Although she took an active part in the postwar European music world in the 1950s and 1960s, **Janet Maguire**'s entire extant oeuvre has been written within the past twelve years. Maguire, an American composer who has spent most of her adult life in Europe, was totally dissatisfied with her own music until the 1990s. It was then that she was able to reach that amalgam of compositional characteristics that she felt expressed her own "voice." Deeply influenced by the European avant-garde composers, her musical output is defined by an interest in extended instrumental and vocal timbres, free and non-metric rhythms, and non-tonal pitch structures. Her compositions, however, although very much a part of this tradition, are not bound by the strict demands of that aesthetic, and in her writing she draws freely from ideas, forms, and sounds of European classical music, as well as those of Oriental and indigenous musics, to create a unique and personal universe.

Born in Chicago in 1927 and raised in New Rochelle, New York, Janet Maguire began studying music at the age of six. She played in school orchestras and spent two summers in the Juilliard Summer School Program, playing cornet in the band and in a triple trumpet concerto heard on national radio. She graduated with a B.A. in piano from Colorado College, where she met the members of the LaSalle Quartet, who introduced her to the music of Bartók, Schoenberg, and Webern. Fascinated by the twelve-tone technique, she traveled to Paris to study with René Leibowitz, a strong advocate of Schoenberg's music and a prolific composer himself, who had introduced the twelve-tone technique to such French composers as Pierre Boulez. Her three years spent at the Darmstadt Summer School provided the opportunity to hear firsthand the music of Stockhausen, Luigi Nono, and György Ligeti. She took a course with Ligeti, and credits such pieces as his *Atmosphères* and *Lux Aeterna*, as well as the music of Iannis Xenakis, with influencing her recent music. Over a period of ten years, Maguire wrote some twenty-five works for various chamber combinations and for orchestra using the twelve-tone technique. Although Schoenberg's approach to harmony and melody—the vertical and horizontal as being all one—remains an integral part of her compositional thinking, she has since rejected, even discarded, all of these compositions, and none of them is included in her list of completed works.

Turning away from composition, Maguire spent the next several years of her life in a massive effort to hear as much live concert music as possible, an endeavor facilitated by her position as music critic for the Paris International Herald Tribune. She also worked on several projects that took her outside the world of the avantgarde. She collaborated with Leibowitz on Thinking for Orchestra, a book on orchestration published by G. Schirmer and Co., Inc. They would later collaborate on two other projects. The first was a compiled suite of the opera music of Jacques Offenbach, re-orchestrated by them as Nuits Parisiennes, an RCA commission for its Reader's Digest series. The second was an orchestration of Carl Maria von Weber's unfinished opera, Die Drei Pintos, from a piano-vocal score found by Leibowitz. In addition to her music critic duties, Maguire was also a contributing writer for the Saturday Review in the 1960s. While raising her two sons, she began a book on the European music festivals. This project was later abandoned, and in 1976, she relocated to Venice, where she still lives. There she began work on a new finale for Giacomo Puccini's Turandot, which was interrupted in 1979 by the death of her first son. The completion of the finale in 1988 re-energized her and she returned to, or, one might say, she began afresh, her work as a composer. Since 1990 she has written some forty works for chamber groups, orchestra, and voice. She has served as president of the composers' association Venezia Musica Nuova, which is active in Venice organizing concerts of new music at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, the Thetis Marine Research Center, the University Auditorium, and several of the city's churches and palazzos. Her works have been performed throughout Italy and Germany, in the United States, Canada, Spain, Austria, Ireland, Australia, Argentina, Bulgaria, Latvia, and on the French National Radio.

Rejecting both tonality and serial composition, essentially rejecting the idea of "system," Maguire sees the role of her work as that of "exploring a wellspring." She is not interested in pre-determined or abstract structures, but rather she often calls on musical resources to "describe" subtle and fleeting impressions. A master of instrumental sound combinations, she begins each new piece with an intense concentration on the timbres of the instruments and lets their sonic vocabulary and their combinations manifest themselves. In many cases, the knowledge of how the sounds will reverberate in the physical spaces where they will be heard influences her timbral choices. Textural changes define the sections of her pieces, and in the horizontal lines the instruments

traverse a broad array of sounds. In the string quartets, she uses a warm, full vibrating tone that resonates with emotion to contrast with the ethereal high harmonics and tactile gestures of glissandos, the effect of which is sensual and kinesthetic. Many titles suggest their sound: *Ebb and Flow* (for two pianos), *Scontri* (translated from the Italian as "Clashes," for violin and double bass), *Frills* (for piano), *Moondust* (for percussion, zheng, and tape), *Lightly* (for women's chorus a cappella, tambourine, crotal, guiro, and rainstick), and *Shuffle* (for orchestra). *Glass*, another piece for orchestra, describes an exhibit of artistic glass seen on the Piazza San Marco. A large battery of percussion instruments gives the piece a broad palette of sound combinations and also demonstrates a characteristic of her percussion writing: an emphasis on timbre rather than metric pulse. It is probably the influence of the Italian singing tradition that brings the easy flowing lines, with a minimum of large and difficult intervallic leaps, to her vocal writing. Her phrases are often particulate groups of one or two notes or short diatonic passages. In the choral pieces, harmonies are formed of the simultaneous sounding of several voices, each performing independent tasks. With the exception of a forty-minute ballet, *Taiga*, and a one-hour opera, *Envoys*, her oeuvre is made up entirely of densely packed pieces shorter than fifteen minutes, many of them ranging from seven to twelve minutes in length.

Così (1993), for piano and soprano, was written at the request of its poet, Paola Bozzini, and first performed at the Palazzo Mocenigo, Venice. Two interlocking seventh chords pitched a half-step apart, one taken by each hand, form a fragmented counterpoint in which the alto line suggests the percussive and unpredictable pattern of raindrops. The vocal line appears sporadically: disembodied, simple, floating freely over the sound of the rain. As the patter of the rain cascades down, turning into soft clusters of sound in the middle range of the piano, another descending figure continues into a low rumble, low broken chords, evanescent sounds on the strings, the changing piano textures illustrating the poem. More clusters, a downward glissando at the climax, and the pattering rain of the opening returns. A time-tested form, A-B-A, the returning pattern acts as a dramatic device, contrasting the still-falling rain with the sudden emotional change in the speaker of the poem.

Per Acqua (1990) is the earliest of the pieces in this recorded group. Created for the particular acoustics of the Basilica di San Marco in Venice, and performed there by the A Capella Ensemble Lübeck, it is a piece for two choirs, one male, one female, facing each other on the elevated balconies of the church. The poem of the same name by Luisa Milos alludes to Odysseus and the Sirens and describes the journey of the man through viscous clouds, algae, and opaque stagnant pools—the slimy path of tortured love. The religious and antiphonal style of the piece is at odds with its subject—contemporary love—but the form, the antiphony of male against female voices, brilliantly mirrors the separation of the He in pursuit of the She. The first section of the poem describes the journey's end. The He returns, eyes whitened, dazzled, by the absence of the Sirens. Set almost entirely on one note, the He is emotionally flattened to a single pitch. The opening introduces a single falling musical theme of four notes that reappears throughout the piece. The two following sections combine singing, speaking, whispering, shouting, to form gushing waves of sound, thick textures of all the voices at tightly spaced intervals forming an image of the encircling water as the lovers entwine among the coral, then separate, as He begins his desperate pursuit. Throughout, there is the ever-present downwardly piercing melodic theme, repeated more and more often in the third section, by a solo tenor. The theme's final appearance is in the top soprano line as She drives it down like a knife. The fourth and last section suggests the physical swamp of destructive love, a slow procession of tight harmonies moving first to a whisper, then to a desperately quiet, widely spaced, full chordal sound, resting one note above, and anticipating the work's opening pitch. The flashback has ended, the circle completed.

The voice, enunciating vocal sounds, examining them high and low, focuses on single pitches and short two- or three-note groups with a predominance of stepwise motion despite the many changes of register. The strings provide a background of lacy interchanges interrupted by various sonic events. One might see the content of the piece as the space between the notes. An array of glissandos, wobbling glissandos, and portamentos connect clear pure pitches, quarter-tone wobbling slow trills, fast trills, and tremolos. The vocal and instrumental lines pass sonic gestures back and forth. The voice sometimes joins the string activity and sometimes it is off on its

own, examining such sounds as "ah," pure and abstract, "nye," with its distinctive nasal presence, or "mmah" or "gnow," sounds that transfer a distinct physical sensation. The piece was premiered in 1999 at the Thetis Marine Research Center, the sound expanding into the vast space of this fifteenth-century shipyard building.

Cummings Lieder (2000) was first performed at Music Under Construction in New York City. The first of the four songs, "of evident invisibles," features rising whole steps in the voice and in the piano. At the end of the song is a long rising whole-step scale that takes the listener back to the time of Debussy. The suggestion of an earlier era echoes the image of the song—a woodland setting with creatures from ages past still inhabiting the surroundings. The soprano sings simply, often on a single pitch. Flitting about the voice is the sprightly, sparse, single-line piano part, suggesting the presence of past butterflies. The location of "Take for example this," the second of the lieder, is the city, with rain hitting the rooftops and the sound of a clock striking in the background. This song's characteristics differ only slightly from those of the first. The single-voice piano line is now staccato. Sounds played directly on the strings of the piano echo the striking of the clock. The soprano adds four long rising intervals, in the middle and at the end of the piece, to its main vocabulary of short chromatic lines and declarative single-pitch phrases. At the end a glissando drifts upward to a half-closed mouth high pianissimo sound, leading into the celestial realm of the following song. "luminous tendril of celestial wish" is slow and sparse. The upper piano voice is joined by a low bass voice, opening a giant cavern of space between the two piano lines into which the vocal line enters. The final song, "now all the fingers of this tree ...," recalls the characteristics of the first song, with the evanescent subject—the then of past love still inhabiting the now accompanied by the light and sprightly melodic piano line that serves up the invisible reminiscences of the first song in the cycle.

The sections of the string quartet, **Invenzione** (1996), are defined by delicate blocks of sound. High harmonics are heard in the opening where, at the ends of phrases, the tightly spaced singing voices of the instrumentalists form a mysterious and unearthly echo. At its first performance in the Vivaldi church in Venice, these vocal sounds reverberated eerily in the cavernous space. In the next two sections narrow chromatic lines in each of the instruments perform against each other note for note. Performed at pianissimo, there is not a sense of the individual lines but rather of a unified and singular effect. Three big climactic gestures, each with a longer preparation than the preceding one, and each ending with the mysterious vocal echo, lead into a final lyric section where short, wispy phrases dart about among the instruments suggesting a sonic ballet of wilis and fairies. Over the low resonant sound of the cello, the evanescent turbulence disappears, high, up and off into the air.

Inno a Dio (1994), commissioned by the A Cappella Ensemble Lübeck, is a short choral paean. It was first performed at the Chiesa della Madonna dell'Orto in Venice in 1995, where this recording was made. The piece rises from a low single pitch, through a delicate hocket and the sibilant entrance of the first words of Maguire's text, to a majestic choral climax, leaving the soprano voices stranded in the air. The other voices descend out of the soprano line, forming tightly spaced intervals that create a sense of unease, a crying out from the darkness—the soprano line holding desperately to its high pitch. At the end a vocal unison lowers to the piece's opening pitch before the final choral gesture, "Gott!," held too long to be a shout, not long enough to be a glorious finish, sounding more like a cry for help than a shout of praise.

L'Altro Quartetto (1999), commissioned by the Paul Klee String Quartet, was written to challenge the quartet's members, each string part an etude focusing on an individual player's "weakness." The feathery mictrotones of the two upper strings are joined by the full voices of the cello and viola. In *L'Altro Quartetto*, the full expressive lyrical sound that has been historically associated with the stringed instruments stands in special relief, surrounded by the many extended sounds that strings can make. Passages marked "lirico" are immersed in a sea of light tremolos, glissandos, phrases bowed on the fingerboard, staccatos, glissandos to nowhere, trills, and bounces on both sides of the bow. The changing textures in each string part overlap and there is the occasional call to attention by the sound of a crotal. There is a wonderful moment where the wood of the bow hitting on the strings forms a delicate rhythmic sonority. Near the end of the piece is a lento section of beautiful

chords increasing in intensity, bringing to mind the slow movement of a late Beethoven quartet. And then comes the climactic ending, loud and grand with the requisite drum roll (on a tomtom played by the second violinist). It is a finale with no sense of preparation, no feeling of resolution; it is a conclusion with no premise, wryly and conceptually humorous. -Carolyn Lord

Carolyn Lord is a composer and choreographer who lives in New York City. She is the director of Music Under Construction, an organization that produces concerts of new music. She received her master's degree from Mannes College of Music.

Così

(Text by Paola Bozzini)

L'asfalto è lucido di pioggia; da una finestra aperta le note sincopate di un pianoforte ...

Il traffico fruscia piano sotto un cielo luminescente. Sui lastricati sconnessi scintillano i fanali.

Gocce nei capelli e mani in tasca corro sotto i platani del viale, spogli di foglie.

D'improvviso, tu, sotto il portico, in controluce, lo sfondo della vetrina chiara disegna la tua immagine.

Scopro così, d'un tratto che non ti amo più.

An Instant

The asphalt is shining in the rain; through an open window the syncopated notes of a piano ...

The traffic sounds hushed under a luminescent sky. Headlights sparkle On rough pavement stones.

Raindrops in the hair and hands in pockets I run under the avenue's leafless plane trees.

Suddenly, you, under the portico, semi-reflected, the glass of the store window forms your silhouette.

In an instant, I found that I no longer love you.

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Per Acqua

(Text by Luisa Milos)

Quando ritorna ha gli occhi bianchi abbacinati dall'assenza di sirene

Scivolano l'uno nell'altro all'indietro lungo la rete dei coralli all'indietro si cercano piano tra schegge di parole pause vibrazioni ondeggiano ristagni opachi paure fughe si chiamano una lunga nota fendente tremano

si prendono per mano

per mano per acqua per la lama di luce che eclissa

e accende lontano

salde

il seme nero della notte

Sono sceso — ha detto — alla notte oltre il mare Coperto di squame un occhio di smeraldo ho penetrato la faglia stretta strisciando radici fredde come lame Ho perforato nuvole viscose senza forma immense ho staccato le alghe dal mio capo ad una ad una attorcigliate livide Ho tremato Giù — ha detto — lungo il filo gorgogliante del tuo canto un'iride m'ha guidato (o il mio gorgolio di eco in eco mi spingeva avanti?) Sono sceso — ha detto — al tempo oltre il mare Ho piantato le gambe nella sabbia

Ho scavato

Ho scavato nelle orme dei tuoi sguardi le mani di fuoco ho scavato nella pietra dei tuoi pianti e Guarda! il tuo volto — ha detto — mi respira accanto ...

Non ho volto — ho gridato — non ho volto già lontana

già sciolta in pioggia di farfalle

ebbre d'acqua per acqua

turbinanti ho gridato

già lontana

una nota per acqua che si perde

Di là dall'acqua nel sonno

Di qua dalla memoria nel silenzio

verso dove

i grandi fiori bui

By Water

When he returns his eyes are white dazzled by the absence of Sirens

They slip into one another backwards along the coral reef backwards they search for each other softly among word fragments pauses vibrations they rock with the waves opaque stagnancy fear flight they call each other a long piercing note they tremble

take each other by the hand

by the hand by water by the blade of light that eclipses

and far away lightens

the black seed of night

I descend — he said — to the night beyond the sea covered with scales an eye of emerald I penetrated the narrow fault scraping roots cold as blades I pierced viscous clouds formless immense I tore fronds of algae from my head one by one twisted leaden I trembled down there — he said — along the gurgling thread of your song a rainbow guided me (or was it my song from echo to echo that drove me ahead?) I descended — he said — to the time beyond the sea I planted my feet into the sand firmly I dug I dug into the traces of your glances my hands aflame I dug into the stone of your crying your face — he said — breathes near me

I have no face — I cried out — I have no face already far away already dissolving in butterfly rain intoxicated with water by water whirling

I cried out

already far away

a note by water that vanishes

Beyond the water in sleep

on this side of memory in silence

towards where

the large dark flowers

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Cummings Lieder

(Texts by E. E. Cummings)

1. of evident invisibles exquisite the hovering

at the dark portals

of hurt girl eyes

sincere with wonder

a poise a wounding a beautiful suppression

the accurate boy mouth

now droops the faun head

now the intimate flower dreams

of parted lips dim upon the syrinx

2. Take for example this:

if to the colour of midnight to a more than darkness(which is myself and Paris and all things)the bright rain occurs deeply,beautifully

and i(being at a window in this midnight)

for no reason feel deeply completely conscious of the rain or rather Somebody who uses roofs and streets skilfully to make a possible and beautiful sound:

if a(perhaps)clock strikes,in the alive coolness,very faintly and finally through altogether delicate gestures of rain

a colour comes, which is morning, O do not wonder that

(just at the edge of day)i surely make a millionth poem which will not wholly miss you; or if i certainly create, lady, one of the thousand selves who are your smile. 3. luminous tendril of celestial wish

(whying diminutive bright deathlessness to these my not themselves believing eyes adventuring, enormous nowhere from)

querying affirmation; virginal

immediacy of precision:more and perfectly more most ethereal silence through twilight's mystery made flesh—

dreamslender exquisite white firstful flame

—new moon!as(by the miracle of your sweet innocence refuted)clumsy some dull cowardice called a world vanishes,

teach disappearing also me the keen illimitable secret of begin

4. now all the fingers of this tree(darling)have hands, and all the hands have people; and more each particular person is(my love) alive than every world can understand

and now you are and I am now and we're a mystery which will never happen again, a miracle which has never happened before and shining this our now must come to then

our then shall be some darkness during which fingers are without hands;and i have no you:and all trees are(any more than each leafless)its silent in forevering snow

—but never fear(my own,my beautiful my blossoming)for also then's until

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Inno a Dio

(Text by Janet Maguire)

Souffle de vie Son du silence Soleil de l'âme Source de joie Amour! Gott!

Breath of Life Sound of Silence Sunlight of the Soul Source of Joy Love! God!

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The **A Cappella Ensemble Lübeck**, formed in 1976 by its director, Hartmut Bethke, performs a vast range of new music in addition to the traditional repertoire. The choir has received critical praise for its rich sound and for its expressive interpretation of texts. It has been awarded many prizes including, in 1985, fourth prize in the National German Awards; in 1987, second prize in the Spittal International Competition; and, in 1988, first prize in the Land competition, representing the state of Schleswig-Holstein in a tour of China. In 1991 the Choir won the Foundation Professor Marx competition at the VDOK meeting in Neuss (Association of Oratory and Chamber music choirs). **Hartmut Bethke** studied sacred music at the Lübeck Conservatory, choral direction with Kurt Thomas, and organ with Eugen Simmich and Walter Kraft. He became Director of Music at the Itzehoe Church while still a student and held this position for many years. He taught music at the local schools and conducted the Itzehoe concert choir in both a cappella performances and with orchestra. The A Cappella Ensemble Lübeck tours each year throughout Germany and abroad, often travelling to Italy, Austria, England, France, Latvia, and Finland.

Elisabetta Bocchese, pianist, was born in Vicenza, Italy. She received her diploma in 1987 from the Venice Conservatory and continued her studies at the Mozarteum in Salzburg and at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna. In her career, she has concentrated on the performance of chamber music, specializing in lieder. Her performances have taken her to Paris, Florence, Siena, and Fiesole. In 1992, Bocchese won the prestigious chamber music competition in Caltanissetta, and in 1993 received a special award in the Schubert competition in Piemonte. She was principal pianist for the Venetian opera company La Fenice's recordings of the complete chamber works of Johannes Brahms, performing them in Venice with the ensemble La Scuola di Rony Rogoff. Her solo recitals often feature world premieres, and she has an extensive repertory of traditional piano music.

Cristina Mantese, soprano, began her vocal studies with Iris Adami Corradetti at the Venetian Conservatory Benedetto Marcello, graduating with honors. Her teachers also included Anton Dermota, Nigel Rogers, and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf. She made her debut in Venice in Schumann's *Manfred*, under the direction of Piero Bellugi. Mantese has sung some thirty-seven roles in the opera repertory, including nineteen world premieres. She has appeared in such technically and stylistically diverse works as *Norma, Cavalleria Rusticana, Così fan tutte, Il Pirata*, and *Adriana Lecouvreur*, as well as in many Baroque operas. Mantese has sung under the batons of Bruno Campanella, Alan Curtis, Massimo de Bernart, Otmar Maga, Donato Renzetti, and Christian Thielemann, with whom she was featured in the Berlin Festliche Operngala. Mantese has won four international competitions as well as the prestigious Luigi Illica Prize for "canto all'antica," and has recorded for the Italian National Radio and Television (RAI), Rivo Alto, and Bongiovanni.

Julie Mellor, mezzo-soprano, was born in Stoke-on-Trent, England. She took her degree at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England, continuing her studies in Italy at the Accademia d'Arte Lirica e Corale Città di Osimo. She now lives in Venice, where she studies with Sherman Lowe. She has been a finalist in such international singing competitions as the Toti Dal Monte, Treviso, Lignano, and the Iris Adami Corradetti at Padua. Mellor has sung with several orchestras, including the Grand Theater La Fenice and in nationally televised concerts of Luigi Nono's *Io Frammento da Prometeo* and Schumann's *Requiem.* She is a member of the highly praised quartet of women's voices Cuiusvis Toni, which tours widely. Her operatic roles include Charlotte in Massenet's *Werther*, Eboli in Verdi's *Don Carlo*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Marcellina in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Fidalma in Cimarosa's *Il Matrimonio Segreto*.

The **Paul Klee String Quartet**, formed in 1995, specializes in the music of the twentieth century. In recent concerts the quartet has shown its supreme ability to interpret the disparate expressive styles of such composers as Sofia Gubaidulina, Iannis Xenakis, Zhou Long, George Crumb, Dimitri Shostakovich, Aaron Copland, Paul Hindemith, Philip Glass, and Kaija Saariaho. It has also performed many world premieres. The Quartet has appeared in festivals in Santander, Alicante. Istanbul, Rome, Galway, Dublin, Venice, Lucca, Livorno, Verona, Bolzano, Salzburg, Udine, and, in 1999, in New York City. The Quartet has been broadcast on Italian and Spanish national radio, has recorded for the Niccolò label, and is featured on several other recordings. The Paul Klee String Quartet has a particular interest in the relationship of music to the visual arts, as is indicated by their name, and they have performed as live accompaniment to silent movies.

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For a list of Janet Maguire's compositions, go to www.janetmaguire.com.

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JANET MAGUIRE LACE KNOTS

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1. Così (1993) 5:57

Cristina Mantese, soprano; Elisabetta Bocchese, piano

2. *Per Acqua* (1990) 12:11

A Cappella Ensemble Lübeck, Hartmut Bethke, conductor

3. Lace Knots (1998) 6:45

Cristina Mantese, soprano; Paul Klee String Quartet: Alessandro Fagiuoli, Marco Rallo, violins; Andrea Amendola, viola; Stefano Bonomi, cello

Cummings Lieder (2000)

- 4. "of evident invisibles" 2:24
- 5. "Take for example this:" 3:10
- 6. "luminous tendril of celestial wish" 4:27
- 7. "now all the fingers of this tree(darling)have" 3:45 Julie Mellor, mezzo-soprano; Elisabetta Bocchese, piano
- 8. *Invenzione* (1996) 7:35

Paul Klee String Quartet: Alessandro Fagiuoli, Marco Rallo, violins; Andrea Amendola, viola; Donatella Colombo, cello

9. Inno a Dio (1994) 6:37

A Cappella Ensemble Lübeck, Hartmut Bethke, conductor

10. L'Altro Quartetto (1999) 7:36

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