://www.music-usa.org/conners/>

## Membership News

Please consider joining the new Tennessee chapter (Gary Knudson – [gknudson@dvf-plic.com](mailto:gknudson@dvf-plic.com), president). Your membership will give the Tennessee chapter an initial boost and might give you another performance opportunity as well.

To pay dues online:

1. Go to <http://www.music-usa.org/nacusa/>
2. Select "Member Area" from the menu.
3. Select your name from the dropdown list.
4. Enter your password.
5. Select "Pay Dues" from the menu.
6. Follow instructions provided on the "dues worksheet" page.

## Support New American Music Join NACUSA

A non-profit organization -- successor to the National Association of American Composers and Conductors  
**and receive ComposerUSA  
three times a year!**



Chapter members must also belong to the national organization. Please send one check covering the total dues from the national and chapter membership plus any additional contribution you may wish to make.

**\$25 --- National Membership dues**

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Chapter members must belong to the national organization. National and chapter lifetime memberships are available to individuals (national = \$150.00; chapter = \$150.00). Joint membership is available to additional persons within a regular member's household (national = \$15.00; chapter = \$15.00). San Francisco chapter members pay an additional \$5.00 activity fee. This fee applies to all categories of membership (regular, student, senior, and joint). NACUSA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Donations in the friend/patron/ benefactor categories are tax deductible as charitable contributions. Dues aren't; however, they are generally deductible as professional expenses.

# NACUSA CONCERTS

## Mid-South Chapter NACUSA Concert

Wednesday, October 8, 2003, 6:00 PM  
LSU Recital Hall, Baton Rouge, LA

- Five Viniettes for Piano* (2003) . . . . CARLO VINCETTI FRIZZO  
Carlo Vincetti Frizzo, piano
- Surge* (2003) . . . . . DAWN K. WILLIAMS  
Robert Peck, leader
- Event Horizon* (2003) . . . . . ROBERT PECK  
Robert Peck, cello; Dawn Williams, piano
- Surf Bites* (2002) . . . . . CHARLES HAARHUES  
tape alone
- Let Freedom Ring* (1997) . . . . . WILLIAM PRICE  
tape alone
- Aset* (2003) . . . . . DAWN K. WILLIAMS  
Dawn Williams, speaker; Robert Peck, prepared piano
- Suite for Clarinet, Op. 65* (2002) . LUDUINO J.P. DE OLIVEIRA  
Yos Vaneesorn, clarinet

## Mid-South Chapter NACUSA Concert

Monday, November 17, 2003, 6:00 PM  
LSU Recital Hall, Baton Rouge, LA

### Performers

Mayumi Yotsumoto, soprano; Chin-Ming Lin, piano  
Carlo Vincetti Frizzo, piano; Judy Hung, piano  
Charles Haarhues, percussion

- Cores de Lua* . . . . . MARIA DI CAVALCANTI  
*Retrato De Uma Cidade* . . . . . LUDUINO J.P. DE OLIVEIRA  
*Wind and the Window Flower* . . . . CARLO VINCETTI FRIZZO  
*Pie Jesu and I Shall Know Why* . . . . JOHN CRABTREE  
*Olga's Song* . . . . . DINOS CONSTANTINIDES  
*Three Tanka* . . . . . CHARLES HAARHUES  
*The Cat* . . . . . WILLIAM PRICE  
*The Pillow Song* . . . . . PAUL BARKER

## Opportunity

The Society for New Music and the NY Federation of Music Clubs seek to encourage promising New York State composers of student age or those just beginning their professional careers. The competition is open to any composer currently living in New York State (students currently studying in New York State ARE eligible), born on or after May 1, 1974, whose music has not previously been performed by the Society for New Music. Two awards will be made: one for \$500 and another for \$250. Also, each of the two prize-winning composers will be performed by the Society for New Music during the 2004-2005 season. Works should be for one to seven performers, in any combination of instruments, tape, and/or solo voices. Choral music will not be considered. A composer may submit only one work. Works must be submitted anonymously, accompanied by a cover sheet listing the title, duration, instrumentation, and date of composition of the work, and the name, address, telephone number, email address, and date of birth of the composer. Submitted works must be postmarked no later than **May 1, 2004**. There is no application fee. For complete submission requirements and other details of the competition, visit the Society for New Music web site at <http://www.societyfornewmusic.org/snm/israel.cfm> or contact Samuel Pellman at [spellman@hamilton.edu](mailto:spellman@hamilton.edu).

# NACUSA

## Upcoming NACUSA Concerts

Please go to this link to see and download the flyer calendar of NACUSA concerts which have been planned so far in 2004. This link requires Acrobat.

- <http://www.music-usa.org/nacusa/calendar.pdf>

In our efforts to promote composers and audiences for new American music we can all publicize the fact that concerts of New American Music are not isolated events but are happening across the country. Because our members are geographically wide spread, NACUSA's purpose will begin to be known throughout the country when each member advocates in their own locality and on all concerts on which their music is programmed. This link can be forwarded electronically to your own email list of interested contacts. And it can be printed and used:

- for your own information
- as the back side of a flyer publicizing your local performances and NACUSA Chapter concerts
- on the cover (perhaps on the back) of printed programs which feature New American Music, especially NACUSA programs
- for media press releases and feature articles about local concerts to provide a national context
- on display tables at concerts, festivals, and conferences that you attend
- wherever else you think appropriate

Here is the basic information which is on the flyer:

### Southern California

March 19, 7 pm--*25th Anniversary of NACUSA Young Composers' Competition*, 2003 winners to attend. West Los Angeles College Fine Arts Theatre, Culver City, CA.

April 1, 7 pm--*Made in Culver City*, music composed & performed by residents. Music in the Council Chambers.

April 23, 7 pm--*Trio Recital WLAC*, Culver City.

May 22, 7 pm--*Choral Concert of Music for Worship by Deon Nielsen Price in Celebration of her 70th Birthday*, Ch. of J.C. of L.D.S. Los Angeles Stake Center, CA.

### Northern California

March 13--*Composers and Friends*, Palo Alto Cultural Center.

### Louisiana

February 26, 6 pm--*Bring Your Own Performer*, Louisiana State University Recital Hall, Baton Rouge.

April 24, 4 pm--*Guest Performers, collaboration with Louisiana Composers Consortium*, LSU Recital Hall, Baton Rouge.

### New York

February 22, 8 pm--*Chamber Music*, Christ & St. Stephen's Church, NYC.

March 8, 8 pm--*Chamber Music*, Christ & St. Stephen's Church, NYC.

### Tennessee

TBA--Kickoff Concert, Center for the Arts, Murfreesboro.

### Virginia

April 24, 3 pm--*Chamber Music*, College of William and Mary Ewell Hall, Williamsburg.



## IN MEMORIAM (1908-2004)

# Zenobia Powell Perry

by Jeannie Pool

American composer, pianist, and music educator **ZENOBIA POWELL PERRY** died in Xenia, Ohio on January 17, 2004 of liver cancer. NACUSA members heard about Miss Perry in the last issue of *Composer/USA* in article about her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday concert tour. She was born on October 3, 1908, to a well-educated, middle-class family. Her father, Calvin Bethel Powell, was a black physician, and her mother, Birdie Lee Thompson, was Creek Indian and black. Originally trained in piano by a local teacher, Mayme Jones, who had been a student of black pianist-composer R. Nathaniel Dett, Perry went, in 1931, to study music with Dett in Rochester, New York. Brief studies with Cortez Reece at Langston University in Oklahoma, encouraged her to think seriously about composition. Later she went to Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, where she assisted the famous black choir director, arranger, and composer William L. Dawson. After completing her degree, she headed a black teacher-training program, supervised in part by Eleanor Roosevelt, who became a friend, ally and mentor and sponsored her graduate studies in education in Colorado. Additional studies in composition were with French composer Darius Milhaud, Allan Willman, and Charles Jones at the University of Wyoming and Aspen Conference on Contemporary Music in the late 1940s and 1950s.

Perry's first university faculty position was at Arkansas Agricultural, Mechanical and Normal College [A.A.M. & N.] (later called University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff), from 1947 to 1955. From 1955 until 1982, she was a faculty member and composer-in-residence at Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio, where she was Faculty Emerita. Her compositions have been performed by the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, the Detroit Symphony, West Virginia University Band and Orchestra, and other performing ensembles, as well as by many singers and instrumentalists. Her opera, *Tawawa House*, based on the history of Wilberforce, Ohio, completed with a commission by the Ohio Arts Council/Ohio Humanities Joint Program, was premiered in 1987.

Her hometown, the all black Indian town of Boley, Oklahoma, provided a lifetime of inspiration and material for her work as a composer, long after the town, known for its black ownership, self-governance and autonomy, had been destroyed by Jim Crow politics. The history of Oklahoma and in general, the history of the United States, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, as it related to race relations, had a tremendous impact on Perry's life. The philosophical outlook and political activism of Booker T. Washington, with whom she had a life-long family connection, was a major influence in her life and the institutions where she studied and served as faculty and administrator.

She tried for nearly three decades to find a composition teacher who would take her seriously and teach her the craft. Many whom she had approached told her that she was such a good pianist that she should settle on a career as an accompanist and not bother with composition. Milhaud overheard her improvising for some dancers while she waited for an appointment with the University of Wyoming Music Department. At an interview later that day to determine what courses she would take during the summer session, Milhaud told her she was already a composer and he would be delighted to be her teacher. She said, "You could have bought me for a penny that day!" His encouragement and instruction launched her into a composing career, and through Milhaud she met many internationally well-known composers and musicians who inspired her to venture beyond songs and short piano pieces to write for orchestra, concert band, and larger

chamber works. During her entire life she dodged the discrimination against her because she was Black, Native American, female, divorced, single mother, Midwestern, and taught at Black educational institutions.

In December 2002, a compact disc of Zenobia Perry's music was issued by Jaygayle Music, featuring Zenobia's daughter, soprano Janis-Rozena Peri singing her mother's art songs and arrangements of spirituals, along with some piano works, performed by John (Jack) Crotty. Both Peri and Crotty are on the faculty of West Virginia University in Morgantown. A lengthy biographical article appeared in 2003 in the *International Alliance for Women in Music Journal* [Volume 9, No. 1 (Spring) 2003, pp.13-1, excerpted from my doctoral dissertation, with musical examples and a photograph.]

To celebrate Miss Perry's 95<sup>th</sup> birthday, Jeannie Pool and Beverly Simmons organized a 12-concert, 5-city tour in Ohio, with funding from the Ohio Arts Council in cooperation with the National Afro-American Museum of Wilberforce, Ohio. Miss Perry attended most of the performances, greeting the crowds, signing autographs, and speaking about her life and music.



Miss Perry continued to compose to the very end of her life. When she was admitted to a nursing home for hospice care, she asked her friends to bring her work to her so she could finish a piece she was writing at the time. She had also been working on revisions to the score for her opera *Tawawa House* which is to be performed in April at the National Afro-American Museum in Wilberforce, Ohio. Zenobia was diagnosed with advanced stages of liver cancer in early January and with the blessing of her daughter, declined chemotherapy given her age and general health. Zenobia will be sorely missed by her family, friends, colleagues, and students, but her music and inspirational life story will live on. A memorial service, conducted by Rev. Pamela E. Gaylor, was held at Christ Episcopal Church in Xenia, Ohio, on Saturday, January 24, 2004, attended by approximately 200 people, followed by a dinner at the church to celebrate her life. Zenobia's friends and students sang in a choir, conducted by Joanne Brooks. ♥

*Dr. Jeannie Pool is NACUSA's Board Chair, Secretary of the Officers' Council and Zenobia Perry's biographer and publisher, through her ASCAP-affiliated company Jaygayle Music, P.O. Box 8144, La Crescenta, CA 91224-0144. Pool completed her Ph.D. dissertation in musicology at the Claremont Graduate University in May 2002 on Perry and hopes to have it published this year. There is a web site for Zenobia (zenobiaperry.org) with her biography, chronology, and list of works, photographs, and other information. A second recording will be issued this spring featuring tenor Darryl Taylor (singing the Paul Laurence Dunbar song cycle and spirituals), clarinetist Berkeley Price and pianist Deon Nielsen Price.*

## Expression *Continued from page 15*

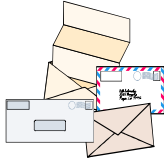
expression markings, they may be done to the benefit of the piece; or they may just be the incursion of the performer's style on the music, but these changes are part of the process of having the composer's works performed. It is messy, and it may be wrong, but that is what occurs. The primary issue is to keep in mind that a musician will be playing the score, and the more time spent in rehearsal playing the new music to become acquainted with it, the better the odds for a good performance.

*Matthew Hetz, a frequent contributor to ComposerUSA, lives and composes in the Los Angeles area.*

## LETTERS

Dear NACUSA:

I am researching the history of the teaching of composition in California and I am gathering names of teachers (including dates of their tenures at California institutions) and their students (including dates of their tenures at California institutions). I am particularly looking at the impact of Darius Milhaud on California composers (also generally on American music) and would be interested in hearing from anyone who studied with Milhaud at Mills College, Aspen, or Music Academy of the West. Thank you.



--Jeannie Pool  
P.O. Box 8144

La Crescenta, CA 91224-0144.  
e-mail: [jeanniepool@cs.com](mailto:jeanniepool@cs.com)

The following letter concerns the article in the last issue (Fall 2003) entitled "Whatever Happened to Dante Fiorillo?"

Dear NACUSA:

This is a question I have asked myself for years; much of this article I could have written myself, for I studied with Fiorillo during the summers of 1949 and 1950, in his Bleecker Street apartment. Dr. Simon's account of his life and teaching, and his virtual disappearance in the 1950s, strike familiar chords in me. I can't answer the above question, but I can add some details.

Two of my fellow composers at Eastman in 1949 urged me to study with Dante: Byron McCulloh, later the 36-year bass trombonist of the Pittsburgh Symphony, and Robert Hall Lewis, who taught some years at Peabody; after them John Huggler, associated with both the Boston Symphony and the University of Massachusetts at Columbia Point. (all three now unfortunately deceased.) To the list of his students I can add Elias Tanenbaum, who I have not met but whose wife the pianist Mary Weir I did know at Eastman.

My study with Fiorillo was a unique experience, concentrating on counterpoint. The examples I remember him giving to me to react to in the way that Dr. Simon describes, I only later learned came from Bernhard Ziehn's *Canonic Studies* and Carl Orff's *Schulwerk*, but his Socratic method of using these sources to inspire me to cover pages of exercises (unfortunately these, like the examples of his own music he had me examine, have disappeared) I feel was much more important than where they came from. It appears that the tragedy of his life may have been related to this: viz., the accusations of plagiarism from the music of Berthold Goldschmidt

Dear NACUSA:

As President of NACUSA, newly elected by the Board, I send greetings to you all! I expect 2004 to be a year full of NACUSA activity in many geographical areas. Please do look around and evaluate opportunities to promote American concert music in your own locale. Then offer your services and ideas to the Board.

I look forward to working with Jeannie Pool, our newly elected Secretary, as well as with those currently serving on the Officers' Council: Treasurer Tony Wardzinski, and Vice-presidents Dan Kessner, Barbara Bennett, and David Lefowitz. I want to extend my appreciation to Paul Humphreys, outgoing Interim Secretary, for being so pleasant to work with and for expressing his willingness to be nominated for Secretary again, although it was received after the deadline.

I also want to thank Max Lifchitz for his work as Interim Chair of the Board and for processing the selection of new officers in a timely way. The By-laws specify that Chair of the Board will be the nationally-elected member with the most seniority. For the year 2004, Chair will be Jeannie Pool. Jeannie served throughout 2003 on the Interim Board, and prior to that time served on the now defunct NACUSA National Advisory Council. She brings many years of valuable experience as a Board member of other non-profit music organizations.

With all of us--officers, Board members, and composer members--helping NACUSA expand nationally, we will make great progress in 2004!

--Deon Nielsen Price

and others may have in part induced him to disappear and take his music with him.

About ten years ago his name came up in a long conversation I had with the late Otto Luening, who knew him well but could shed no light on his whereabouts. I believe it was in 1951 that Robert Lewis tried in vain to find him, having heard rumors that he had died; in speaking to a Bleecker Street neighbor of Dante's who turned out to be a mortician, he received this reply: "Naw, he ain't dead; if he was dead, I'd have buried him!" Since this was over 50 years ago . . .

Somehow Dante Fiorillo helped free my compositional being from previous inhibitions that had plagued me, and inspired me to keep going no matter what, in complement to what I had learned and was to learn about music at Eastman (Rogers, Hanson and others) and

thereafter in the more than half century I have been composing.

--Walter S. Hartley  
[wsh@Buffnet.net](mailto:wsh@Buffnet.net)

<http://www.walterhartley.com>

If anyone out there wants to continue this conversation about Dante Fiorillo, the author of the original article, Robert Simon, would like to hear from you.  
[micheausimon@earthlink.net](mailto:micheausimon@earthlink.net)

## In Memoriam

Continued from page 3

Kennan's numerous compositions have been widely performed and published. Best known is *Night Soliloquy*, which in the version for flute and strings has been played by all the major orchestras in the country under distinguished conductors, including Toscanini, Ormandy, Stokowski and Ozawa. It has been recorded under six different labels.

Kennan was born in Milwaukee in 1913, and he attended the University of Michigan and the Eastman School of Music. His talent was recognized early, and as a result of winning the Prix de Rome in 1936, he spent three years in Europe, chiefly at the American Academy in Rome. He joined The University of Texas faculty in 1940, left to serve in World War II, taught at Ohio State University for two years, and returned to the university in 1949. He taught counterpoint, orchestration and composition, and published two of the most successful music texts ever written, *Counterpoint*, and, in collaboration with faculty colleague Donald Grantham, *The Technique of Orchestration*, now in its sixth edition.

Kennan also served as graduate adviser and chairman of the School of Music. Although he retired in 1984, Kennan continued to encourage and mentor young composers, meeting with recipients of the Kent Kennan Endowed Graduate Fellowship in Music Composition or Theory, which he endowed and continued to support.

Recognizing his 40 years of devotion to the School of Music, the College of Fine Arts bestowed upon him its highest honor, the E. William Doty Award in May 2001. Named for the founding dean of the College of Fine Arts and chairman of the School of Music, the Doty Award recognizes individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to education, the arts and society, as well as rendered exceptional service to the college and The University of Texas at Austin.

--Continued on page 14



# The Importance of Expression Markings

by Matthew Hetz

When writing a piece of music, one of the concerns of the composer is expression markings to indicate a musical passage. Should the music at a certain point be legato, or staccato, sostenuto or agitato? These expressions are indicated through expression markings: dynamics, tempo, rhythm, slurs, phrase marks, accentuation, touch, and so forth.

The composer should pay careful attention to which expression markings best describe the desired affect. If one is fortunate enough to have a piece performed, this is especially important when a new piece is read by the performers for the first time, and for subsequent rehearsals. Loading conflicting or incomplete information on the score for the performer(s) to decipher may be an impediment to a good performance, for it seems that in learning a new piece of music there are two basic challenges to be conquered by the performers. First they must deal with the pitches of the notes within the rhythms of the work. Then, once this is mastered, the polishing of the piece can begin, and a great deal of the polishing is done through the interpretation of the expression markings. Well thought-out expression markings can save time by the performers in rehearsal when they approach music for the first time. If too much time is spent in trying to decipher the notation and expression markings, then less time can be devoted to the by the performers to learn the music.

While great care should be made in using expression marks, unfortunately the composer's intentions are not always met by the performers through the obstacles inherent in the process of having a composition rehearsed, for there exists a divide between the composer and the performer. The composer commits to paper their abstract musical thoughts. It is a type of translation from the intangibles of musical ideas to the written score. Then, another translation occurs when the score is given to the performers who then translate the until then unrealized score into sound. This second translation, from the composer's score to the performers playing it, is imperfect as the performers, through their own musical abilities, will affect the outcome of the performance. But this is the ageless way of performing music, the composer creates the score, and the players create the performance. While a computer program may realize a score to a more calculated perfection, it is not wholly perfect as there are variables of deficiencies in any computer program, and limitations in the hardware to make a realization in sound of the score. While musicians leave their musical fingerprints on the music through interpretation, they may add a degree of individuality that can enhance a score. Performers may interpret a musical passage that the composer may not have conceptualized, and may add a deeper aspect to the work. The performers can also mar and distort a work through a bad performance, but that is part of the chance method of using performers instead of relying solely upon computers to realize a musical score. (I would rather take a chance with the live performers instead of relying solely upon computer realization of a score.)

One of the leading factors to a good performance is good rehearsals, and few things are more detrimental to a good rehearsal than scores that are hard to read and decipher. I know this through first-hand experience, I play violin in an orchestra. Any difficulty in reading the score and parts is magnified with the larger number musicians in the orchestra, where problems are expanded exponentially. The orchestra primarily performs works from the Romantic era, occasionally something from the Classical or Baroque period may show up, music of the 20th Century is also sometimes played, and in a very rare case is a work from a living composer performed. It is during rehearsals that the gritty work of interpreting the music, no matter how old, takes place. The overall conception of how a piece should sound is mostly made by the conductor, with additional input from the first stand

players. Also, the orchestra itself is a social organism that can take on its own characteristics in performing music and creating a distinct sound.

As a composer I have my own opinions of how a particular piece of music should sound, as do probably many of the other musicians in the orchestra. If the music is from the often performed standard repertoire, then the opinions are usually many and varied. If on those rare occasions when the composer happens to be at the rehearsals of their own work, then their input should be of the primary importance. But regardless of how careful the composer is with using expression markings performers can, and do, make changes to the composer's expression markings. While these changes to the composer's intentions by the performers may verge on the act of trespassing and usurping the composer's prerogative, it does happen. Sometimes it is necessary as the composer used expressions markings that are inappropriate for an instrument, or the composer did not use enough expression markings to convey their ideas.

What can happen is the orchestra will play a passage, and the composer will come up to the orchestra and conductor, and make suggestions or corrections on how a passage should be played. Conversely, the conductor may approach the composer and ask for clearer insight on a certain passage. These discussions take time, and the concentration of the players can wane while waiting for new instructions. Then, once some agreement is made on a change, the conductor will relay the instructions to the first stand players, who will then convey the instructions to the section. Then, the passage is located, the pencils are taken out, the parts are marked, and the rehearsal resumes. The corrections can stem from incorrect copying and printing of the parts, the composer's desires to make changes once they hear the work, or inappropriate or missing expression markings. This process of stopping the orchestra, discussing the passage, finding a solution, and writing the changes takes time, sometimes a lot of time. And it can become tedious to the players who can easily lose interest in the new music at hand when there are repeated interruptions to the rehearsal. If there are multiple rehearsals for the work, it may be best to make notes of questionable passages during the first rehearsal, make the corrections afterwards, and then approach the conductor with the changes before the next rehearsal. It is advantageous to the players to play the piece through with minimal stops in order to grasp some concept of the work.

It is important for the players in a section, such as the strings, to arrive at a consensus on how a passage should be played regarding attacks, bowings, dynamics, and so forth. Performing a new composition is like a new pair of leather dress shoes. The leather is stiff and the shoes are uncomfortable when new, but after repeated wearings, the shoes will eventually fit the shape of the feet and retain the memory of the foot. Musicians repeated exposure to a new composition creates not only the mental memory of the work for interpretation, but the muscle memory needed for its execution. Few things are more time wasting than having an orchestra try to decipher the composer's intentions when the writing is not clear. Again, less time spent actually playing the score often leads to a less secure performance which is a disservice to the composer's work and to the orchestra's time and efforts. The optimum wish of a composer is a well played performance of their music, and this is hard enough to achieve for a new piece even when the score and parts are clearly marked and legible, let alone if the score is not well and clearly marked and leaves questions in the performers' minds.

However, even if the composer is completely scrupulous with expression marks, and they are used with the utmost care, there are additional obstacles in accurately realizing the score for performance through expression markings: the performers may choose to change the markings to suit their capabilities and musical tastes. As a composer I try to be very aware of the composer's intentions in the score, and when changes are made the need to defend the composer

*Continued on page 15*



**101** *Continued from page 6*

ensembles and soloists, contact local and state arts councils and consider forming a consortium.

I have received lucrative commissions by being in the right spot at the right time. Once I visited a publisher's booth at a convention minutes before someone asked that publisher to recommend a composer for a commission. I was there and got the commission. Once at a concert, on which one of my works was played, the performer introduced me to an audience member (a director) who had just asked for a reference. I have been commissioned by universities, a music manufacturer's group, a private foundation, professional performers, professional ensembles, amateur ensembles, school ensembles, former students, colleagues, an enlightened non-musician and national and local arts organizations.

**Show me the money!****Negotiating a commissioning contract**

**H**ow much do you charge? It depends on your current compositional commitments, your level of expertise, the number and quality of commissions you have received, the amount of time given to complete the commission, length and instrumentation of the piece and the exposure you will receive from the commission. How bad do you want to write this piece? Will you need to generate a large score and parts, or piano parts? What resources are available to the commissioner?



Will it be on a CD? Will it be performed on tour or at a prestigious convention? The latter may be more valuable than cash, so keep that in mind. You may even offer to lower your price if they record it, or bring it on tour, perform it at a convention or see to it that it is published.

I have had success using the following method: Instead of quoting one lump sum figure, I now quote a sliding scale. For example, if I would like to get \$5,000 for a short solo piece, but know I would actually do it for \$3,000, then I might say, "Apply for grants, and continue applying for grants in good faith for 2 years, with the goal of raising \$7,000. But if you are unable to receive that funding, I don't want you to lose your shirt, so I will take whatever you raise in that time, but it needs to be at least \$3,000." Most commissioners will do all they can to get you the \$7,000, and they are more likely to commission you knowing that they are only obligated to a \$3,000 outlay. Sliding scales show the commissioner that you are empathic to current economic conditions, but also know what you deserve.

**Business managers**

**G**reat plan, but can you afford it? A friend was approached about 8 years ago by the manager of an up-and-coming composer (who has since garnered prestigious grants, commissions and faculty positions). The manager had a "vacancy" on her roster and offered to provide her services to my friend for \$15,000 a year. She did not guarantee commissions, performances or anything. My friend (who is also now well-known now) declined. Buyer Beware: as a business manager in New York several years ago, I witnessed widespread corruption in the music business world. Examine all contracts with managers carefully and demand a full accounting of use of funds. If you can afford it, choose someone with a proven track record.

*An Assistant Professor at California State University Fresno, Benjamin Boone's music has been recorded on eleven CDs by leading performers/ensembles, been performed from Carnegie Hall to seven European countries, and garnered honors from NACUSA, ASCAP, the American Music Center, Billboard Magazine, Southern Arts Federation, and Fundación Valparaíso, among others. Boone was formerly a Music Business manager in New York City.*

**Symphonic Film Scoring Workshop Offered this Summer**

**H**arry Hurwitz of Symphonic Workshops, Ltd. of Toronto, Canada is pleased to announce a Symphonic Film Scoring Workshop to take place in the Czech Republic, July 17-17, 2004. Los Angeles composer Dr. Jeannie Pool is the Director. The workshop featured a distinguished international faculty, including individuals who have worked in the business and are experienced teachers. Faculty members include Fred Karlin, John Scott, Ardell Hake, Derek Gleeson, Ronald Royer, Soren Hyldgaard, Eldridge Walker, Beverly Grigsby, and Kaye Royer, among others.

This is the film scoring workshop for those who are considering a career as a motion picture and tv composer; composers who want more experience working with an orchestra, for teachers of film and television music courses on the college/university levels, and for music scholars interested in writing about film and television music. The instruction is in English.

The eight-day workshop includes instruction in film music history and analysis, film scoring techniques, recording of demo cues with an orchestra, basics of music copyright, licensing and contracts, orchestration and arranging, score preparation and optional tutoring in theory, counterpoint, composition and orchestration

The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of individual participants. There will be advance preparation for Workshop through a Web site and communication with faculty from April through July. The conference also includes screenings, an orchestra concert, a silent movie with orchestra performance, and a chamber music concert. A certificate of completion will be issued for all participants.

The workshop will take place in Prague and Hradec Kralove. Hradec Kralove is a city of 100,000 residents within 100 KM of Prague known for its uncontested beauty and historic architecture, including a central large square and a small square on a hill top surrounded by a moat with an 11 century cathedral, a baroque church and Bishop's Palace. The Workshop sessions will take place in a converted 18<sup>th</sup> century Dominican Monastery, which today also houses part of the University Music Department, and includes a restaurant and lecture halls. Philharmonic Hall is within walking distance. The central square has many open air restaurants and pubs and a famous Art Nouveau art gallery.

*Accommodations* for the workshop are available in The Adlebertinum in Hradec Kralove and include single and double rooms, with breakfast included. All accommodations are doubles, single accommodations are available with an additional fee. Auditors are welcome. Some scholarships are available.

For more details and biographies of the faculty, please visit the WEB site at [symphonicfilmsscoringworkshop.org](http://symphonicfilmsscoringworkshop.org) or contact Jeannie Pool, Director at 818-606-5743 or e-mail her at [jeanniepool@cs.com](mailto:jeanniepool@cs.com).

**In Memoriam** *Continued from page 12*

Kennan's other works in various media have also been widely performed and published and include *Sonata for Trumpet and Piano*, *Three Pieces for Orchestra*, *Threnody* and *Retrospectives*, a set of 12 pieces for piano. His transcriptions for clarinet and piano of sonatas by Prokofiev and Brahms are performed by such leading clarinetists as Richard Stoltzman. In 1992, Kennan donated his manuscripts, published scores, correspondence and scrapbooks chronicling the performance history of his various works to the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the university.

--Office of Public Affairs; UT-Austin

**“As with so many things, the problem is not so much whether something should be done as with whether it can be done effectively in actual practice.”**

**“What I come to in the end is the conclusion that submission feedback is one of those good ideas that would work in a very small proportion of cases, be useless in the large majority, and actually do mischief in a small, but not inconsequential, share.”**

## Feedback *Continued from page 16*

back as either ambiguous “no’s” or with sufficient cautionary hesitation to make one wonder.

I am one composer whose recent rejection was accompanied by a form purporting to offer useful feedback. Instead, it forced evaluation of my composition into a rigid framework that simply didn’t work. In trying to accommodate to the form, the evaluator made comments that suggested that he or she hadn’t spend enough time with the work to understand its structure; or if he or she did, the comments raised questions as to his or her qualifications to judge my composition in the first place.

I’ll have to admit that I was at first angered by this. But after thought, I realized that it could hardly have been otherwise for most of the rejected compositions. All of us who are at all familiar with conference arrangements know that submissions must go through a winnowing screen of considerations that have nothing to do with their quality. Are there artists to perform them? Do they fit the program structure? Are their submitters owed anything because of past relationships? Are there geographical considerations? You readers can expand the list without difficulty. And the answers to many of them are not the type that the conference organizers could give and still remain pc.

What I come to in the end is the conclusion that submission feedback is one of those good ideas that would work in a very small proportion of cases, be useless in the large majority, and actually do mischief in a small, but not inconsequential, share. Let’s give a hearty round of applause to those conference hosts that have tried it, then relegate the idea to the ever growing heap of good intentions that have been tried and found wanting. V

**East Cost \* Los Angeles \* San Francisco  
Tennessee \* Virginia \* Mid-South**

## Expression *Continued from page 13*

against these trespasses can be aroused in me. While there are instances when the composer may have used an inappropriate marking in a passage, there are other times when the performers will make changes for no apparent reason other than their own personal taste or style, and this is when the divide between the composer and performer opens wide. The performer is taking over the piece, and making it their own. It is part of the process of rehearsing a piece of music, and at those times the composer will take the back seat.

I am not a first stand player, and while I may have contrary ideas to how the piece should be played, I rarely raise my voice when changes are instructed. Sometimes I do, but only when I feel passionately that the change does not serve the piece. But what most amazes me is that performers can, and do, willfully and without compunction change expression and phrase markings. One stand leader is very fond of breaking up phrase markings into smaller bits, such as dividing a two measure phrase to be played in one bow stroke, to two separate bowings. Does this go against the will of the composer? Of course. Does this adversely affect the music? At times it does. But other times, changes to phrase lengths are necessitated and may lead to a better playing of a passage.

There are times in string writing when a phrase marking is made over a very long string of notes. In the first movement of the Brahms’ *Second Symphony* the first violins enter with a fifteen measure passage separated into two phrases. I’ve seen orchestras perform it with two bow strokes, others with more bow strokes. Which is correct? The score obviously, but if the players are not capable of maintaining a good sound within two bows, then it may be legitimate to add more bowings. One composer who is very fond of a long, long phrase marking in the strings is Rachmaninoff. His intention is for a long phrase of a seamless sound, but many times what he wanted cannot be accomplished. Thus, his long phrase marks are cut and chopped to a more manageable level of playing by shortening the phrase lengths and adding more bowings.



With string playing the attack of a note is marked with either an up bow or down bow. When found printed in the score, it is called to be in the ink. And one would think that since a bow marking is in the ink, it would be sacrosanct to change. However, the odds would not be good on that bet. Repeatedly, the bow markings in ink are changed to markings done in pencil, meaning at some time the performers went against the wishes of the composer and imposed their own markings. And again, the composer may not be accurate in coordinating bow markings with the desired affect in a passage. Or the changes may be the impulse of the player to suit their abilities and taste.

Penciled in changes to the parts are done by all orchestras. The vast majority of the music performed by the orchestra I play in comes from public or private libraries. In these library scores the string parts can have so many erasure markings of different bowings and phrase markings made by different groups that the paper can begin to wear thin. It seems there is a tradition of no tradition on how a passage should be played, and it is up for reconsideration each time a different orchestra approaches the piece.

This leaves the questions on how necessary are expression marks since they are subject to changes later; and is it even worth the time carefully notating the expression marks? Expression markings will remain extremely important, if not absolutely necessary, to all compositions as they give the directions on the shape and impact of the music. The composer must spend time and give consideration to what the piece should express, and give the performers as clear and precise instructions as possible to avoid confusion and wasted time at rehearsals. Should the performers later make changes to the

*Continued on page 11*

National Association of Composers/U.S.A.  
P.O. Box 49256, Barrington Station  
Los Angeles, California 90049

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Visit NACUSA's website at  
<http://www.music-usa.org/nacusa/>

## Results of NACUSA's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Young Composers Competition

**N**ACUSA President Deon Nielsen Price, Vice President David S. Lefkowitz, LA Chapter President Daniel Kessner, and composer Tom DeDobay met to judge the entrants to the 25th Anniversary Young Composers Competition. There were 35 fine scores submitted. NACUSA is pleased to announce the following winners:



**FIRST PRIZE:** \$400 and a performance on the 25th Anniversary Concert, March 19 in Culver City, CA.

- **Kenneth Froelich:** *Blue Fire* for clarinet and string quartet

**SECOND PRIZE:** \$100, and a likely performance on the 25th

Anniversary Concert.

- **Ramon Castillo:** *Paroxysm* for horn, percussion, violin, violoncello, and piano

**HONORABLE MENTION:** consideration for performance on this or other future NACUSA concerts.

- **Grace Choi:** *Nostalgia* for flute solo
- **Aaron Einbond:** *Abstracts* for flute, clarinet, violin, violoncello, and piano

NACUSA sends its heartiest congratulations to all of the young composers.

## Feedback

**A**s if there aren't enough controversies to deal with these days, a new one has arisen in our own special world of academic music conferences. This one concerns the question of whether and, if so, how feedback should be given to composers who submit their compositions for possible performance at conference events. Should those who receive "rejection slips" be advised of the reason or reasons for the rejection? The topic has received enough attention through an e-mail Listserv of late that I thought I might weigh in with my own thoughts (and experiences) with regard to it.

At first blush, the question seems to be a no brainer. Of course, composers are entitled to know why their compositions haven't passed muster. That can only lead to improvement in both the compositions themselves and in the programs that feature them. Who could argue with that?

Well, after reading most of the e-mail comments and being fairly fortified by some direct personal experience, I find that I'm one who can argue with that. Here goes...

As with so many things, the problem is not so much whether something should be done as with whether it can be done effectively in actual practice. To begin with, is the reason for a composition's acceptance or rejection ever really clear? It is, after all, a value judgment dependent as much on the evaluator's mindset as on the work itself. Can such things ever be communicated with clarity and objectivity? That leads on to further questions. Is the individual making the judgment qualified to do so? Does he or she have enough time to properly evaluate the numerous submissions? How about the politics of the matter? If the composition is too difficult to be performed by the available artist or artists, can that be told to the composer? Those are only a few of the questions that spring to mind almost without thought. And when they do, the answers often come

Point  
of View



by  
Al  
Benner

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