

The Women and Music Project of WSRC/Brandeis Presents

# **ALIVE BY HER OWN HAND: WOMEN COMPOSERS AS PERFORMERS OF THEIR WORK**

*a Fest-Conference at Brandeis University*



January 22 & 23, 2011

***Alive by Her Own Hand:  
Living Women Artists & Current Musical Movements***

8:00 p.m. Saturday, January 22  
Slosberg Recital Hall, Brandeis University

*Disir* (from Old Norse Poetic Edda) Eva Kendrick and Reed McClaren  
Cello - Rachel Arnold, Percussion - James Delorey,  
Soprano - Noell Dorsey, Folk Harp/Soprano - Erin Reed McClaren,  
Soprano - Eva Kendrick

Prologue  
I. Yggdrasil  
Interlude  
II. Meyjar Margs  
Interlude  
III. Gullveigu

*Tales of White Flowers* Livia Lin  
Livia Lin, Piano  
I. Night-blooming Cereus  
II. Narcissus

*Simpatico* Jodi Stevens  
Jodi Stevens, Electric bass

*the moon passes over* (2009) (world premiere) Ketty Nez  
James Winn, flute and Ketty Nez, piano

*INTERMISSION*

*The Tiger is Awake* Mary Lou Newmark  
Mary Lou Newmark, electric violin, voice and soundscapes

*Six Lyrics of Marilyn Hacker* Tamara Cashour  
Flute -- Michael Laderman, English Horn -- Sarah Davol,  
Mezzo soprano - Margaret O'Connell, Soprano -- Eva Kendrick,  
Piano -- Tamara Cashour, Guitar -- Bill Anderson

Late August  
Literary Initiation 1960  
Saturday Night Bile  
Alba Near Impruneta  
Les Serpillieres  
Languedocienne  
— from *Going Back To The River* (Marilyn Hacker) (cont'd)

Ms. Newmark revised the score and added a new cadenza for a June 2010 performance of the concerto with the Culver City Chamber Orchestra. Ms. Newmark's numerous awards for composition and performance include the Bettylou Scandling Hubin Award in Music Technology (2009), election into the prestigious ACME of Mu Phi Epsilon (2007), and nomination for the Herb Alpert Foundation's Alpert Award in the Arts for Music (2004). Mary Lou has a traditional classical background with undergraduate and graduate degrees in violin performance from Southern Methodist University and USC, and a Masters degree in composition from UCLA. Mary Lou's two CDs are available on iTunes and Amazon.com. Her website is [www.greenangelmusic.com](http://www.greenangelmusic.com).

### **SIX LYRICS BY MARILYN HACKER**

The poems I have set for this evening's performance are from Marilyn Hacker's collected volume of poems: *Going Back to the River*, published in 1990 by Vintage Books. In that same year, I studied in a poetry workshop with Ms. Hacker, and became completely enthralled by her masterful, contemporary dexterity with classical poetic forms, such as the sonnet, villanelle, pantoum, syllabic, and others. \* Ms. Hacker imbues these forms—which can often seem baroquely remote to 21<sup>st</sup> century palettes—with her individual signature elements: intimacy, the beautiful simplicity of emotional truth, intercontinental *panache*, and a “go-down-easy” virtuosity with *enjambment* within unique end-rhyme schemes. These elements of Hacker's writing are what first attracted me to her poetry and I continue to strive for similar qualities in my own poetry writing. You've already guessed that it is the musician in me—most specifically my (our) education and training in musical form—that immediately connected to the formal styles of Hacker's various favorites: pantoum, villanelle, sonnet, and others. Quite simply, I knew they would make great art songs! Hacker's poems have always conveyed a vivid emotional life as related through cogent narrative, and on top of that, a chosen formal structure. They seemed to cry out for a musical life—and it was my pleasure to give them my version of such.

As with all true greatness, Hacker's savvy technique with poetic forms 'never shows'; there is a kind of 'bare-bones', non-fanciful aesthetic operating within her poems that immediately cuts to the emotional chase, if not quick. The cultivated, trained poet will immediately notice how well her sentiments are contained and conveyed by (as opposed to *constrained* by, which happens with so many other poets), her chosen forms, yet the relatively unsophisticated reader will not be put off. Ms. Hacker makes her homes in both Paris and New York City, and I am so often awed by her skillful, crafty and non-condescending insertion of French *mots* into her primarily English-language poems.

I tried very much to capture as many elements of Ms. Hacker's style into these lyrics, which are vaguely reminiscent of pre-existing musical motifs and forms. My love of jazz (Roussel, anyone?!) is certainly revealed in these settings, which revel in chromatic, wide-leaping vocal lines, colorful instrumental “short-takes”, and an almost bored nonchalance with the endless possibilities of postmodernism's penchant for recycling. (I struggle to find a positive manifestation for the protocol of “the copy of the copy”, a protocol once considered base, but now—for better or worse—happening *di riguer* in almost every cultural field) As Ms. Hacker so deftly combines classical form with modern sentiment, I have attempted to meld a primarily improvisational style/feel with

formal art-song presentational style. Certain musical motifs make their appearance from song to song; the musical fabric of the entire cycle reflects an effect that each instrument borrows from a pre-set pot in which one reaches in, grabs a handy motif and then tosses it out again in colorful commentary. This musical process feeds into how I conceived these songs on a textual, emotional basis, which is as a narrative loosely depicting the waxing and waning, and waxing again, of a relationship or relationships.

**Tamara Cashour**, teaches on the Adjunct Instrumental Accompanying Faculty at William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ. She is also on the Vocal Coaching Staff: of the Mannes College of Music and has been a pianist for the Wagner College and Kingsborough Community College Music Theatre Departments. Tamara was a staff vocal accompanist and recitalist at the Manhattan School of Music from 1999-2007. As a composer, Tamara has been an ASCAP Plus Award winner 2008-2011. Her composition *Girly Hurly Burly*, a choral hybrid music theatre burlesque for SSAA women's voices, Actress, Violins, Piano, Hurdy Gurdy and/or Bagpipe, Kitchen Utensils and Pots-n-Pans took First Place in the 2008 For Women Only Composers Competition World Premieres: Symphony Space, St. Peter's Citicorp, Franklin Furnace, Columbia University's Casa Italiana. Ms. Cashour's special area of interest as a composer is in two primary fields: 1) the creation of new interdisciplinary and hybrid forms that test the boundaries of reified amalgams of music, theatre and performance, and 2) the deconstruction of traditional-canon forms via feminist semiotic musical and dramatic principles. Tamara is a member of the New York Composers Circle, where she is Director of Publicity, and also holds membership in the AMC and ASCAP. As a recitalist, Ms. Cashour made her Carnegie-Weill Recital Accompanying Debut in February 2002, and has given or prepared over 200 recitals with singers and instrumentalists in the US and Europe. She is currently pianist for the Dal Segno Chamber Ensemble. As a pianist and/or soprano for new music, Ms. Cashour has performed/premiered the works of many new music composers of opera, art song and solo piano pieces, including: John Harbison, Dorothy Chang (Composer Forums, SONGFEST 2004), Ricky Ian Gordon, Antonio Carlos Defeo, Richard Russell, Debra Kaye, Donald Hagar, Nataliya Medvedovskaya, Noah Haverkamp. She possesses a BA, Music Theory from Columbia University and an MA, Interdisciplinary Studies (Opera Directing & Feminist/Avant-garde Theatre Studies).

### **RETRATOS SOBRE DIVERSOS ESTADOS**

In this music I tried to fuse the classical and jazz languages. Jazz has been influencing classical music and classical music has been influencing jazz for more than a century, being sometimes almost impossible to classify contemporary works into one style or the other. In these little pieces, I work with classical forms, but being myself a jazz composer I let the music being molded by this strong influence, being jazz the source for an unprejudiced classical music development.

**Florencia Gonzalez**, jazz and classical saxophone performer, composer and arranger, was born in Montevideo and she started her musical studies at the age of 6. Florencia studied classical saxophone in the "Universidad de la Republica Oriental del Uruguay" and in the "Conservatorio Municipal de Musica" while studying jazz improvisation with