

Augustus Saint-Gaudens Memorial Concert Series

The Little Studio | Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site | Cornish, NH

Selections from

PROJECT 2020

21st C. WOMEN COMPOSERS

20 Composers • Art Song from the Past 20 Years • 2022 - 2024

Jennifer Sgroe, Soprano & Eric Sedgwick, Piano

Sunday, July 21, 2024 @ 2:00 PM

I. Metaphor

From *Giver of Stars*, 2002

I. Flame Apples
IV. Giver of Stars

Edie Hill
Amy Lowell

II. Relationship

I Would Live in Your Love (*Two Teasdale Songs*), 2013

Jodi Goble
Sara Teasdale

Union (*AIDS Quilt Songbook*), 2014

Paola Prestini
Royce Vavrek

Time does not bring relief, 2005

Julia Meinwald
Edna St. Vincent Millay

I Am Sitting on the Edge (*Orange Afternoon Lover*), 2006

Lori Laitman
Margaret Atwood

III. Memory

Raspberry Island (*Raspberry Island Dreaming*), 2002

Libby Larsen
Patricia Hampl

Lorca in the Bronx (*Five Boroughs Songbook*), 2017

Missy Mazzoli
Federico García Lorca

Baffled for just a day or two, 2022

JL Marlor
Emily Dickinson

Out of the night we came (*From the Woolworth Tower*), 2021

Rachel Devore Fogarty
Sara Teasdale

-- Pause --

IV. PROJECT 2020 Commissions

A Time in Isolation, 2022

Nailah Nombeko
Laurel Whitehouse

Courage, 2023

Lauren Spavelko
Elizabeth Gilbert

V. Crossing Over

Hold On (*AIDS Quilt Songbook @20*), 2012

Gilda Lyons
Pueblo Indian Prayer

Beehive (Are you Worried About the Rising Cost of Funerals?), 1994/2004

Errollyn Wallen

VI. Lifecycles

From *Baby Book*, 2017

I. Objects

V. Looking Out

Lauren Spavelko
Chloe Yelena Miller

VII. Inspiration

A Love Song, 2018

B.E. Boykin
Judi Day

The Far Shore, 2014

Kamala Sankaram
Meera Bai

Joy (from *Emily! From New England*), 2015

Gwyneth Walker
Emily Dickinson

About PROJECT 2020

A song recital series distinguishing the exceptional work of 21st Century women composers, PROJECT 2020 features the art songs of twenty women composers, written within the past twenty years. In development since 2019 and first performed in March 2022 in Boston & New York, *Program One: From Isolation to Inspiration* offered a reflection of the performers' experiences as they approached 2020 and moved through the COVID-19 pandemic. It included World Premiere performances of two songs by composer Nailah Nombeko as part of the PROJECT 2020 Commission Initiative. *Program Two: Memory & Metaphor* premiered in Boston in April 2023 and included the Boston Premiere of Lauren Spavelko's song *Courage* with text by author Elizabeth Gilbert from her book *Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear*. The duo continues to perform in recital in venues across the US.

The selected repertoire for PROJECT 2020 expresses contemporary viewpoints, expertly crafted by today's leading women composers, including newly commissioned songs through the PROJECT 2020 Commission Initiative, with the intention of developing a third program made up solely of commissioned works.

PROJECT 2020's mission is to support the work of underrepresented women composers through performance of existing contemporary art song and the commissioning of new works, to secure a place for women art song composers in the repertoire and to add relevant voices to the canon of art song so that it may more accurately represent the experiences of 21st Century women.

About the Performers

Jennifer Sgroe has performed across the US and at festivals in Finland, England and Austria in opera, recitals and on the concert stage at venues such as Jordan Hall, Radio City Music Hall, Carnegie Hall, Mechanics Hall, Dartington Hall, The Society for Ethical Culture and the United Nations. She specializes in contemporary American opera and repertoire of the Baroque and Classical eras and is a proponent of new works by women composers, especially art song. Representative concert performances include Soprano Soloist for Barber *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, Mozart *Requiem*, Poulenc *Gloria*, Handel *Messiah*, Brahms *Ein Deutsches Requiem*. In January 2023, she and her collaborative pianist partner, Eric Sedgwick along with composer Lauren Spavelko, placed 3rd in the Sparks & Wiry Cries NY SongSLAM Competition, with their song, "Courage", composed by Lauren Spavelko with text by best-selling author Elizabeth Gilbert. Jennifer and Eric were also finalists in the Federation of the Art Song Fellowship Competition this past October and she appeared with Wellesley Symphony as Soprano Soloist for Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* in November 2022. She will join Worcester Chorus this coming December 2024 as the Soprano Soloist in Handel's *Messiah* at Mechanics Hall. In recent years, Jennifer made her Jordan Hall solo recital debut with Timothy Steele at the piano, sang the premiere of Susanna in Laura Schwendinger's *Artemisia* with Center for Contemporary Opera, was Soprano Soloist with Back Bay Chorale, Cambridge Symphony and made her Jordan Hall artist debut and recording on Navona records with The Shakespeare Concerts which included World Premieres of works by Summer and Pesetsky. Additionally, she has performed the US premiere and multiple performances of Jessica Rudman's *Trigger*, a one-woman opera about domestic assault, with Hartford Opera Theater, Women Composers Forum and other venues. At the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic, she turned to practice as a tool to remain focused, bolster courage and wellbeing, and remain connected to music. You can view all 100 days of her #100daysofpractice challenge on Instagram @jennifersgroe. As a result of the challenge, she developed the "A Passion for Practice" Masterclass Series which defines and re-defines the purpose and intention of practice. It also offers tools and inspiration to empower other singers in their own practice. Masterclasses have been offered at New England Conservatory's School of Continuing Education and The Boston Conservatory, with future offerings being planned. She is currently on the voice faculty of New England Conservatory Preparatory School and School of Continuing Education, and has served on the voice faculties of Boston University, Dean College, and New York University. She maintains a small private voice studio in Westborough, MA and works regularly as a professional actress in film and commercials. Jennifer holds the Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Kentucky, the Master of Music in Opera from The Boston Conservatory and the Doctorate of Musical Arts, also from the University of Kentucky. For more visit www.jennifersgroe.com

Eric Sedgwick has performed with many of music's top talents including Leona Mitchell, Sanford Sylvan, Marni Nixon, Nicholas Phan, Laquita Mitchell, Broadway leading ladies Sarah Rice, Carole Demas and Debra Monk, and English hornist Thomas Stacy of the New York Philharmonic. A frequent performer and collaborator in the NYC area, he is also a vocal coach at the Manhattan School of Music

and the faculty collaborative pianist for the Tanglewood Music Center. He has served as rehearsal pianist for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, under the batons of Michael Tilson Thomas, Bramwell Tovey, John Williams and Andris Nelsons. He is a regular pianist for events with the Metropolitan Opera Guild, and has worked for Carnegie Hall's Music Education Workshops with Joyce DiDonato, as well as for the International Vocal Arts Institutes in New York and Montreal, and for Beth Morrison Projects. For ten years he was the music director for the Junior Opera Theater scenes program at Manhattan School of Music, directed by Catherine Malfitano. On the west coast, he was a longtime coach and music director for the OperaWorks training program in Los Angeles. Mr. Sedgwick is the official pianist for the Art Song Preservation Society in New York, a group whose regular masterclass series has included Dalton Baldwin, Thomas Grubb, Margaret Lattimore and Joan Dornemann. He performs regularly with local groups in New York including Opera Singers Initiatives, the Stonewall Chorale, La Forza dell'Opera, and the Halcyon chamber music series, and has been featured in the Center for Contemporary Opera's concert series, the 2019 Ukrainian Contemporary Music Festival and OmniARTS productions. He has appeared often with the Broadway Concerts Direct performances in upstate New York, in cabaret shows at 54 Below and the Metropolitan Room, and as music director/pianist for "The World According to Kurt Weill" and "Jarmila Novotná: Her Life in Song" at UrbanStages. He can be heard in the PBS series "The Heart of Art" as well as on the soundtracks for the prize-winning short films "Connection Lost (The Tinder Opera)," "Something Blue (The Bachelor Opera)" and "Someone Like Me (The Facebook Opera)." He has recorded for WQXR's Greene Space and for Opera Omaha and LA Opera's coproduction of David Hertenberg's "The Rose Elf." He was a winner of the Boston Steinway piano competition, and has premiered new works by composers Seymour Barab, J. Mark Stambaugh, Joelle Wallach, and Louis Hardin. Mr. Sedgwick is a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music and Brown University. Visit www.ericsgedgwickpiano.com

About the Composers

Brittney Boykin (B.E. Boykin) is a native of Alexandria, Virginia and comes from a musical family. She captivates audiences worldwide with her versatile skills in piano, conducting and composition. The vitality of her writing establishes her as a vibrant light and voice in this next generation of composers. Boykin holds a B.A. in Music from Spelman College, an M.M in Sacred Music with a concentration in choral studies from Westminster Choir College of Rider University and a Ph.D. from Georgia State University with an emphasis in Music Education. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Music at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Boykin's instrumental and choral works are currently being published and distributed through her own publishing company, Klavia Press. Visit www.beboykin.com.

Rachel DeVore Fogarty's works have been commissioned, awarded and performed by organizations in the U.S. and internationally, including ACDA, KMEA, IAWM, NATS, the Bryan Symphony, the Fort Dodge Area Symphony, the Oak Ridge Symphony, St. Olaf College, the Brooklyn Youth Chorus, SACRA/PROFANA, Oklahoma State University, University of Kentucky, Conundrum, Tapestry Singers, Muse (Cincinnati Women's Ensemble), Making Waves (Ukraine), the Young New Yorkers' Chorus, the Concert Chorale of Nashville, the Astoria Choir, Fresh Squeezed Opera Company NYC, the Six Degree Singers, the Astoria Music Project, the Princeton Girlchoir, Dulciana (Ireland), Voces Inauditae (Scotland), the Luna Nova Music Ensemble, Roane Choral Society, the Pittsburgh Compline Choir, the Bowery Trio, Sparks & Wiry Cries, Inversion Ensemble, Constellation Men's Ensemble, the Capital

Hearings, Cantus and VocalEssence. She received both her M.M. in Composition and her B.M. in Piano from Belmont University and now resides in Long Island City, NY. Visit www.rachelvevrefogarty.com

Edie Hill Described as "...bold...radiant, deftly crafted..." (Musical America) and "flat out beautiful" (Stereophile Magazine), Edie Hill's music is performed all over the world. She has been commissioned to compose for solo voice to choir, solo instrumental to orchestral and mass band, miniature to full evening drama. She served as Composer in Residence at St. Paul's Schubert Club from 2005-2017 where she ran and grew the Mentorship Program for gifted high school composers. She has lectured at colleges, universities and various institutions in the States and abroad. A three-time McKnight Artist Fellow and a two-time Bush Artist Fellow, Hill has received grants from the Jerome Foundation, ASCAP, New Music USA, Meet The Composer, the Minnesota State Arts Board, Chamber Music America, and was awarded a Doctor of Humane Letters from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota. Visit www.ediehill.com

Gilda Lyons, composer, vocalist, and visual artist, combines elements of renaissance, neo-baroque, spectral, folk, agitprop Music Theater, and extended vocalism to create works of uncompromising emotional honesty and melodic beauty. As composer and vocalist Lyons' works and performances are available on the Clarion, GPR, Naxos, New Dynamic, New Focus, Roven Records, and Yarlung Records labels. An active vocalist and fierce advocate of contemporary music, Lyons has commissioned, premiered, and workshopped new vocal works by dozens of composers; this season she appears on the rosters of Brooklyn Art Song Society, Lyric Fest, and New Mercury Collective. Lyons currently serves as Co-Chair of the Composition Program at Wintergreen Music Academy and as Assistant Professor of Composition at The Hartt School. She is the Executive Director of the Richard P. Garmany Chamber Music Series, Founding Director of The Phoenix Concerts, New York's "intrepid Upper West Side new-music series" (The New Yorker), and serves on the Board of Advisors of Composers Now, the Steven R. Gerber Trust, and Sparks & Wiry Cries. Lyons served as Composer-in-Residence of Chautauqua Opera in the 2019 season. In 2021, she returns as composition faculty for Connecticut Summerfest. Visit www.gildalyons.com

Jodi Goble writes text-based, character-driven music fueled by her extensive background as a vocal coach and song-specialist collaborative pianist. Her compositions have been performed across the United States and internationally and featured on National Public Radio. Her works have recently been performed at the ASEAN Festival of Contemporary Music, the National Opera Center in New York City, Songfest, Jordan Hall, Ames Town and Gown, Omaha Under the Radar, Beijing Central Conservatory, Boston University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Hunan Women's University, Iowa Composers' Forum, and the Art Song Preservation Society of New York. Ms. Goble is Associate Teaching Professor in Voice at Iowa State University, the official pianist for the Simon Estes Roots and Wings Community Concert Series, and the official accompanist for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Guild Auditions in Iowa. Visit www.jodigoble.com

Lori Laitman. Described by Fanfare Magazine as "one of the most talented and intriguing of living composers," Lori Laitman has composed multiple operas and choral works, and hundreds of songs, setting texts by classical and contemporary poets, including those who perished in the Holocaust. Her music has generated substantial critical acclaim. The Journal of Singing wrote "It is difficult to think of anyone before the public today who equals her exceptional gifts for embracing a poetic text and giving

it new and deeper life through music.” She is a magna cum laude Yale graduate and received her MM from The Yale School of Music. In May 2018, Laitman was the recipient of The Yale School of Music’s Ian Mininberg Alumni Award for Distinguished Service. Visit www.artsongs.com.

Libby Larsen is one of America’s most performed living composers. She has composed over 500 works including orchestra, opera, vocal and chamber music, symphonic winds and band. Her work is widely recorded. An advocate for the music and musicians of our time, in 1973 Larsen co-founded the Minnesota Composers Forum, now the American Composer’s Forum. Grammy Award winner and former holder of the Papamarkou Chair at John W. Kluge Center of the Library of Congress, Larsen has also held residencies with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony, and the Colorado Symphony. As Artistic Director of the John Duffy Institute for New Opera (2014-2020), she guides a faculty of practicing professional artists in nurturing and production of new opera by American Composers. Larsen’s 2017 biography, *Libby Larsen: Composing an American Life*, Denise Von Glahn, author, is available from the University Illinois Press. Visit www.libbylarsen.com

JL Marlor (she/they) is a Brooklyn-based multidisciplinary artist, composer, and educator known for her unique, narrative-driven chamber music, opera, and vocal music that explores the intersections between the collective and the individual as it relates to community building and social consciousness. With a style that draws heavily from Slavic women's vocal music, riot grrrl punk, plainchant, and American protest music, JL's work has been performed by ensembles like Jack Quartet, Wet Ink Ensemble, and LoftOpera, and commissioned by ensembles like SparkDuo, Chromic Duo, the DaCamera Singers, and numerous individual performers. Beyond her work as a composer, JL fronts the indie rock band Tenderheart Bitches which was included in Them's list of "up and coming queer performers to watch out for", and their debut EP High Kicks was hailed by The Wild Honey Pie "coming flaming out of the gate...arriving on the indie rock scene with something serious to say". Visit www.jlcomposes.com

Missy Mazzoli, a Grammy-nominated composer, was recently deemed “one of the more consistently inventive, surprising composers now working in New York” (The New York Times) and “Brooklyn’s post-millennial Mozart” (Time Out New York), and has been praised for her “apocalyptic imagination” (Alex Ross, The New Yorker). Mazzoli is an active opera, ballet, and TV and film composer, as well as an active pianist and keyboardist with her band, Victoire. Mazzoli made history when she became one of the two first women to be commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera. Mazzoli is currently the Mead Composer-in-Residence at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. From 2012-2015 she was Composer-in-Residence with Opera Philadelphia, Gotham Chamber Opera and Music Theatre-Group, and in 2011/12 was Composer/Educator in residence with the Albany Symphony. Missy was a visiting professor of music at New York University in 2013, and later that year joined the composition faculty at the Mannes College of Music, a division of the New School. Visit www.missymazzoli.com

Julia Meinwald is a New York City based composer who likes writing for musical theatre (and the occasional film and computer game score) and eating kimchi. Her musicals include PREGNANCY PACT, REB + VoDKa + ME, THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN, THE LONELIEST GIRL IN THE WORLD, SOMETHING BLUE and ELEVATOR HEART. She and her collaborator Gordon Leary write aggressively empathetic shows that help them understand completely foreign points of view, like Anita Bryant's save-our-children crusade, online fan communities that formed around high school shooters, and groups of teenage girls who decide to get pregnant together. Julia's work has been produced at

the Weston Playhouse and Diversionary Theatre, and developed through awesome groups like Ars Nova, the Civilians, Fresh Ground Pepper, the Dramatists Guild, Page 73 and exciting acronyms like 92Y, MTF, NAMT, NYMF, and YIMT. Visit www.juliameinwald.com

Nailah Nombeko is a native New Yorker. Her music has been performed all over the US in such venues as Symphony Space, Columbia University, The University of Kansas, National Sawdust and The Portland Opera. Internationally her music was performed in the Netherlands with soprano Marijke Groenendaal and in England at the Royal Northern College of Music. Ms. Nombeko is primarily an art song composer receiving commissions from Sparks and Wiry Cries to write for international opera star Karen Slack, and most recently Kara Dugan for WQXR's "In a New York Minute" where five composers were commissioned to set poems about life during the pandemic. This was premiered in December 2021. In August of 2021 Ms. Nombeko's short opera entitled "Sunder" was premiered at the University of Maryland and the Annapolis Opera. This performance was a new work reading with the Maryland Opera Studio. In addition to receiving art song and opera commissions she was commissioned to write a string quartet for the ETHEL Quartet and most recently for renowned oboist Jared Hauser (2021) with Intersection Music in Nashville TN. Visit www.nailahnombeko.com

Paola Prestini. Through an illustrious career being equal parts creator and connector, composer Paola Prestini is known both for her "otherworldly...outright gorgeous" music (The New York Times), as well as the "visionary-in-chief" (Time Out New York) and Co-Founder/Artistic Director of the non-profit music organization National Sawdust. As the Wall Street Journal says, many recognize Prestini for "pushing the boundaries of classical music through collaborations." She has collaborated with poets, filmmakers, and scientists in large-scale multimedia works that chart her interest in extra-musical themes ranging from the cosmos to the environment. She has created, written and produced large scale projects such as the largest communal VR opera, The Hubble Cantata, and the eco-documentary currently on PBS, The Colorado. As an immigrant, many identities, cultures, and values have collided and interlocked within her helping create a synthesis of both unique and universal ideas that naturally manifest into music. On a more granular level, folk melody is infused into the creation of original melodic lines that are deconstructed then supported with complex harmonies, rhythms, counterpoint and electronic worlds. Her work incorporates improvisation, live electronics, foley, and spatial elements. It is of the moment, political, ambitious, and always curious. Visit www.paolaprestini.com

Kamala Sankaram. Praised as "one of the most exciting opera composers in the country" (Washington Post), composer Kamala Sankaram moves freely between the worlds of experimental music and contemporary opera. Recent commissions include works for the Glimmerglass Festival, Washington National Opera, the PROTOTYPE Festival, and Creative Time, among others. Kamala is known for her operas fusing Indian classical music with the operatic form, including Thumbprint, A Rose, Monkey and Francine in the City of Tigers, and the forthcoming Jungle Book. Also known for her work pushing the boundaries of the operatic form, recent works include *The Last Stand*, a 10-hour opera created for the trees of Prospect Park, Brooklyn, *Only You Will Recognize the Signal*, a serial space opera performed live over the internet, *Looking at You*, a techno-noir featuring live datamining of the audience and a chorus of 25 singing tablet computers, all decisions will be made by consensus, a short absurdist opera performed live over Zoom, and *The Parksville Murders*, the world's first virtual reality opera. Awards, grants and residencies: Jonathan Larson Award, NEA ArtWorks, MAP Fund, Opera America, HERE Artist Residency Program, the MacDowell Colony, and the Watermill Center. Dr. Sankaram holds a

PhD from the New School and is currently a member of the composition faculty at SUNY Purchase. Visit www.kamalasankaram.com

Lauren Spavelko is a composer, teacher, performer, and visual artist in Columbus, Ohio. From the serious to the lighthearted, Lauren's diverse works inspire deeper connections with one another and ourselves. Here, listeners find play, curiosity, wonder, joy, catharsis, empathy, healing, and more. Lauren's works have been performed across the US, as well as in Italy and Singapore. She has been commissioned by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Central Ohio Symphony, the Johnstone Fund for New Music, and numerous artists & performing ensembles. Lauren and her work have won multiple awards, including the 2017 Young Composers Competition in Spoleto Italy (*Baby Book*), and the Ruth Anderson Commission Prize from IAWM (*Black Box 2.0*). In addition to composing, Lauren is an adjunct professor at Otterbein University and operates Musical Life Studio. She offers lessons in voice, piano, violin, & composition. A graduate of the University of Louisville (M.M. Composition) and Ohio Wesleyan University (B.M. Music Education), she studied composition with Steve Rouse, Clint Needham, and Jason Bahr. Visit www.laurens Pavelko.com

Gwyneth Walker. Widely performed throughout the country, the music of American composer Gwyneth Walker is beloved by performers and audiences alike for its energy, beauty, reverence, drama, and humor. Dr. Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947) is a graduate of Brown University and the Hartt School of Music. She holds B.A., M.M. and D.M.A. degrees in Music Composition. A former faculty member of the Oberlin College Conservatory, she resigned from academic employment in 1982 in order to pursue a career as a full-time composer. For nearly 30 years, she lived on a dairy farm in Braintree, Vermont before returning to live in her childhood hometown of New Canaan, Connecticut. A composer since age two, Gwyneth Walker has always placed great value on writing in a broad array of genres. More than 400 commissioned works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, solo instruments, chorus, and solo voice have been created—all arising from the impetus of performers and collaboration with musicians. Over the decades, she has traveled throughout North America to attend performances of her works and to meet her musician colleagues. Gwyneth Walker is a proud resident of New England. She was the recipient of the 2000 "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the Vermont Arts Council and the 2018 "Alfred Nash Patterson Lifetime Achievement Award" from Choral Arts New England. In 2020, her *alma mater*, the Hartt School of Music of the University of Hartford, presented her with the Hartt Alumni Award. Walker's catalog includes musical works of many sorts: arrangements of traditional folk songs; original music in both vocal and instrumental genres inspired by great American poetry; dramatic works that combine music with readings, acting, and movement; works for student performers of all ages; and large-scale pieces for professional players and ensembles. The music of Gwyneth Walker is published by E.C.Schirmer (choral, vocal, and instrumental music) and Lauren Keiser Music (orchestral and instrumental music). Visit www.gwynethwalker.com

Errollyn Wallen is a multi-award-winning Belize-born British composer and performer. Her prolific output includes twenty-two operas and a large catalogue of orchestral, chamber and vocal works which are performed and broadcast throughout the world. She was the first black woman to have a work featured in the Proms and the first woman to receive an Ivor Novello award for Classical Music for her body of work. Errollyn Wallen founded her own group, Ensemble X whose motto is "we don't break down barriers in music...we don't see any". Their orchestral album PHOTOGRAPHY on the NMC label was voted a Top Ten Classical Album by USA's National Public Radio. In October Errollyn will give her

Wigmore Hall debut performing the songs from The Errollyn Wallen Songbook. Errollyn's book, *Becoming a Composer* will be published by Faber this year. Visit www.errollynwallen.com