

Julia Seeholzer is an American composer currently living in Warsaw, Poland. Julia explores narration in her music, shaping timbral spaces around the personal meaning of words. Her vocal works are concerned with engaging with, questioning, and responding to the writers with whom she collaborates, without attempting to speak on their behalf. She is fascinated with the subtle complexities of minimal gestures, and how those can be manipulated over time to form their own narrative bonds within larger structures. Julia holds an M.M. in Composition from the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati, and a B.M. in Composition from Berklee College of Music, where she graduated summa cum laude. She is the recipient of two consecutive Fulbright student research grants, and received an Artist's Diploma in Composition from the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music during that time.

Emma Lou Diemer is a native of Kansas City, MO, and was a composition major at Yale and at Eastman. She is professor emeritus of the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her music has been published since 1957 and she has been a keyboard performer (organ, piano, harpsichord) most of her life. Her website is emmaloudiemermusic.com

Festival of the Arts

Rogue Music Project

Carrie Hennessey, soprano
Sarah Fitch, mezzo-soprano
Kevin Doherty, tenor
Omari Tau, baritone
Jennifer Reason, piano



SATURDAY, 7:00 P.M.
APRIL 10, 2021

PROGRAM

Meditation on "Dale Trumbore" Omari Tau (b. 1974)

Where Go the Boats? (2012) Dale Trumbore (b. 1987)
text by Robert Louis Stevenson

Fairy Movements Stephanie Ann Boyd (b. 1990)
1. To Float
Jennifer Reason, piano

Meditation on "Julia Seeholzer" Omari Tau

Portraits of Disquiet (2016) Julia Seeholzer (b. 1990)
texts by Kendall A.
I. Prayer at my parting
II. Black and Blue
III. As yet untitled
Carrie Hennessey, soprano
Jennifer Reason, piano

Meditation on "Stephanie Boyd" Omari Tau

Fairy Movements Stephanie Ann Boyd
2. To Ensconce
Jennifer Reason, piano

Meditation on "Emma Lou Diemer" Omari Tau

PROGRAM

Psalm 23 (1943) Emma Lou Diemer (b. 1927)

Fairy Movements Stephanie Ann Boyd
3. To Pirouette
Jennifer Reason, piano

In the Middle (2005) Dale Trumbore
text by Barbara Crooker

Rogue Music Project

Carrie Hennessey, soprano
Sarah Fitch, mezzo-soprano
Kevin Doherty, tenor
Omari Tau, baritone
Jennifer Reason, piano

Dale Trumbore is a Los Angeles-based composer and writer whose music has been praised by The New York Times for its "soaring melodies and beguiling harmonies." Her music has been widely performed in the U.S. and internationally by ensembles including the Los Angeles Children's Chorus, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Modesto Symphony, Pasadena Symphony, and The Singers - Minnesota Choral Artists. How to Go On, Choral Arts Initiative's album of Trumbore's choral works, debuted at #6 on Billboard's Traditional Classical Chart.

Trumbore has served as Composer in Residence for Choral Chameleon and Nova Vocal Ensemble as well as Artist in Residence at Brush Creek Foundation for the Arts, Copland House, the Helene Wurlitzer Foundation of New Mexico, and Willapa Bay AiR.

Trumbore has written extensively about working through creative blocks and establishing a career in music in essays for 21CM, Cantate Magazine, the Center for New Music, and NewMusicBox. Her first book, *Staying Composed: Overcoming Anxiety and Self-Doubt Within a Creative Life*, was released last year and hailed by writer Angela Myles Beeching (*Beyond Talent*) as a "treasure trove of practical strategies for moving your artistic career forward." Learn more about Trumbore and her work at daletrumbore.com

Michigan-born, Manhattan-based American composer **Stephanie Ann Boyd** writes melodic music about women's memoirs and the natural world for symphonic and chamber ensembles. Her work has been performed in nearly all 50 states and has been commissioned by musicians and organizations in 37 countries. Boyd's music has been performed by the New York City Ballet Orchestra, the Des Moines Symphony, the Faroe Islands Symphony, the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra, the Fort Smith Symphony, the Arkansas Philharmonic Orchestra, and principal players in the Colorado Symphony Orchestra.

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Meditation on "Dale Trumbore"- Without trying to capture any perceived "essence of the composer," the voices play with the syllables in Trumbore's name. "Bo-deh!" combined with the trilled, rolling "r" of her first name make for a fun juxtaposition. — O. Tau

Where Go the Boats?

Dark brown is the river.
Golden is the sand.
It flows along for ever;
With trees on either hand.
Green leaves a-floating,
Castles of the foam,
Boats of mine a-boating—
Where will all come home?
On goes the river
And out past the mill,
Away down the valley,
Away down the hill.
Away down the river,
A hundred miles or more,
Other little children
Shall bring my boats ashore

—Robert Louis Stevenson

Where Go the Boats? sets a seemingly simple Robert Louis Stevenson text about a child's boats sailing down a river. As the river flows away with the boats at the poem's conclusion, the speaker realizes, "Other little children / Shall bring my boats ashore." The poem's undertones—loss, longing for return, and letting go—reach far beyond a child's immediate experience. This particular musical setting aims to bring out both the surface simplicity of this poem and its potential darker, deeper implications. The child narrator copes with the loss of the boats in the same way an adult must cope with the loss of a lover: the lost objects are gone forever, but will nonetheless be loved in the future. — D. Trumbore

Fairy Movements was written for a friend of mine from sophomore year in college, Lina Song. The piece is based upon actual physical movements of whimsical creatures, and I created three watercolor pencil and pen-and-ink

fairy drawings to go along with each movement of the piece, and these were projected onto a screen during the premiere. (If by some reason you happen to do a search of my pen name, you can find my published fairy coloring book.) My deep thanks to one of my dearest and oldest friends, Eric Hiller, for making the definitive recording with recording engineer extraordinaire Jason Carlock. — S. Boyd

Meditation on "Julia Seeholzer"- So many great syllables to work with! The textures in Julia Seeholzer's name provide a landscape that's filled with hissing "S" noises and buzzing Zs that give way to tight EE and round Os. Add claps and stir. — O. Tau

Julia Seeholzer wrote *Portraits of Disquiet* originally for the 2016 elections and had no idea how it would be even more potent now, four years later. RMP recording them on the day of the 2020 election makes for powerful moment of happenstance or some cycle of cosmic truth. The poet, Kendall A. remains off the grid quite purposefully. As a trans woman who was raised in the Mormon tradition, the first song of the cycle is quite personal, a letter to her mom and dad. The second piece is a community outcry for the devastation in Ferguson in 2014. Kendall quotes directly from Dante's *Inferno* in Italian. Seeholzer then quotes musically the opening line of Barbara Strozzi's *Lagrime Mie*, a baroque lament. In the third song, the scope broadens even further in both the wonder and great tragedy of life, time and humanity continue through space and time.

I. Prayer at my parting

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for the time,
for the times you could have laughed
but didn't, for the times you could
have joined your other kids
in their pursuits
in the bathrooms, in the halls,
in the darkened areas between,
thank you for only watching.
Thank you for teaching me
that there are no do-overs,
that we need to learn to breathe quickly
or be forever strangled.

The mantle clock that was my grandfather's has stopped at 9:20; we haven't had time to get it repaired. The brass pendulum is still, the chimes don't ring. One day I look out the window, green summer, the next, the leaves have already fallen, and a grey sky lowers the horizon. Our children almost grown, our parents gone, it happened so fast. Each day, we must learn again how to love, between morning's quick coffee and evening's slow return. Steam from a pot of soup rises, mixing with the yeasty smell of baking bread. Our bodies twine, and the big black dog pushes his great head between; his tail, a metronome, 3/4 time. We'll never get there, Time is always ahead of us, running down the beach, urging us on faster, faster, but sometimes we take off our watches, sometimes we lie in the hammock, caught between the mesh of rope and the net of stars, suspended, tangled up in love, running out of time.

—Barbara Crooker

Barbara Crooker's poem "In the Middle" describes the struggle to connect in the rush of ordinary life. In this setting, the piano serves as an unreliable time-keeper, ebbing and flowing as our perception of time does. Sometimes, it pushes us on, frantic; sometimes, the pace relaxes in a moment of peace. The word "time" itself occurs over and over within the piece, serving as a sort of refrain, a reminder to slow down. I first read this poem of Barbara's last summer, at the beach house where my family has gone since I was very young—an annual trip I'd missed, for one reason or another, for the last three years. There, the poem's metaphors were made real—a literal hammock in the backyard, a beach just across the street—and it seemed especially important to set this text. It is so easy to forget, in the context of everyday life, that time will ultimately catch up with all of us. There's no antidote, but in the meantime, we should "take off our watches" more often, finding ourselves "tangled up in love" with another or just with this life, and granting time permission, if not to stop, then to slow. — D. Trumbore

as far as I know, I'm unaware
as far as I'm aware, I do not recall.

—Kendall A.

**This poem is printed in full, although with the poet's permission, sections were left out to aid in setting the text.*

Meditation on "Stephanie Boyd"- "Stay, funny boy." That's what I heard. A sad, sort of longing for the guy. A funny valentine that didn't know you loved him so. — O. Tau

Meditation on "Emma Lou Diemer" - Emma Lou Diemer's name has such warm tones in it. From those round shapes, I wanted to add some *crackle* from it with the piano. Something or someone by the fire whose face takes on the shadows and dancing lights. "Loo" "Ma-Ma-Ma" "Murmur" "Em-Dee" — O. Tau

Emma Lou Diemer was a mere teen when she scored *Psalms 23*. Its beautiful melody has endured and can still be heard in every imaginable sacred service from small church to large cathedral. Its clear, prayerful proclamation is communicated in unison. In it, you can imagine a church organ, a large hall, an important life moment, one of transition, one of pain, or one of hope.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul.
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for thou art with me.
Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies
Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

In the Middle

of a life that's as complicated as everyone else's,
struggling for balance, juggling time.

I ask that you let me go gently,
that you let me dance,
let me laugh and let me love,
that you let me live
like an honest being,
even though we have
some basic disagreement
to the nature of that honesty.

And to my Immortal Mother,

I know, all those times,
that you snuck me comfort
in times of estrangement,
You took me to the top of the hill
To see the city lights,
behind His back,
and that above it all
the connections between us
are all so very clear.

I wish I could talk to you,
I wish I could thank you too,
I wish he wasn't a dark gulf
between us, as though I were the rich man,
without ever being either.

In royal Abraham's bosom,
there's no milk, no honey,
yet they flock to him like
he was the mother of us all.

I know that you know,
and that is important to me.
When I needed a sister's shoulder,
you were there,
when I needed a mother's comfort,
you provided,
when I needed a mentor,
you taught me.
Thank you.

II. Black and Blue (Ferguson 2014)

I made a mistake
the mistake I made
in coming ere,
the mistake, I don't think
can be unmade.

For a minute,
think of the game,
there's no control,
nobody refereeing,
we are free to foul and offend
and there's nobody
there to stop us.

Proximate space crumbles apart,
We run to escape the sniper's bullet,
the drone's missile,
only to be swallowed by the earth
and caught in a maelstrom of souls
swirling through the underworld.

Lasciate ogne speranza,
voi ch'intrate

Rows of houses,
wide streets without sidewalks,
cages on the windows,
cages on the overpass,
cages on the freeway
incarcerate in this jail
that needs no guards.

III. As yet untitled *

In the photos,
faces I should have kept,
instead,
only those I'll soon forget,
only those I'll soon regret.

There are fires burning on a hill,
fires burning still,
a wall of candles is a wall
still.

If the light never goes out,
if the city never sleeps,
if the hill never erodes,
then, there can be no doubt,
but darkness, it creeps,
and doubt, it wakens,
then explodes.

The couple talked about children,
about having children, about keeping children,
about the safety of children, about the expense of children,
about the abstract concept of children,
metaphors for their own fragile egos,
still weak and unprepared for the world.

There is a time, when knees must bend
when all that was, must be again.
Give me a song to cover the cries
of the unjustly tormented,
give me a seed to plant a stand,
that I might not see the damned,

Find a ship to Guantanamo,
find a boat to row ashore,
find a way to swim to the river,
find a way to carry no more.

They say that there was no manger,
that there was just a cave,
they say that the boy was Egyptian,
they say that he was born a slave.

Time carries over, carries over,
time carries over, carries, over
carries over distance;
distance carries time.