



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR WOMEN IN MUSIC

*uniting the ICWM, the AWC and the ILWC*

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## Beach Publications, Conferences and Concerts

### 1. Recent Publication:

*The Sea-Fairies*, op. 59 (1904), Andrew Thomas Kuster, ed. In *Recent Researches in American Music*, A-R Editions, 1999. ISBN 0-89579-435-7. *The Sea-Fairies* is a single-movement cantata for four-part women's chorus, three soloists, orchestra, and harp that is available for the first time in a full score. The text by Alfred, Lord Tennyson is based on Homer's *Odyssey* and portrays the lure of the sirens.

### 2. Conferences and Festivals, 1998-2001:

"Amy Beach and her Times," the first Beach conference, was held at the University of New Hampshire on October 28, 1998. Adrienne Fried Block was the program chair and keynote speaker.

At the New England Conservatory Festival, March 8-12, 1999, the Borromeo Quartet played Beach's String Quartet, op. 89, and the Flute Quintet, op. 80, assisted by flautist Fenwick Smith (the Borromeo also plays the Beach Quartet on tour). The Festival Orchestra presented two movements from the "Gaelic" Symphony. Block was a pre- and post-concert speaker. That week, the Boston Pops, directed by Keith Lockhart, played a movement from the symphony in three concerts. (For additional information, see the *IAWM Journal*, vol. 5, nos. 2/3: 20.)

### Women in the News

The San Francisco Opera (fall 1999) announced that it had selected **Pamela Rosenberg** as general director starting in July of this year. She succeeds Lofti Mansouri, who had been director of the prestigious company for 12 years. San Francisco Opera produces 11 productions annually and is known for its adventurous programming and premieres of new works, such as Andre Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Rosenberg has headed the Stuttgart Opera for the past 10 years. The Stuttgart produces 22 operas annually in 170 performances as well as 80 ballet performances. Previously, Rosenberg was manager of artistic affairs for the Netherlands Opera, director of operations for the Deutsches Schauspielhaus and artistic administrator for the Frankfurt Opera.

The Athena 2001 Festival and Competition will be held at Murray State University in Murray, KY, March 1 and 2, 2001. The event will be devoted to the performance and study of keyboard and vocal music written by women, with particular attention given to topics directly related to Amy Beach and her contemporaries. Adrienne Fried Block will be the featured scholar and presenter. (For details, see "Festivals" elsewhere in this issue.)

### 3. Performances, 1998-2000:

Pianist Joanne Polk presented two all-Beach recitals at Merkin Hall, assisted by Curtis Macomber and the Lark Quartet, September 16 and 19, 1998. Polk was the soloist on a three-disc survey of Beach's piano music and on the English Chamber Orchestra's recording of Beach's Piano Concerto, op. 45. Polk and the Lark Quartet have recorded a two-disc set of Beach's chamber music to be released in 2000. Block wrote the liner notes for all the CDs, which are on the Arabesque label.

Beach's "Gaelic" Symphony was played by the American Composers Orchestra, conducted by Dennis Russell Davies, at Carnegie Hall, New York, January 9, 2000. Block was the pre-concert speaker and wrote the program notes.

The music of Amy Beach and Libby Larsen will be presented at a "Chamber Music PLUS" concert on March 19, 2000 in Hartford, CT. Larsen and Block will be the pre-concert speakers and will be awarded the first annual Aaron Copland prize.

Joanne Polk and the English Chamber Orchestra will perform the Beach piano concerto at London's Barbican Centre on March 21, 2000, and with the Women's Philharmonic in San Francisco on March 25.

### 4. Other Events:

Amy Beach was inducted into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame in Cincinnati on April 24, 1999. Beach was the first woman to be selected, and Block was invited to receive her medal.

Amy Beach's name was added to those of 89 composers on Boston's Hatch Memorial Shell, the summer venue for the Boston Pops Orchestra, in the fall of 1999. She is the first woman composer to be so honored.

(Special thanks to Adrienne Fried Block for supplying the above information.)

## Awards

### Two Women are Winners of the Rome Prize

By Ruth M. Robertson

It is Thursday, April 22, 1999. We are seated in the Peter B. Lewis Theatre of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City. A hush falls over the assembly as Michael I. Sovern, Chairman of the American Academy in Rome, steps forward. He will announce this year's winners of the 103rd annual Rome Prize Competition. Which of the nearly 1,000 applicants have been chosen to study in Rome during the coming year? "The American Academy in Rome has appointed a panel of internationally respected American jurors to select this year's Rome Prize fellowship recipients," he begins. "These men and women have evaluated submissions from nearly 1,000 applicants before narrowing the field to the 27 American artists and scholars who will be the first Rome Prize fellows of the new Millennium."

Sovern works his way through the list of names of the 1999-2000 fellows. "In the area of Musical Composition," Sovern finally intones, "we have two awards: Carolyn Yarnell has received the Samuel Barber Fellowship and Shih-Hui Chen, the Frederic A. Juilliard/Walter Damrosch Fellowship."

Many in the assembly may not have realized the import of this announcement. Shih-Hui Chen and Carolyn Yarnell are only the second pair of women to receive the Rome Prize in musical composition in the same year, repeating a feat first accomplished by Kathryn Alexander and Michelle Ekizian in 1988-89. Yarnell and Chen are only the seventh and eighth women to receive this fellowship. Ever.

The first was Barbara Kolb in 1968. Her fellowship extended through 1971 and she returned to the Academy as resident in 1976. The next two women recipients were Sheila Silver (1978-79), and Tamar Diesendruck (1983-84), who returned as visiting artist in 1989. Bun-Ching Lam continued the tradition by garnering the prestigious prize for the 1991-92 academic year. Two other distinguished women composers have completed residencies at the Academy: Ellen Taaffe Zwilich in 1990 and Tania J. León in 1998.

Shih-Hui Chen and Carolyn Yarnell and their 25 fellow 1999-2000 Rome Prize recipients follow more than 1,400 other young Americans who have received the prize since 1894. Each year, fellows receive modest stipends during residencies that range in duration from eight-and-a-half months to two years. Other American artists also reside at the Academy, receiving their stipends from other sources. All fellows and residents pursue independent studies and advanced research. They enjoy access not only to the Academy's collection of 121,000 volumes, but also to the cultural riches of the city of Rome.

### History of the American Academy in Rome

The idea for an American school in Rome was born on a construction site on a bog at the south end of Lake Michigan. Around a roaring fire in "The Shack," supervising architect Daniel Burnham and his team of notable landscape architects, painters, sculptors and fellow architects dreamed into existence the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. One of the Fair's architects, Charles Follen McKim, envisioned a continuation of this kind of artistic collaboration by establishing an American institution patterned on the 250-year-old French Academy in Rome. Spain, Hungary and Germany had already established their own national academies in Rome. Why should not the Americans follow suit?

Armed with limited financial resources and single minded tenacity, McKim succeeded in rallying support for the founding in 1894 of the American School of Architecture in Rome. The American School of Classical Studies, for archeologists, followed one year later. In 1913 the two schools merged into a single American Academy in Rome.

### Fellowships in Musical Composition

The number of disciplines at the Academy has since grown to 13. Howard H. Hanson and Leo Sowerby received the first pair of Rome Prize fellowships in musical composition for the 1923-24 academic year. Other notable male recipients have included Randall Thompson, Roger Sessions, Samuel Barber, Lukas Foss and Elliot Carter.

The American Academy in Rome has always desired to award from one to three fellowships every year in each of the disciplines. Since it depends almost entirely on funding from private sources, the Academy could award only one prize in musical composition during many of the pre-World War II years and hardly any during that war. In most of the post war years, two composers per year have received the Rome Prize, as funds permitted. In 1998, two permanent fellowships in musical composition were established enabling the Academy to consistently offer two fellowships each year from now on.

### Carolyn Yarnell

Like all the recipients of the Rome Prize in musical composition before them, Chen and Yarnell submitted several compositions for evaluation from their impressive lists of completed works. Carolyn Yarnell's three submissions were *Love God*, *Paintings for Jacob* and *The Same Sky*. The first work is an electronic piece commissioned in 1997 by Common Sense for performance by Twisted Tutu. *Paintings for Jacob* resulted from a 1997 joint commission by the Seattle

Symphony and ASCAP for a major orchestral composition in memory of Jacob Druckman; the Seattle Symphony performed it in 1998, Gerard Schwartz conducting. Yarnell's *The Same Sky* for "Mega Piano and Computer" was a Meet the Composer commission for pianist Kathleen Supove.



Carolyn Yarnell

Prior to this year's Rome Prize, Yarnell had already received many fellowships, including ones from the Yaddo Corporation, the MacDowell Colony (in three separate years), the Tanglewood Music Center, the National Endowment for the Arts and most recently, from the Seal Bay Festival of Music. She spent a year as a Fulbright scholar in Iceland, where her Kaldalonstríod commission, *Fragment of an Angel's Robe* (clarinet, cello and piano), was performed in Reykjavik in 1992.

Yarnell has received many commissions including several from Common Sense Commission Project. The 1999 premieres of her works include *William Tomorrow* and *Dark Iris* (Seal Bay Music Festival, Rockport, Maine, for piano trio+); *Code Warrior* (Dogs of Desire, for chamber orchestra, soprano and mezzo); and *Zoot* (Albany Symphony/Common Sense Educational Outreach, for high school wind band).

An equally productive year was 1998: The American Baroque Ensemble performed her *Three Graces* (in three movements); Stephen Schultz performed the work he had commissioned for Baroque flute and electronics: *10/18* (in three movements); the Meridian Arts Ensemble performed her *Slade* for brass quintet and traps.

Her earlier works include theater music for *She Stoops to Conquer* (chamber ensemble, percussion and computer) performed by the Juilliard Drama Department in 1995. Jeanine Wager conducted Real Artways in Yarnell's *Sage* for chamber ensemble in 1993. (CRI Emergency Music offers a 1996 compact disc recording of *Sage* on the "Common Sense Composers' Collective" disc.)

Many orchestral conductors have elected to perform Yarnell's major works. In 1993, Dennis Russell Davies conducted the American Composers Orchestra in her *Living Mountains*. In 1998 David Milnes conducted the Berkely Symphony-Under Construction, in a performance of her *White June*, an NEA project. Samuel Wong conducted the New York Youth Symphony in a 1990 performance of Yarnell's *Halcyon*, a First Music 7 Commission. Yarnell's 1994 NEA project, *Andromeda* (orchestra and pipe organ), awaits a premiere.

The third of five movements from her Symphony entitled "L." enjoyed three performances: (1) by the Women's Philharmonic in 1989, Odaline de la Martinez conducting; (2) by the Oregon Mozart Players in 1994, Ching Hsin-Hsu conducting; and (3) by the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra in 1998, Oliver Knussen conducting. Other of Yarnell's orchestral works that Knussen has championed at Tanglewood include *Enemy Moon* and *Exit* (a Paul Jacobs memorial commission) in 1991; *Icon* for chamber ensemble in 1990; and *Introit* and *White Plains/Black Rock* in 1988.

Yarnell studied at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music (BM 1986) and at Yale (MM 1989), where she received the Rena Greenwald Memorial Prize and the Bradley-Keeler Memorial Prize. She then returned to San Francisco for post-graduate work. Sonic Vision serves as Yarnell's sole publisher.

Currently working on *Horizen*, commissioned by Albany Symphony for the Mozart Orchestra, Yarnell is also preparing for her obligatory Spring 2000 concert in Rome. She writes: "My project embraces Western music composition techniques combined with computer generated music and live performers. I will create a performance that incorporates electronic and acoustic music with visual art, moving and still images."

#### Shih-Hui Chen

While Carolyn Yarnell was born in California's sunny climes, her "Rome Prize Twin," Shih-Hui Chen, drew her first breath across the Pacific Ocean. Born in Taiwan, she received her early musical education from that nation's National Academy of the Arts (Diploma in Theory/Composition in 1982). She then felt the need to come to the West to continue her interest in Western composition techniques. She has spent the last 17 years in the United States, studying first at Northern Illinois University (MM in Theory/Composition 1985; MM individualized 1986) and at Boston University (DMA in Theory/Composition). The American

Rome Prize is the latest of many prestigious fellowships Chen has already earned from such institutions as the Massachusetts Cultural Council, Mary Ingraham Bunting Institute, Tanglewood Music Festival, Fromm Foundation, Malden Cultural Council, National Endowment for the Arts, Meet the Composer, American Music Center, MacDowell Colony and the Aspen Music Festival.

Like Yarnell, Chen had a long list of sophisticated compositions from which to choose when deciding what to send to the Academy in Rome for evaluation. She settled on *66Times*, String Quartet no. 3 and *Moments*. The first two titles were included on an entire concert of her works presented by the Formosa Chamber Music Society at the Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, October 22, 1999. Her other works on this recital were Violin Sonata (for solo violin); *Fu I* (for solo pipa, a short-necked fretted Chinese lute); and *Fu II* (for pipa and five Western instruments) featuring pipa soloist Wu Man. In his review of the concert in the *New York Concert Review*, David Witten described all of the works, which were composed between 1993 and 1999, as benefiting from "new kaleidoscopic sonorities, compelling musical ideas, and an intensity curve that leads the listener on a potent journey from the first to the final notes of each piece." He was especially fascinated with the sound of the pipa and its "own inventory of performance techniques. One of them called 'fu' involves striking the strings violently and then stopping them just as abruptly," and it served as the inspiration for both *Fu* pieces.

The Cleveland Chamber Symphony Orchestra premiered Chen's *66 Times*, a song cycle based on Japanese poems written at the end of the previous millennium, for soprano and chamber orchestra, in 1995. A reporter reviewing that performance for the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* described the song cycle as a sensitive text setting that "...abounds in arching vocal lines, harmony that sits on the precipice of tonality, and richly hued atmospheres that depict the various seasons." On May 1, 2000, for its anniversary celebration, the Cleveland Chamber Symphony Orchestra will again perform *66 Times* as part of a concert of works the ensemble had premiered in earlier years.

Chen has arranged *66 Times* for soprano and chamber ensemble to accommodate smaller ensembles. The cycle in this form has been performed by the Taiwanese Women Composer Conference in Champaign-Urbana, by the Emyrean Ensemble in California, at the Tanglewood Music Festival, at Aspen, for the NuClassix Performance Series in Boston, and at events in Taiwan, Tokyo and Seoul. David J. Craig of the *Boston University Bridge* describes this composition as follows:

In *66 Times*...a chamber piece that was the culmination of Chen's doctoral work at BU, silence is employed as if it were an instrument. In the music, remarkable for its simplicity and lack of pretension, playful string, wind, brass,

and vocal melodies are surrounded by long pauses much as the precise imagery in a Zen poem is accentuated by its clipped verses.

The second of Chen's Rome Prize pieces, String Quartet no. 3, was premiered by the Arditti Quartet at the 1999 Tanglewood Music Festival. A critic from the *Boston Globe* found the quartet to exhibit "...a sureness of step and gentleness of spirit that are very winning." Others who have performed this quartet include the Coolidge String Quartet and the Meridian String Quartet.

Chen's third submission to the Rome Prize competition, *Moments*, was commissioned and premiered in 1995 by a consortium of the Philadelphia and Cleveland Symphony Orchestras for their educational programs. The Harvard Radcliffe Orchestra performed *Moments* in 1998. "It gave me a chance to compose a piece which constructs a narrative for children to follow," states Chen. "It was my hope to expose young audiences to contemporary music while giving them a context through narrative."

Another work that appeals to younger audiences is *Little Dragonflies*, a collection of easy piano pieces based on Taiwanese folk songs. Like her other recent works, this set illustrates Chen's willingness to embrace both Eastern and Western cultures and to weave them together in interesting, if spare, textures.



Shih-Hui Chen

Delving into yet another performance medium, Chen has composed music for the documentary video *Once Removed* by video maker Julie Wang-Mallozzi; it has been showing at the

Museum of Fine Arts in Boston since December 2, 1999. The one-and-a-half hour video is about Mallozzi's trip to meet her mother's relatives in China after a separation of 50 years. "I learn about my intellectual family's role in China's turbulent political movements," states Mallozzi, "and meditate on the complications of remembering...and forgetting...history."

The month of April 2000 will be an incredibly busy month for Chen with premieres on both coasts of *Silent Spring* (for clarinet and piano); while it will receive its East coast premiere by Duo Asiatica (Hartford, Connecticut, April 3), it was commissioned by and will receive its West coast premiere by Earplay for its 15th anniversary (San Francisco, April 10). Sandwiched between those performances, comes the 4th International Conference on Chinese Music at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, culminating in two concerts at 8:00 p.m. on April 8 and 9. As adviser to the Foundation for Chinese Performing Arts, Chen has helped organize this event.

In her "leisure time," Chen is at home in Rome, preparing for her June recital there. The program will include *Fu I*, *Fu II*, and *Twice Removed*, a new solo for saxophonist Ken Radnofsky. Commissioned for Women's History Month by the Longy School of Music where Chen has recently taught, *Twice Removed* celebrates the life and work of saxophonist Elise Hal. In her day, Hal commissioned pieces from

many of her contemporaries, including Leoffler and Debussy. One of Chen's other current projects is *Aunt Tiger*, a musical drama based on a Taiwanese folk tale using languages, instruments and sound worlds derived from both the East and West.

While both Chen and Yarnell have well-established track records as productive composers, the prestige that comes with the American Rome Prize and the eleven months of residence on the Academy's quiet precincts will do much to enhance their blossoming careers. For additional information, see Lucia and Alan Valentine, *The American Academy in Rome: 1894-1969*, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1973. Website: <http://www.aarome.org>. The American Academy in Rome: 7 East 60 Street, New York, NY 10022-1001. Telephone: 212-751-7200. Fax: 212-751-7200.

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## The Bourges 1999 Competition

By Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner

The Bourges Competition, officially called Les Concours Internationaux de Musique Electroacoustique de Bourges, is generally considered to be the most prestigious electroacoustic music competition in the world. It was founded in 1970 by a woman, Françoise Barrière (b. 1944), and by Christian Clozier.

Classically trained in piano, harmony and counterpoint at the Conservatoire de Versailles and the Conservatoire National, Barrière received her music technology training at ORTF. She creates her works at the Groupe de Musique Expérimentale de Bourges, which she also established with Clozier. Barrière was a founding member of the International Confederation of Electroacoustic Music and continues her service to the electroacoustic compositional community with the annual Bourges competition, the publication of scholarly journals, and the editing of the Cultures Electroniques compact disc series. As director of these activities, Barrière is unquestionably one of the most powerful leaders in the international electroacoustic music community today.

The important news from Bourges in 1999 was that the Magistère Prize, which goes to someone active in the field for at least 20 years and who is nominated by his/her peers as an outstanding pioneer, went to a WOMAN! (I am not certain, but

this may be a first.) The composer's name is Elzbieta Sikora. She is of Polish background and currently resides in France.

In the other categories, two awards are given—the Prix (5000 francs and performance of the work in Bourges, France, the following year, plus CD or CD-ROM publication) and the Finalist (2500 francs and performance of the work in Bourges the following year and in many cases, CD or CD-ROM publication). Honorable mentions are also given. Works submitted in most categories are anonymous and are judged by an international jury.

The women who received recognition in 1999 are:

Category: Electroacoustic concert music with instruments. Prix Award: Unsuk Chin (Korea) for *XI*

Category: Device and Improvisation. Honorable Mention: Elena Gantchikova (France) for *Pleurs*

Category: Music for CD-ROM/internet. Finalist Award: Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner (USA) for *Full Circle*

Category: Electroacoustic thematic concert music. Honorable Mention: Elaine Lillios (USA) for *Arturo*

Category: Music for video. Finalist Award: Alicyn Warren (USA) for *Molly*. Honorable Mention: Amanda Terrington with Deter Green (UK) for *Dehs*