

Oregon Musician

Sharing ideas about music and the teaching of music

Music and Knowing

The Editor's Comments



About the Editor

Diane Baxter, pianist, educator and consultant, is the editor of *Oregon Musician*. She is currently Professor of Music at Western Oregon University where she has received the *Faculty Honors Award for Outstanding Creativity* and the *Pastega Award for Excellence in Teaching*. Diane teaches studio piano and courses in Ethnomusicology, Performance Anxiety, and Research Methods. Off campus Diane consults and performs far and wide, often giving workshops on doing our best under pressure. "The Science of Artistry: The Fourth String" was published in *Clavier Companion* in Nov/Dec 2013. She lives, writes, plays and thinks in Brownsville, Oregon.

At my university I teach a course called *Introduction to Graduate Research Methods*. For several years I have focused the class on what it means "to know" in music. We do the requisite library assignments, learn to navigate the standard databases, and to investigate specific topics. The students are required to share their findings, videotape their presentations, then critique themselves. The research, the preparation, the presentation, and the final review all represent different parts of one process. I invite guests from outside music to speak to the students about their chosen fields and scholarly work. This term we had fabulous speakers in history, poetry, dance & choreography, and visual design. In each case, the kaleidoscope was turned a bit and we experienced different perspectives. One of the guests, a visual artist, told the students that it is okay NOT to know. Part (or all?) of the creative process is discovering what lies beyond our current understanding. For one

of the students in particular, this was a huge relief. He is a fine, talented musician, but her presentation seemed to lift an ominous cloud for him. In reality, “the best laid plans of mice an men” often DO go awry, but rarely does anyone speak to what this means for us as artists. This artist’s gift to the students was profound. By freeing ourselves from predetermined views of the future, paradoxically we can move ahead. In this vein, I welcome you to the newest edition of *The Oregon Musician*. The topic is “Music and Knowing.”

I am happy to introduce you to Michael Johnson, whom I became acquainted with in France through his work with *International Piano Magazine*. You will learn a bit about him through our interview, then you can enjoy two of his recent columns. Michael says: “Writing about music gives me a non-stop education. I have learned the most fascinating details of the lives of Modest Mussorgsky, Nadia Boulanger, Ignaz Friedman and the greats such as Bach, Liszt and Chopin, via my profiles and critiques of their works. Studying their personal histories has taught me to be humble in the face of great talent, in awe in the face of inborn gifts.” Kevin Helppie talks about a mid-career shift from the vantage point of a well-established artist. “I was a professional singer whose career had gone somewhat ‘south,’ but I moved into unexpected new territory . . . My long-standing vocal career had given way to a new and exciting identity. This singer had somehow transitioned into being a composer.” Deborah Cleaver articulates her relationship to music by examining two areas of personal interest. “Since we can’t all be experts on everything, it is fortunate that there are individuals who are so passionate about some corner of music that they devote their lives to plumbing the depths, all the nooks and crannies of a particular subject, and allow us to broaden our knowledge.” She explores rhetoric and speech, literature, and ornamentation.

Jill Timmons adds her thoughtful experience of learning the Bach *Goldberg Variations*. She writes: “The surprise of this musical journey . . . is that it has helped me to process a recent significant loss. It’s big enough to contain deep sorrow. It has given me an awe-inspiring focal point, a benchmark of joy, a way of reorganizing myself. Being in Bach’s presence is humbling and truly breathtaking. That may sound trite given that we all recognize his place in Western European Art Music. But in diving into this extraordinary work, I have been reminded again about his genius, his invention, his infectious *joie de vivre*, and the magnificent order of things.”

Enjoy these essays, and please keep in touch. I welcome your feedback. You can reach me at baxterd@wou.edu.

Diane Baxter, Editor
The Oregon Musician



Music and Knowing

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An Interview with Michael Johnson

by Diane Baxter



About Michael

Michael was born and raised in a small town in Indiana. From the age of 17 he never stopped traveling. After graduating from San Jose State College he went on to Columbia University, New York, on a fellowship in international reporting. In 1967 The Associated Press hired him and sent him to Moscow for four years as a general news reporter. He then worked as a business and economics writer in Paris, New York and London, finally settling in Bordeaux ten years ago where he became a music journalist, critic and portrait artist. His special interest is piano performance and composition.

Q. What inspired you to become a music journalist?

A. I often wonder the same thing. As usual in life, there was no single flash of insight. It was a gradual process and it came late in life. It was half impulse, half accident.

Q. Specifically, what qualified you?

A. In my first year of college I pursued my childhood dream of becoming a musician. I sang in the choir, I played drums in a jazz combo, and I took a private course in voice and another in piano performance. I played in the college orchestra. I was heading for a BA in music. But then I dropped out of the music world entirely

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Q. Why?

A. At the same time, I was writing for the school paper. By year two, I realized that I was lagging behind my fellow students in the music department. One guy—I still remember his name, Ernie Sanchez—had a powerful baritone thanks to a fortuitous juxtaposition of larynx and lungs, a pure biological accident. I'm not sure he was an actual musician. I was a pathetic tenor by comparison and could not compete with his God-given equipment. Meanwhile, a very dexterous piano student was working on her fifth Beethoven sonata as I struggled with the first movement of Mozart's Sonata in C (The so-called "Easy Sonata"). But my byline was on the front page of the school paper every week, and I enjoyed the access to powerful and accomplished people that journalism offered.

Q. Sounds like a turning point.

A. Yes, I faced the music, so to speak, and switched my major to political science and journalism, and for 30 years made a good living in the newspaper business when there still was such a thing. I moved to Bordeaux ten years ago and recycled myself as a music journalist/critic, combining all my experience, and have never been happier. I have made really good friends here—pianists, a jazz bass player, a university professor, a big league banker. Bordeaux is very rich in the educated classes.

Q. How did a nice American boy who grew up saying "might could" in the Midwest end up in Bordeaux?

A. I might could explain that. I love the Midwest vernacular, what ah call borderline hill-billy. To speak it, you just relax everything in your mouth, throat and nasal passages, and honk. Out comes hillbilly English. But as I continued my education I fell in love with other languages and acquired a working knowledge of Russian and French. I began to feel the pull of French wine and song. Oh and of course Brigitte Bardot.

Q. I've read that there were stops in New York, Paris, Moscow, and London and Boston along the way?

A. Well, as a young journalist at The Associated Press I was posted first to New York, then Moscow, then Paris. Later I worked in London and New York for *McGraw-Hill World News* and some of the magazines. I dragged my wife and three daughters around the world with me.

Q. Doesn't it put a strain on the kids to move around so much?

A. Usually, yes, but mine thrived on the cultural change rather than going bonkers like some of their friends. My girls eventually went to college in Boston and I did some free-lance music criticism there (Boston Musical Intelligencer) on visits. I am still doing that. They stayed in the Boston suburbs with their boyfriends but I chose Bordeaux as a perfect

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place to settle, and have found something close to nirvana here. From here, I can write for *International Piano* magazine, www.factsandarts.com and *The cross-Eyed Pianist* plus occasional pieces in *The New York Times International Edition*, successor to the *International Herald Tribune*.

Q. What have you learned from music through writing about piano and pianists?

A. I became a terrible classical music snob at an early age and I remain so. Somebody asked me about Queen the other day and I thought of Elizabeth II in Buckingham Palace. Writing about music gives me a non-stop education. I have learned the most fascinating details of the lives of Modest Mussorgsky, Nadia Boulanger, Ignaz Friedman and the greats such as Bach, Liszt and Chopin, via my profiles and critiques of their works. Studying their personal histories has taught me to be humble in the face of great talent, in awe in the face of inborn gifts.

Q. What about listening to their music? How has it affected you?

A. The love of serious music taps into a high consciousness. If this connection is nurtured, the emotional payoff is one of life's greatest pleasures. It makes you want to know more about the composer or performer. In the old days, ladies fainted at the sight and sound of Franz Liszt. Today grown men, including me, feel tears welling up at some of the classics or even some contemporary works. The trigger might be a chord, or a recurring theme, or a very quiet passage, played delicately by a fine pianist. A true music lover goes to places of great calm and beauty. The tone-deaf don't know what they are missing.

Q. Don't you admire the courage of a player who sits alone on a large stage facing a thousand or more spectators?

A. Tremendously. The piano is especially powerful because it is a high-wire act by individuals. There is no safety net. Memory lapse? Too bad. Try to fake it or leave the stage.

Q. What about the storage capacity of the musical memory?

A. Russian teachers tell their young students they should aim to memorize a new concerto each year. At the age of 30, you should have about 20 concertos in your head. It's hard to imagine such discipline in American teaching. Admittedly, musical memory works differently for everyone but the result is a marvelous thing to behold. Roslyn Tureck once told me it's simple, "The next note, the next measure is obvious because it could not be any other way." The London pianist Martino Tirimo told me he visualizes the notes on the printed page. When I was playing, I depended on muscle memory, like Charles Rosen did. In fact he tackled difficult passages by playing them over hundreds of times while reading detective novels.

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Q. What similarities do you find between painting and pianism?

A. I see and feel many similarities among the arts. It's all about creativity. If you are a naturally creative person you are driven to seek outlets. The visual arts such as my specialty—portraiture—came more easily to me. I have not had an art lesson since college days but I have progressed in my own way. My music brain also needed nurturing so I devoted myself mainly to other people's pianism. There is no shortage of marvelous recorded piano music available, much of it free—on radio, on YouTube, and lately in train stations. You can't avoid it unless you want to.

Q. Can you discuss some pianists whose playing has left the greatest impression on you?

A. Yes, I can name a few among the living. I favor players that let the music speak for itself. Marc-André Hamelin told me in an interview that no one would learn anything from watching him. His arms and hands do the physical work and the rest happens in his head. And Radu Lupu plays like a saint, seemingly in heaven, hardly acknowledging the audience. At the other extreme is the ghastly Lang Lang, who clowns, who winks at the audience, wears makeup, likes big hair, and thrashes around on the bench like a giant fish out of water. The paradox is that he plays pretty well.

Q. What do you find most encouraging in today's piano scene?

A. The fresh talent coming up from the most unlikely places, like provincial China, like Ran Jia, like Yundi Li. These people amaze me. They grew up in a different musical culture and yet mastered ours.

Q. What do you find most discouraging in today's piano scene?

A. The tendency of young players to display technique rather than musicality. A few years ago, the organizer of the Clara Haskell Competition in Switzerland resigned from the jury over contestants trying to play faster and louder than others. And of course many of the young Chinese are products of the national piano factory, where some 20 million Chinese youngsters are hand-picked to master the instrument. Their own musical culture is alien to us, so the outcome is sometimes unsatisfactory. I am also discouraged by the Lang Langs of this world, including Khatia Buniatishvili and even Daniil Trifonov. Their managers should rein them in.

Q. But is there a true piano culture in China?

A. What else would you call a country with such a large cohort of students and something like 80 percent of world piano production? They are coming our way. Watch out.

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Q. You sound frightened, resentful.

A. I am ambivalent. On the one hand, they learn the Western canon to perfection, note-wise. On the other hand they often lack background in musicology. On the third hand, our children are abdicating the field by devoting their lives to video games, skate boards and awful noise such as Queen. All this is deeply discouraging.

Q. Is anything good coming out of this shifting scene?

A. Yes. The truly talented Asians are keeping the great tradition of European classics alive. Maybe our young will return some day.

Q. How do the arts help us as human beings “to know”?

A. To know is to understand, to appreciate, to enjoy. If we are active in the arts, we bring a comprehension to things that matter in life. We stay sane by retreating into a marvelous world of wonder—music, dance, painting—when wanted, needed or desired. We use our minds to find happiness. We become complete human beings.



“Somewhere between intimidating and terrifying”

—a portrait of Nadia Boulanger—

by Michael Johnson

Perhaps enough time has passed since the death of the French pedagogue Nadia Boulanger to step back and question her musical sainthood. She was, after all, only human.

My elder musician friends recall her as a brilliant analyst of composition yet as a person she tended toward the tyrannical, impatient and cantankerous. Composer Philip Glass, who studied with her for two years, wrote that she tried to be kind but “*stayed pretty much in the range between intimidating and terrifying.*”

She was like a lot of piano teachers, one might add. Fanny Waterman used to crack the knuckles of her young students with a ruler if they missed a note or dragged a tempo.

Nadia, who died in Paris in 1979, moved in the best circles of 20th century music. Leonard Bernstein often visited her in Paris. On one occasion, when he was already established as a composer and conductor, he recalled being made to feel small when he played one of his compositions for her. She objected to a certain b-flat. He recalled later, “*I am 58,*” but suddenly “*it was like I was a child . . .*”

One musician friend of mine in Paris who studied with several of her students goes further, accusing her of “castrating” them (especially the males) by constant criticism and tedious exercises that had them “jumping through technical hoops for hours, years, on end.” Some of the exercises she wrote for her charges were “soul-destroying,” he says.

Nadia knew she had a mixed reputation and was comfortable with that. She maintained that musical training without rigor cannot be of value. Virgil Thomson wrote that she had a “no-nonsense approach to musical skills and a no-fooling-around treatment of anyone’s talent or vocation.” She once turned down a young girl applicant, exasperated, saying she would never find the patience to work with her. Fortunately, she added, her father was soon transferred to another country and the family left France.

I have just read an extraordinary collection of Nadia’s opinions and memories as assembled by Bruno Monsaingeon and published in 1980 as ‘Mademoiselle’ (Editions Van de Valde). Long out of print, I found a dog-eared, mildewed French copy in a bookstall and have studied it minutely. It is a portrait of a complex lady who describes herself as “pitiless” in her treatment of students, adding that she was just as rough on herself.

Originally an aspiring composer, she said that “*if there is one thing I am sure of . . . it is that my music is useless.*” Some listeners today would agree while others don’t. Her blandness and lack of originality seem evident to me. She admitted that she realized early on that she “*had absolutely nothing to say.*”

A student of Gabriel Fauré, Nadia gave up composition after the death of her beloved sister Lili, the more talented of the two sisters. Lili died of an affliction now known as Crohn’s disease, at 24, in 1918. Broken by Lili’s death, Nadia threw herself into teach-

“Somewhere between intimidating and terrifying” —a portrait of Nadia Boulanger—

ing, inviting students from throughout the world to come to her Paris apartment and be forced into her straightjacket. There she taught conducting, analysis, harmony, counterpoint and composition as well as piano performance.

Some of the most important musicians of the 20th century worked under her harsh regime: Aaron Copland, Elliott Carter, Walter Piston, Pierre Schaeffer, Igor Markevitch, John-Eliot Gardiner, Daniel Barenboim, Dinu Lipatti and others. Her list of students has never been completed but I should add the jazz composers Quincy Jones and Donald Byrd. The list goes on—Jean Françaix, Roy Harris, Peter Hill, Ralph Kirkpatrick, Michel Legrand, Gian Carlo Menotti, Jeremy Menuhin, Emile Naoumoff, Soulima Stravinsky.

Nadia was particularly critical of her American students who queued up to suffer under her rigorous demands. About 600 Americans took lessons from her in the 1920s to the 1970s. She found some of them brilliant but many, she said, lacked fundamentals or even a good ear. *“The truth is that the study of the basics makes you understand that to be a good musician you must be a good grammarian.”*

Conductor Igor Markevitch, who studied with her, recalled that she went out of her way to assert herself, even wearing a pince-nez to appear professorial. This, he said, helped her advance in a world then dominated by men.

She could be so harsh as to leave students stunned. Glass recalled in his recent autobiography ‘Words Without Music’ that while recuperating after a group class studying Bach chorales, the students would sit down at a café for coffee or beer. The Boulanger experience, he remembered, *“invariably left us shaken and silent.”*

Confused by the contradictory opinions in the air today, I turned to one of my main interests, portraiture, to try to get a better feel for the person behind the mask. Portraits can afford the artist a good opportunity to study a subject up close. In her case, I found nothing but severity—a strong jaw, narrowed eyes, arched eyebrows, a hard, thin mouth, and body language that students such as Glass found intimidating.

Watching her come to life on the page, I had to turn away. I felt fear. As a student, I would not have lasted an hour with her.

The Monsaingeon book is the most comprehensive account of Nadia’s views on music. He directed a television documentary on her 90th birthday and produced a book-length compilation of some five years of meetings and conversations with her. For easy reading, he reordered the material as an interview—inserting questions among her monologues.

I have produced this edited and translated version of Monsaingeon’s work, capturing the most pertinent extracts for a modern audience.

Q. Aaron Copland described you as the most famous professor of composition alive.

A. Allow me to doubt the veracity of that statement. I believe a professor is dependent on the quality of the students. The professor’s role is less grand, less omnipotent, than one might think.

“Somewhere between intimidating and terrifying” —a portrait of Nadia Boulanger—

Q. When did you discover music?

A. As a child, I could not stand the sound of music. It almost made me sick. I screamed. My sobbing could be heard in the street. The piano was a monster that terrorized me. Then one day I heard a fire truck passing by, siren blaring, and I sat down and found those notes on the keyboard. Suddenly I had discovered music with a passion. I can still hear my father saying, “What a strange little girl we have here.”

Q. Your father was a French music professor and your mother was Russian?

A. Yes, my father was totally French and my mother Russian (Princess Michesky). We never spoke Russian in the home because she did not want the family language to be one that my father did not understand.

Q. Do you believe your Russian ancestry has been important for you?

A. It has been very important . . . but I do not like to talk about personal background. There is no point talking about me all day long because it would interest no one and certainly not me!

Q. Is it true that at the age of twelve you knew Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier by heart?

A. It was an obligation. I was instructed to learn one prelude and one fugue per week. But you know, let’s not exaggerate. One prelude and one fugue per week is not so much . . . After this kind of training, though, one has a good basis in mind.

Q. It is said that you already had an encyclopedic knowledge of music when you began teaching.

A. You know, people say all kinds of things, few of which are true.

Q. How did you end up at the American Conservatory of Fontainebleau?

A. Walter Damrosch founded the school and Francis Casadesus was the first director. I was brought in to join the faculty. I spoke two words of English, “Hello” and “Goodbye.” My first student was Aaron Copland. After Robert Casadesus, other directors followed, including Maurice Ravel, Charles-Marie Widor, and I succeeded Casadesus in 1946.

Q. I understand that the conservatory was founded after World War I for American troops but after the war, what happened?

A. The Fontainebleau school became very important for the Americans. They had brilliant schooling and were very gifted but they lacked fundamentals in many cases; their musical ear was underdeveloped and they had bypassed the everyday details of music education. Why? Because—it was believed—one must not overwork the children.

Q. What were your basics in the curriculum?

A. I had to insist on the fundamentals—hearing, looking, listening and seeing.

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Q. You trained a large number of Americans. There must be hardly a city in North America that doesn't have one of your students.

A. Yes indeed, I had a great number of American students. One must remember that fifty years ago there was no such thing as American music. An immense change has happened since—Monsieur Copland, Monsieur Bernstein—their works are performed all over the world. The term “American musician” is no longer something unusual.

Q. Didn't you bring Aaron Copland to the attention of the American public?

A. Yes, in September 1938 I encouraged Walter Damrosch and Serge Koussevitzky to program his *Symphony for Organ and Orchestra*. Damrosch conducted it in Boston (in 1938) and was probably disturbed by the modernity of it. He turned to the audience as said, “Ladies and gentlemen, if a man of 23 can compose such a work, he will be capable by the age of 30 of murdering his own parents.” He was laughing but he was serious too. Naturally there was a reaction and agitation among the public but Copland's reputation was made. Copland's piece seems tame by today's standards.

Q. Music goes through phases of popularity. Is this a problem?

A. I am tormented by the phenomenon of fashion in music. Since I am an old fusspot, I don't much like change. Of course change for reasons of necessity can be marvelous. But change because one does not know where to go next is fatal and destructive.

Q. What about new voices in music?

A. Rather than deepening one's understanding, we see too many people chasing discoveries as an end in itself — finding that unknown masterpiece at any cost. The less these people understand, the more enthusiastic they are. I recently heard a piece that made me wonder if the composer was ill, on drugs, or victim of a serious mental disorder.

Q. How important is music in your life?

A. I am an absolutely mad consumer of music. I call it a sickness because even when I am exhausted after eight or nine hours of teaching, my first move—to the annoyance of the household—is to switch on the radio and listen. I am insatiable. I love listening (to music).

Q. You say you can appreciate the good and bad elements of a work. What are your criteria for a masterpiece?

A. I have no idea. I don't say they don't exist but I have no idea.

Q. And yet listening to a masterpiece you seem to be certain of your judgment.

A. It comes down to faith, to belief. Just as I accept the existence of God, I accept beauty, I accept emotion and I accept a masterpiece . . . exactly what makes up a masterpiece escapes me . . . I can analyze anything. But a page, a line, a measure of Schubert, I have no idea.

“Somewhere between intimidating and terrifying” —a portrait of Nadia Boulanger—

Q. How much training is necessary to appreciate great music?

A. One can be totally without training and yet feel the senses penetrated by melodic emotion—this is perfectly respectable.

Q. How do you balance rigor and creative freedom?

A. I hope my teaching has influenced students to appreciate the need for rigor, for order. But in the area of style, I have never intended to exert any influence. If I am working with a foreigner and I try to make him or her into a French person I am sure to fail.

Q. Isn't it possible to list composers in a hierarchy of importance?

A. The seems very difficult to me.

Q. Still, one could rank Beethoven against Max Bruch, for example . . .

A. There you are falling into the abyss. You compare the Himalayas with Butte Montmartre. Really, I must say that I honestly almost never think about Max Bruch whereas hardly a day passes that I don't think about Beethoven.

Q. How would you sum up your role as a professor?

A. I know my job. I am someone who can help students acquire a basic technique, to listen, to hear, to transpose, to practice, to memorize. The role of the professor seems to me to be modest.



Piano Without Borders

by Michael Johnson

The [Stakhanovite](#) work ethic among young piano students in China shows no sign of fading as their tiny fingers fly up and down the keyboard ten or twelve hours a day. Competitions are welcoming the new Asian talent and European concert halls tend to fill with admiring fans. Some of us (including me) don't quite know what to make of it.

It's not all about Lang Lang, Yuja Wang or Yundi Li. Potential new superstars are emerging each year. Brace yourself for more in the years ahead. Some 20 million Chinese are said to be practicing madly as our European and American kids play with their smart phones and iPads.

Two contrasting Chinese women have caught my eye (no, not like that . . .) recently and promise to leave indelible marks. They both have worked hard to get noticed and—contrary to myth—they are capable of absorbing and mastering the Western canon.



Painting of Ran Jia by Michael Johnson

Ran Jia, the Shanghai-born daughter of an established composer, has become a recognized Schubert interpreter. And Zhu Xiao-Mei has adopted the Goldberg Variations as virtually her own. Music without borders is no longer a cliché.

Piano without Borders

Elegant, poised and deeply musical, Ran Jia has brought a new freshness to Schubert, a phenomenal achievement considering how often the piano sonatas have been performed by the greatest pianists of the past 75 years. The music press in Germany, where she played all eleven works in a four-day marathon last year, christened her “the challenger.”

And Xiao Mei, a battered survivor of five years in the labour camps of Mao’s China, recovered her piano training and managed to escape, first to Hong Kong, then Los Angeles, then Boston, and finally Paris. It’s difficult to read her book “The Secret Piano” without welling up.

In one passage, she describes the beginning of her career at Beijing Conservatory. *“We worked at the piano like galley slaves, in little closed rooms whose doors were fitted with a small, round window (for monitors to check up on students) . . . The school’s leaders encouraged rivalry between students. The best pupils not only had the right to more classes but also to better food.”*

Living conditions were Spartan. *“At night, forty of us slept in the same dormitory hall. Bunk beds were placed next to each other so closely there was just enough space to move about the room. The atmosphere was suffocating.”*

And her first serious teacher, Pan Yiming, was “unrelenting,” she recalls. He ran her through the Hanon virtuoso book plus the main volumes of Czerny, Cramer, Moszkowski and Brahms, plus Bach’s “Inventions” and the Well-Tempered Clavier.” He told her, *“I want you to play all this by heart. From now on, for each lesson, you must play a piece by Bach and two etudes from memory with no mistakes.”*

By a circuitous route she ended up at the New England Conservatory in Boston, studying under Gabriel Chodos who had trained under a student of Arthur Schnabel. “Professor Chodos was forbidding. With him, it was a life-or-death struggle. After every class, I wanted to quit the piano.”

When he assigned the Schumann “Davidsbüldlertänze,” he warned her it would be the “ultimate test . . . once again, he was right.”

She saves her greatest enthusiasm for the Goldbergs, which she says “took over my existence—it contained all one needed to live.” The variations, she says, “are all about flow . . . this is what makes Bach’s music so soothing for its listeners.”

Her mastery is evident in this sample of her [Goldbergs](#).

Ms. Jia rejects talk of competitive striving among the Chinese. “My dream is simple,” she told me in an interview, “to share my musical inspiration deep down in my heart with the audience . . .” To her, Schubert’s music “dances between our world and heaven.”

Her modest persona comes as a welcome change in the face of the flamboyance of other young Asian players seeking to distinguish themselves through hair-styles or performance antics. She may well be the next Chinese superstar, a versatile player who thoroughly understands her music and performs it for us without excesses.

Piano without Borders

One American critic noted that onstage she simply and calmly “looked as though she were thoroughly enjoying herself, frequently smiling at Schubert’s more engaging nuances.”

I asked her about the growing criticism of young pianists who place technique above musicality. Not wishing to join the polemic, she agreed however that “music is not only related to the physical action but also the knowledge, emotion and the depth of the spirit behind it.” She brings all these crucial elements to her playing.

I have spent the past few days listening attentively to her latest CD (Ran Jia Schubert, Sony Music) a pairing of Sonata No. 19 in C Minor and Sonata No. 16 in A Minor. As a bonus, she includes “Three Preludes for Solo Piano” by her well-known composer-father (also an accomplished painter), Jia Daqun.

In this [video](#) she discusses her love of Schubert and demonstrates her exquisite playing.

Ms. Jia has already built the foundations of a long-lasting career, with debuts at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center, New York. As she explains in our interview (below) she became a multicultural musician by growing up in a musical household. Her father is Senior Professor of Composition and Theory at Shanghai Conservatory. He is regarded as China’s leading composer and has worked in various musical styles, including traditional Chinese music.

A bonus on the new CD is the world premiere recording of his Preludes. Most captivating is his variation swirling around Schubert’s A Minor sonata and placing it very much in the 21st century. After absorbing his daughter’s pure Schubert, this contrast is chillingly beautiful.

Interview with Ran Jia

Q. Your four-recital cycle of Schubert the eleven piano sonatas in Germany last year left critics in awe. They called you an “astonishing” artist, a “piano poet.” How has that success changed you?

A. I would say it changed me as a pianist. After this almost impossible mission, I suddenly found peace and freedom in myself as a musician.

Q. You are in very good company, devoting so much of your musical talent to Schubert. The competition could not be stronger—Brendel, Schiff, Perahia, Kempf, Lupu, Richter, Barenboim, among others. What drew you into this stratosphere?

A. Schubert has been my favorite composer since I was a teenager. Ever since I played his music the first time, I have felt a unique connection. All his music has become my mission in my musical life. I don’t feel there should be any competition between the interpreters as you mentioned in the question. For me, my dream is simple, to share my musical inspiration deep down in my heart with the audience, and to diligently dig into Schubert’s music as much I can.

Piano without Borders

Q. Will you really spend the rest of your life discovering Schubert's "spiritual delicacy and profoundness," as you have written? Is your ambition to become the definitive interpreter of Schubert?

A. Of course I will spend the rest of my life discovering Schubert's music. For more than a decade I have continuously studied his pieces. I feel his music is still underrated compare to his genius—he is so much more than just a songwriter (even though the songs are amazing!) The boldness of his harmony is absolutely stunning and he uses music to express his philosophy of life.

Q. You have said that you moved from your native China to Europe to better understand the Germanic culture of Schubert. In what way did this help your interpretations?

A. The language, the culture, the atmosphere, those are the foundations for better understanding his background.

Q. What is Schubert's secret in drawing the tragic and painful strains from major rather than minor keys?

A. True, major brings a brighter feeling than minor, but Schubert's use of the key changes make me feel that major is more sad than minor because of the way he uses the major sounds seem like a beautiful dream that will never come true.

Q. What are you preparing now in repertoire? Do you plan more ensemble work?

A. I am at the moment preparing a lot of repertoire. I have some interesting projects, for example all the Beethoven concertos, and a Schubert cycle in China in the second half of the year and some trio concerts (mainly transcriptions) with piano, saxophone and violin.

Q. Your father, the distinguished Professor Jia Daqun, is perhaps the ultimate cross-over East-West composer, combining some Chinese traditions with vigorous Western-style contemporary music, as he does in "Melodies from Sichuan Opera" on your new CD. Has his musical culture always combined a balance of the two?

A. Yes, he wrote a lot of interesting chamber works with the combination of Chinese folk melody and Western modern composition technique. He has recently been commissioned by Yo-Yo Ma for a string quartet for the Silk Road Project.

Q. In your own musical life, did you have to move from the Asian pentatonic to the Western heptatonic scales? If so, did you make this adjustment gradually?

A. I never had to move because music of all kinds was always just naturally there with me. I started studying piano when I was three and half years old. Because of my father, I heard a lot of music in different periods, of course including Chinese folk music. I didn't need to change anything.

Piano without Borders

Q. Are you still interested in Chinese music or have you definitively crossed over?

A. I don't think you can speak of crossing over in this context. It is not a question of interest in Chinese music, because this music is a part of me. I am Chinese :).

Q. How should we understand the current explosion of popularity of Western music in China? Some observers think it has become a status symbol to love Western music, like the "Gucci shoes of the music world," as one pianist has called it. How true is this?

A. First of all, there are a lot of Chinese, so it might seem like it's an explosion of popularity of western music. Second, the competition in the schools in China is enormous, the teenagers usually have to have several interests besides their normal subjects of study. And music became very popular because it can cultivate one's feelings.

Q. What drives Asian children to over-practice, sometimes 12 hours a day ? Don't their results sometimes favor technique at the expense of musical understanding? Are Asian piano students more driven to succeed or are Western children going soft?

A. Asian children work very hard and they want to be good in any area they study, whether in music or other subjects. It's important that at a certain age they build up a good technique through a lot of practice, but in my opinion, it has become very critical because music is not only related to the physical action but also the knowledge, emotion and the depth of the spirit behind it. I think we should not see a music career as 'succeeding' but rather as 'devoting' and 'growing', or we lose the essence of being a musician.



Two Roads Diverged: A Singer's Evolving Creativity

by Kevin Helppie



About Kevin

Kevin has directed collegiate, church and community choirs in Washington, Oregon, North Dakota, Kentucky and Texas. He has been a soloist with the Louisville Bach Society, Nashville Opera, Jacksonville Florida Symphony, Newport Symphony, Willamette Master Chorus, Boise Master Chorale, Portland Symphonic Choir, Corvallis Repertory Singers, the Oregon Mahler Festival and the Northwest Mahler Festival. He has been a guest teacher and recitalist in Finland, Latvia and China. Kevin holds the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree from the University of Washington, Master of Music Degree from Indiana University and Bachelor of Arts Degree

from Western Washington University. His compositions are published in the Royal Conservatory of Music Vocal Anthology. Dr. Helppie is Past-President of Cascadia Concert Opera, and Past-President of the Cascade Chapter of The National Association of Teachers of Singing. He has been a Professor of Music at Western Oregon University for twenty years.

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

—from *The Road Not Taken* by Robert Frost

"Here comes Mr. Oratorio!"

It was the early 2000s. I'd just walked into a rehearsal as the featured baritone soloist for Haydn's *Creation*. The shouted-out greeting came from a professional colleague. She was referring to the fact that I was an in-demand local performer and had recently been heard in the Mozart *Requiem*, Verdi *Requiem*, Brahms *Requiem*, Fauré *Requiem*, Handel *Messiah*, Mendelssohn *Elijah* and Orff *Carmina Burana*. I was secretly flattered by my new pseudonym!

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In another rehearsal, during the same time frame, a conductor introduced me to the chorus and orchestra as “The Golden Voice of the Valley.” The attention was flattering yet eventually fleeting. Fast-forward ahead several years. Now the phone wasn't ringing as often with offers for potential concerts. I was getting older—my voice had lost some of its luster and a nightmarish thing called “wobble” was creeping into my sound. That was coupled with the arrival of new and exciting baritone soloists in the valley, who in short order took over my “territory.” Now, when the phone rang, it was for me to cover for one of these new singers when they had fallen ill—still somewhat flattering, but also humbling.

Change is difficult but inevitable. For a time, I felt let down by the loss of visibility that I once held in the music community. I asked one conductor who had often utilized me as a soloist why they were no longer hiring me. Was it my voice, my interpretation, my dependability? The response was curt and stung a little bit. “I now have a much bigger budget and can afford to hire more expensive artists than I used to.” While not a “warm and fuzzy” reply, I could see the point. This was, then, my new reality. One hopes for constant growth and evolution within a personal artistic path or creative process. Sometimes, though, we have to travel “the road not taken” to find it. I wondered if there were a strategy or some kind of magic elixir that could be tapped to sustain creativity throughout an artistic life.

I found Graham Wallas' framework for the creative process extremely helpful. In his book, *The Art of Thought*, Wallas introduces four steps that have helped define my current musical life.

1. *Preparation*—Intense reflection on a subject
2. *Incubation*—Stepping away from the problem or idea to daydream.
3. *Illumination*—Embracing the new idea.
4. *Verification*—Putting the idea into practice (writing the composition, performing the concert, etc.).

In my case, a period of *incubation* eventually led me down a very satisfying, “less traveled” road. I started working with piano pedagogue and composer, Forrest Kinney. At first, we improvised for the pure fun of it. Later, our improvisational process began to include ancient Chinese (Zen) poetry. The very compact four-line poems seemed a perfect vehicle for the creation of vocal melodies alongside piano harmonies. After a few improv sessions, we thought we might be onto something. Eventually we archived the themes to one hundred songs. We sorted through the most promising material and notated thirty-five piano/vocal scores. Those were compiled into two self-published volumes titled *World Songs*. There we were, stuck in a typical self-publishing scenario in which boxes of our “brilliant” books filled the garage just waiting to be sold! I gave away complimentary “desk copies” to most of the voice teachers I knew. Surprisingly, some of those teachers started to use the songs in their voice studios.

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This *incubation* period really jelled when Forrest suggested that we shouldn't just create and improvise songs for our own gratification, but that we should actually share the songs with other musicians and get busy with transcription and notation. Free, unrestricted creativity now had to be channeled and focused towards a tangible end product. This meant a lot more work.

Illumination grew out of the incubation when we committed ourselves to transcribing and notating the songs. We reached out to our colleagues and started to share our songs at workshops and conferences. Eventually a publisher decided to put the songs in a well-known vocal anthology and we found ourselves in the *Verification* stage. It had taken a couple of years of work but it was really satisfying to see things through. I remember judging a vocal competition in which a singer was performing one of the songs. It was rather amusing to see the expression on the teacher's face as she supportively sat in the recital hall with her student when . . . my name was announced as an adjudicator. I could see the teacher whispering excitedly to their pupil that they were being evaluated on a song written by the evaluator himself! I breezily quipped, "You and your teacher have great taste in music!" It was a funny moment for the small audience in the room. Unfortunately, the student became very rattled at my presence and didn't perform well. Oops. That was the total opposite of a teachable moment.

I'm grateful to have had the example of many musical artists who established themselves as singers but then redefined themselves in their later careers. One of my all-time favorite sopranos, Beverly Sills, shifted direction in her mid/late career and went from being the one of the world's leading coloraturas to overseeing the *New York City Opera* as an Arts Administrator. Then there is the unforgettable Placido Domingo. He was a world-class tenor who subsequently reinvented himself as a distinguished conductor and stage director. Lastly is Eileen Farrell, a leading Wagnerian soprano of her era, who astonished many fans when she fully embraced the jazz genre.

I don't place myself anywhere near the achievement level of these icons. However, my story has some parallels to these artists in that I embraced a change in my creative path toward artistic joy. During the height of my "Mr. Oratorio" days, I started to venture into a new area—composing. According to Wallas' theory, *Incubation* had led to *Illumination* (my stagnating singing career) which moved me toward *Verification*.

I was a professional singer whose career had gone somewhat "south," but I moved into unexpected new territory. My long-standing vocal career had given way to a new and exciting identity. This singer had somehow transitioned into being a composer. Composer is a title that I am hesitant to use. I had experienced some training in composition—two years in my long-ago undergraduate days. I was actually enrolled in the class because my girlfriend at that time (now my wife of 37 years) invited me to hang out. My creations are primarily intuitive, based on my wide-ranging interests in music. It is a scary venture to try to teach students how I write songs because of my eclectic and non-formulaic style. Regardless, the process of creating songs gives me deep satisfaction.

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My latest project, "Oyster Blues," is an opportunity to work with Dr. Henry Hughes, a poet whose works about nature and the art of fly fishing are well-known. One of the unexpected joys of a different creative direction is that it allows for new types of artistic collaborations. If I had stayed on a strict career path as a classical vocalist, I rarely would have experienced the opportunities to interact with cross-disciplinary artists such as Henry. I'll admit, it's a daunting task to try to re-define yourself as a musician. But, one can assuredly take inspiration from "late bloomers" in the music field.

There's no denying that practicing a skill since early youth has its advantages. However, there is no age limit on discovering the joy of creating music. If you're a full-grown adult and would like to try writing your own Opus #1, consider the Hungarian composer, Leoš Janáček. It wasn't until he was more than 60 years old that he wrote his most meaningful works and found fame as a composer. The epic opera, *Káťa Kabanová*, is often considered Janáček's first "mature work" and his signature opera. It debuted in 1921 when Janáček was 67.

I still sing a few "Mr. Oratorio" gigs, but they are few and far between. I have had promising success with this new musical venture. There is a thrill to combining words, pitches and rhythms that mesh in a meaningful way.

Branching out is not abandoning your original career. It can be complementary. Co-writing original songs has given me additional depth as a vocal coach when I work with my students on music by the "great composers." I see features of melody and harmony that probably would never have caught my eye had I not undertaken the same process myself. It is very satisfying to allow for more than one career trajectory. The "road not taken" has made quite a wonderful difference in my on-going musical adventure. I heartily encourage other teachers to try their own new roads!

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Deep and Wide: Ruminations on Music and Knowledge

by Deborah Ingram Cleaver



About Deborah

Deborah holds a Master of Music degree in piano performance from Boston University where she studied with the renowned pianist and pedagogue Leonard Shure. She then worked closely with Shure as his teaching assistant at New England Conservatory. Ms. Cleaver has also spent many years studying the performance practice of the Baroque and Classic periods with such luminaries as Sandra Rosenblum, Edward Parmentier, and Elisabeth Wright. Her broad interests have resulted in lectures for universities and music teachers' organizations, ranging from the expressive aspects of Baroque performance practice to

the correlation between Romantic literature and music. She is an adjunct faculty member of Lewis and Clark College as well as in her private studio. An avid performer, she has appeared with the Fear No Music Ensemble, the DeRosa Chamber Players, Cascadia Composers, Friends of Rain, and The Makrokosmos Project, and has had performances aired on the NPR classical music programs "Played in Oregon" and "All Classical."

It has often crossed my mind that being a musician requires a blend of intuition, knowledge, skill, and experience, all of which are so interconnected that it is often impossible to know which asset is holding sway at a given moment. If a chord is heard as moving in a certain direction, does innate talent lead the ear to feel that movement, or has the study of harmony instilled an inherent response that is automatic? When approaching an ornament while sight-reading, is it intuition that informs the decision to play it slowly and lyrically, or quickly and brilliantly, or is it the years of experience fitting ornaments into melodic lines that triggers the response? Is the goal note of a phrase something we know because we are talented, or because the factors of melodic invention, harmony, and rhythm are so ingrained that we hear it almost immediately? Is the melody driven by the harmony, or the other way around? Is it the rhythm that excites the harmony, or vice versa? Or are they like chemical reactions that interact equally to organize thought into musical gestures?

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Knowledge, which includes skill and experience, is like a vast mining site, with tunnels reaching out in all directions, rich with musical veins of precious ore that are there to be extracted, refined, and fashioned into beauty. Mature musical performance relies on the extent to which we can broadly associate musical expression with the underlying veins of theory, philosophy, literature, and formal underpinnings of a composition, and bring them to life with the physical skill to realize those notions.

Since we can't all be experts on everything, it is fortunate that there are individuals who are so passionate about some corner of music that they devote their lives to plumbing the depths, all the nooks and crannies of a particular subject, and allow us to broaden our knowledge. These are just a few of the corners that have been highly revelatory, transformational, and inspiring for me.

Rhetoric and Speech

The idea of music as speech has been explored by music theorists since the early history of our art. The basic argument was which came first, music or speech, and while the opinions flipped back and forth, the underlying assumption that they were irrevocably entwined was always taken for granted. Australian aboriginals traced their paths through the outback, singing their origins and history (see *Songlines* by Bruce Chatwin). Until the tenth century, the only music allowed in the western Roman Catholic church was sung, as instrumental music was deemed lascivious. By the time of Bach, however, instrumental music was in full bloom, both in and out of the church. Still, two elements of the spoken word were central to his compositional output: rhetoric and speech. A simple way of looking at these ideas is to equate rhetoric with the formal organization of a thesis or argument, and speech with the stress patterns of syllables. Some rhetorical gestures might be the use of wide melodic leaps, which are dramatic events. Those going up often denote jubilation, and those going down signal grief or distress; two-note slurs were frequently used to denote sighing or weeping; strettis were to effect a sense of crowding or urgency. It is worth noting that rhetoric was a subject in all schools at the time Bach was a student, and considered a high art. Every musician and listener would have recognized these gestures and felt the appropriate emotional response.

Speech patterns are analogous to poetic feet in verse. For example, a melodic fragment might be composed in iambic meter, which is an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed one (to seek, to find); trochaic, a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed ("Tyger, Tyger, burning bright"); anapestic, two unaccented syllables followed by a stressed one (underfoot, overcome). One can only marvel at Bach's fastidious marriage of language to musical meter and melodic design in his use of groupings of notes. His facile manipulation of metric hierarchy, strategic placement of consonance, melisma, and counterpoint, especially in his cantatas, can inform our sense of phrasing, choice of articulation, and rhythmic energy in instrumental music. It shows us how to highlight syncopations, cross rhythms, and

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hemiolas, to mention just a few rhythmic events. And of course, these very concepts remain constant in the evolution of musical styles, even while touch and tone evolve.

Some sources for excellent information on these topics are: *Evening in the Palace of Reason*, by James R. Gaines, and *Playing Bach on the Keyboard*, by Richard Troeger.

Literature in Music

One day as I was reading through a volume of Brahms Lieder, I started to realize how many different poets were represented in these gems. I gave up counting after 50 different writers, and began to scan all my other volumes of songs. All of the major song writers, from Beethoven to Debussy and beyond, were well versed, so to speak, and sought to enhance the power of the written word with their settings. How much then would the study of languages deepen our ability to perform as singers or accompanists? How much would understanding the profound insights of the Schlegels and Schillers underpin our interpretations?

No book on the relationship of literature and philosophy to music has been more enlightening for me than *The Romantic Generation* by the eminent pianist, scholar, and writer Charles Rosen. A brilliant mind with few equals, Rosen's breadth and depth of knowledge left me breathless with wonder and desire to follow many of the threads he laid out.

Ornamentation as Improvisation

Who would have thought that ornaments began as free-form improvisation? Today, I often hear the discussion in terms of rules and regulations, to be disregarded at great moral peril. How far that is from the actual musical goal of an ornament, which should be expression! It is a common mistake to pull out a composer's chart explaining his symbols, count the oscillations, and cram them into the correct timing, not realizing that the chart is only a blueprint. When we examine the purpose of an ornament—to add spark to a cadence, to tug at the heartstrings in a sarabande, to lyricize a melodic line in a Chopin nocturne, even to fill in blank time caused by long notes—knowledge can help us adapt the execution of the ornament to the musical situation. When is it appropriate to think like a singer, or like a guitar player? A thoroughly fascinating, exhaustive, and eye-opening, if somewhat controversial, history of ornamentation that reads like a novel was given to us by Frederick Neumann in his tome *Ornamentation in Baroque and Post-Baroque Music*.

Each of these corners of music feeds into the others, and in turn forks into countless other veins of exploration. A musician must of necessity constantly seek the knowledge that informs his ability to express. Students for life, that is what we are.



The Goldberg Variations. Why?

by Dr. Jill Timmons, NCTM



About the Author

Jill Timmons performs internationally as a solo and ensemble artist and has recorded on the Laurel, Centaur, and Capstone labels. With some thirty years in higher education, she continues to prepare pianists for competitive auditions and successful performances. Her best-selling career guidebook, *The Musician's Journey: Crafting Your Career Vision and Plan*, is published by Oxford University Press. Timmons is the artist/teacher affiliate with Classic Pianos at their flagship Portland store and in their satellite locations in Seattle, Denver, Cleveland, Anchorage, Las Vegas, and Albuquerque.

These days, I am working on J.S. Bach's Goldberg Variations. It has been on my bucket list for years, but life, projects, and all manner of things continually has put it to the side. It's not as if you can do *part* of it. And then there is the issue of it being one of *those* mountain pieces. Glad you are in it, but truly grateful when it is completed.

How I came to tackle this work is a vivid reminder about the power of synchronicity—Carl Jung's a causal connection between two psychic or physical phenomena.

In the summer of 2018, my dear friend and colleague, Ludovica Mosca, was visiting Oregon to perform on the Mt. Angel Abbey Bach Festival. Italian by birth, she is a Spanish citizen living in Barcelona, and by the way she speaks four languages fluently—really five if you count her long-standing scholarship and performance history of the keyboard works of J.S. Bach. We met some thirty years ago because we shared the same manager. Over the years we became fast friends, sharing in the luck to have been mentored by Marianne Marshall, director of Concert Promotional Services in Los Angeles.

Fast forward to August of 2018. Ludovica and I got together after her spectacular piano recital at the Mt. Angel Abbey. We did our usual lightning fast "catch-up" in each other's lives—joys, concerns, losses, music, performances, travel, family, and so forth. 2017 had been challenging in different ways for each of us. We were ruminating on the process of dealing with loss when she suddenly asked, "Do you play the Goldberg?" I said, "No, but I am picking away

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at it, not consistently, mind you. I would like to play it someday but . . ." She responded with, "Would you be willing to learn it? I have always wanted to dance the compendium of baroque dances embedded in this extraordinary work." Did I mention that Ludovica is also a trained baroque dancer, even to the point of offering me her facsimile charts of dances done in the court of Louis XIV (1638–1715)!? Now before I lose you on this, remember that the Sun King was a superb dancer, as was J.S. Bach!

Dance was an integral part of French court life and for any courtier hoping for a political career in Louis XIV's court, a personal dance master/instructor was an essential. The intricacies and complexities of dance in the court are beyond the scope of this essay, but suffice it to say that one's political career, position in court, and the pecking order amongst aristocrats depended upon fancy footwork!

The G-berg these days is on a pedestal, but back then, it was intricately bound to the popular baroque dance repertoire embedded in a court ball: Menuet, Gigue, Courante, Passepied, Bourrée, Loure, Sarabande, Allemande, Gavotte, and many others. We find them in evidence throughout Bach's larger keyboard works such as the Partitas, English Suites, and French Suites. Bach himself was a fine dancer and personally knew three French dance masters from the court of Louis XIV.¹

So back to the study of the Goldberg. I have been working away—a dance galley slave of sorts. There are so many technical conundrums, just the right tempo for a particular dance, the dreaded "two keyboards" to grapple with while I have only one on the modern piano, and the endless drilling for fluency.

The G-berg, on the modern piano, is a *transcription*, but even that is its own journey. I have fully five separate editions plus my own edits. What a perfect reminder for the need for flexibility in life and figuring out new ways of doing things! Trust me, I have had to redo my fingering choices more times than I care to admit!

The surprise of this musical journey, however, is that it has helped me to process a recent significant loss. It's big enough to contain deep sorrow. It has given me an awe-inspiring focal point, a benchmark of joy, a way of reorganizing myself. Being in Bach's presence is humbling and truly breathtaking. That may sound trite given that we all recognize his place in Western European Art Music. But in diving into this extraordinary work, I have been reminded *again* about his genius, his invention, his infectious *joie de vivre*, and the magnificent order of things. The G-berg is resplendent with all manner of dance—one after another, dances that we can all do. Being in Bach's world does connect you with something great than self, and offers a juicy full-bodied celebration of life.

My guess is that all of us in OMTA have a bucket list of works we would like to learn—those works that speak to the heart of who we are, our reason for making music, our passion for certain composers and times. It doesn't have to be the Liszt Sonata or the Emperor Piano Concerto (although it could be . . .). The goal is to stretch, and to answer to the heart of a personal bucket list. If not now, when? Why not put your "best foot forward?"

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So next September, Ludovica and I are offering this luminous work as the opening concert for *Piano Arts in Netarts*, a weekend piano festival here on the Oregon coast (September 5–8). The performance space? The Netarts/Oceanside Firehouse! With the support of Classic Pianos and the Yamaha Corporation, Ludovica and I will play and dance the G-berg in its entirety.

I'd like to think that Bach would be pleased to have his joyous and visceral work offered to the diverse audience of this small coastal community; where there are more cows than people!

¹ Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne, *Dance and the Music of J.S. Bach*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001, 13.

