

Lesbian American Composers



1. Pauline Oliveros: *Poems of Change* (1992) (10:21)
Pauline Oliveros, voice, accordion, original text;
(Produced by Klaus Schoening of the
Westdeutsche Rundfunk (WDR) in the Studio
Akustische Kunst, in Cologne, Germany.
Benedict Bitzehofer, audio engineer. Actual
sounds of World War II used in the recording
came from the library of the WDR.
Commissioned by Studio Akustische Kunst)
 2. Nurit Tilles: *Raw Silk (A Rag)* (1994) (6:13)
Nurit Tilles, piano; (Recorded by Michael
Marciano at Systems Two, Brooklyn, on
December 29, 1997. Thanks to Kay Blackburn of
Steinway Piano and Piper Macleod)
 3. Linda Montano: *Portrait of Sappho* (1997) (7:16)
Linda Montano, voice, electronics, piano;
(Composed for this collection and recorded in
November, 1997, by Chris Erlon, Sound
Technician of Digital Domain, Austin, Texas)
 4. Lori Freedman/Marilyn Lerner: *Barbie's*
 5. *Other Shoe* (1997) (5:08)
Queen Mab: Lori Freedman, half clarinet;
- Marilyn Lerner, piano; (Recorded in concert at
the Toronto Music Gallery, by Paul Hodge, May
8, 1997)
6. Paula M. Kimper: "I Want to Live," Act II Duet from
Patience & Sarah (1997) (4:30)
Lori Ann Phillips, soprano (Patience); Elaine
Valby, soprano (Sarah); orchestra conducted by
Steven Osgood (Recorded Fall, 1997, by Joe
Arlotta, recording engineer, at Back Pocket
Recording Studios, NYC)
 7. Eve Beglarian: *Wolf Chaser* (1995) (13:53)
Robin Lorentz, violin (Wolf Chaser); Eve
Beglarian, percussion, electronics; (Recorded and
mixed at Baby Monster, NYC, in November
1997. Eve Beglarian, producer; Jon Smith,
engineer)
 8. Jennifer Higdon: *running the edge* (1996) (6:16)
Claudia Anderson, flute; Jill Felber, flute; John
Pirainen, piano; (Recorded at Bryan Hall,
Bowling Green State University by Mark Bunce
and at Kerr Hall, University of California, Santa
Barbara, by Kevin Kelly. Final mix by Kevin
Kelly)
 9. Annea Lockwood: *I Give You Back* (1993) (7:16)
Elizabeth Eshleman, soprano; Poetry by Joy Harjo
(Recorded October, 1997, at Mills College by Maggi
Payne)
 10. Madelyn Byrne: *Winter* (1997) (7:31)
Electronics (sampled sounds of bowed crotales
played by Lisa Frisari, and the voice of Malin
Serner; realized at Columbia University's
Computer Music Center on the Silicon Graphics
Industry's Indy Computer)
 11. Ruth Anderson: *SUM (State of the Union Message)*
(1973/rev. 1997) (7:37)
Collage
- Total playing time: 77:00
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Notes

CRI salutes the eleven composers on this disc for their music and all that goes into it. As they say for themselves in their notes which follow, their gender and sexuality are but parts of their whole persons. But we also salute their bravery in standing as proud lesbians in a profession and in a society where just being a woman can sometimes still be a detriment. This disc is the third volume in CRI's series of music by fine composers who "just happen to be gay." The first volume, *Gay American Composers*, released in 1996, was never conceived to be an all-male affair. But when we began

discussing the project with prospective artists, there were very few women interested in being, or available to be, part of the project. We feared that if only one or two women were included, they would seem like red herrings, if not tokens. Nevertheless, we announced our intention then to release a full disc of lesbian composers. Now two years later—and after far more rejections than we received from men—the project has become a reality. Again, with this new collection, we present representative works from each composer, and we let the listener decide if

there is a gay or lesbian sensibility that unites them. The artists range in age from their thirties to their seventies, and have backgrounds in mainstream composition and teaching, as well as in performance-art and ritual, film scoring, and Broadway. And again we allow each of them to make their own statements on the topic of sexuality and music. Like all first-rate American artists, these lesbian composers share a boldness of vision and a determination to bring it to reality. We hope that this introduction to their work will draw you further into the ever new and changing world of American classical music.

—Joseph R. Dalton,
Executive Director,
Composers Recordings, Inc

Pauline Oliveros (b 1932) is a composer and accordionist, widely regarded as a leader in electronic music, new performance techniques, and interactive sound environments. She has composed in a variety of media, and recorded widely as a soloist and with her Deep Listening Band. Since the early 1980s, she has been concerned with group improvisation, graphic scores, and guided meditation. Through the Pauline Oliveros Foundation, she leads annual retreats in training, and experiencing her system of Deep Listening. One of Oliveros's most recent major works, *Njinga*, is a theatrical collaboration with her companion, the author, playwright, and director Ione, which was based on the life of the African warrior queen, and has been performed throughout Europe and North America. Her recordings on CRI include *Bye, Bye Butterfly* from the collection *Women in Electronic Music – 1977* (CD 728), and *Portrait of the Quintet of the Americas* (CD 722).

Nurit Tilles (b 1952) has been praised by the Village Voice as “one of new music’s most valuable pianists”; she has enjoyed a long association with many distinguished composers. She has performed and recorded with Steve Reich since 1974, and with Meredith Monk since 1984. She and Edmund Niemann are the duo-pianists known as Double Edge, considered by the *Village Voice* to be “one of the century’s best piano duos.” Since their 1987 Town Hall debut, they have toured extensively with programs ranging from Mozart, Brahms, Stravinsky and Messiaen, to new pieces written for them by John Cage, “Blue” Gene Tyranny, David Lang, Kevin Volans, David Borden, and many others. Double Edge recordings on CRI include a collection of American works entitled *U.S. Choice* (CD 637), and *Cage: Music for Two Pianos* (CD 732). *Ragtime Here and Now*, Tilles’s solo recording of modern rags by Donald Ashwander, J.T. Thomas, James Tenney, Paul Epstein, and others, was produced by Rudi Blesh in 1983. In recent years she has given performances of Ives’s rarely-heard Piano Sonata No. 1, recorded with jazz pianist Fred Hersch, and written a second piece, *The Kitchen Table*.

Linda Montano (b 1942) “Self Portrait: Although trained in sculpture, and having graduated from the University of Wisconsin with an MFA in that field, I have been exploring performance for the past twenty-five years, creating fifty different major works. Themes have been: Duration, Transformation, Humor, Attention States, Hypnosis, Eating Disorders, Death, and Obliterating Distinctions Between Art And Life. My writings can be found in thirty publications, and I have written five books. I have been written about in over twenty journals and seventeen art-related books. I have had over 125 reviews of my work. On July 4, 1984, I finished a one-year performance with Tehching Hsieh. We were tied at the waist with an 8 foot rope for a year, and never touched. On December 8, 1984, I began *7 Years of Living Art* (1984-

1991), a multi-layered personal experiment in attention, which lasted for 7 years. I wore only one-color clothes; listened to one note 7 hours a day; stayed in a colored space 3 hours a day; spoke in a different accent each year (except with immediate family); and for 7 years I read palms and gave Art/Life Counseling, once a month, in a 7 year installation at the New Museum, as an extension and testing of my inner work. On December 8, 1991, I began *Another 7 Years of Living Art* (1991-1998). Four times a year for 7 years, I will meet physically or astrally, at the Chagall Chapel (United Nations, New York, NY) to sit still. At the Art/Life Institute and Ashram, Kingston, I will continue disciplines (wearing one-color clothes each year, etc.) to bring new attention and appreciation to the energy centers. I have taught performance/video and sculpture, on the graduate level, at almost 20 different colleges and universities including UT in Austin where I live.”

Lori Freedman (b 1958) is internationally recognized by audiences in the dance, theatre, contemporary, improvised and electro-acoustic music communities. In her native Canada, she is a frequent performer with the Vancouver New Music Ensemble, Banff Music Theatre Productions, and the multi-discipline ensemble Thira. She has appeared as guest soloist with many symphony orchestras, including Vancouver, CBC, Winnipeg, and Manitoba Chamber. Extensively involved with the creation of new work, she has had more than thirty works for solo bass clarinet written for her by Canadian composers, and has herself written music for film, video, theatre and dance.

Marilyn Lerner (b 1957) is a Montreal-born jazz pianist/composer who, as an improviser, speaks from an amalgam of influences including the lyrical impressionism of Bill Evans, the eloquent simplicity of Horace Silver, the brash risk-taking of Bud Powell, and the angular individuality of Thelonius Monk, all distilled through her early classical training and recent forays into New Music. As a composer, her complex, multi-layered, pieces combine a unique jazz conception with ideas derived from Bartók, Stravinsky and Messiaen. As the jazz-influenced composer/improvisation duo Queen Mab, Freedman and Lerner have worked together since 1991. They released their debut CD, *Barbie’s Other Shoe*, on the 9 Winds label in 1997.

Paula M. Kimper (b 1956) has composed music for theater, film, and public television. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music, her CD *Flight of the Harmonic Messenger*, a one hour meditation on Sacred Sites of the Earth, has been played widely on New Age radio programs worldwide. *Patience & Sarah*, to a libretto by Wende Persons, is Kimper’s first opera. The world premiere of the American Opera Project’s production is slated for Lincoln Center Festival in July 1998. Kimper lives in Park Slope, Brooklyn with her lover, mezzo-soprano Elaine Valby, who sings the role of Sarah.

Eve Beglarian (b 1958) is a composer, performer and audio producer, whose work has been performed internationally, in mainstream concert halls and theaters as well as in alternative clubs and lofts. She has written a large body of chamber music and also worked extensively with dancers and choreographers, including Robert LaFosse and the New York City Ballet, Monica Lévy and the Washington Ballet, as well as Victoria Marks, Ann Carlson, Cydney Wilkes, and Hilary Easton. Her experience in music-theater includes collaborations with Shi-Zheng Chen for the China National Beijing Opera Theater, and Terry O’Reilly with Mabou Mines. Her performing duo, Twisted Tutu, with keyboard player Kathleen Supové, blends high technology with theater. The duo has recorded music by Beglarian and Randall Woolf

for CRI's *Emergency Music* series. Her first solo CD, *Overstepping*, was just released by O.O. Discs. In addition to her composing and performing work, Beglarian directs and produces audio-books, of authors including Stephen King and Anne Rice, for Random House and Viking Penguin.

Jennifer Higdon (b 1962) was born in Brooklyn, New York, but grew up in the mountains of east Tennessee. She now lives in Philadelphia with her partner, Cheryl Lawson, and is on the faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music. She has received numerous awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, and two awards from the American Academy of Arts & Letters. Her orchestral work, *Shine*, was chosen as Best New Classical Piece of 1996, by USA Today. She is most active as a composer, but continues to perform on flute, and to conduct. She appears as conductor on CRI's recording of music by Robert Maggio (CD 720), and she plays flute in a CD of her chamber works on the *I Virtuosi* label.

Annea Lockwood (b 1939) was born in New Zealand. After studies and early work in England and Europe, she moved to the United States in 1973. Since 1985, she has been a faculty member at Vassar College, teaching composition, theory, and a course on women in music. In the last decade Lockwood has concentrated on vocal and instrumental music, but she is best known for her large-scale mixed-media performance-works and installations. In *A Sound Map of the Hudson River* (installation, 1982) she traces the flow of the river through recordings made at 15 different locations (available on CD from Lovely Music). *Thousand Year Dreaming* (1991), scored for didgeridoos, conch shells, winds, brass and percussion, incorporates projections of ancient cave drawings

(available on CD from O.O. discs). CRI's collection, *Women in Electronic Music - 1978* (CD 728), includes an excerpt of *World Rhythms* (1978) a ten-channel performance work featuring geysers, pulsars, and other natural phenomena.

Madelyn Byrne (b 1963) is currently at work on a doctoral dissertation at the City University of New York Graduate School and University Center. She also teaches at Hunter College and at New York City Technical College. Her music has been performed in the United States and Hong Kong and been broadcast in Germany, Canada, and the U.S. Her electronic piece *Winter* was a co-winner of the 1997 Friends and Enemies of New Music Composition Competition. Byrne lives in Park Slope, Brooklyn, and on Long Island, with her partner Linda Fisher and their son Jason.

Ruth Anderson (b 1928) studied flute with John Wummer and Jean-Pierre Rampal, and composition with Darius Milhaud and Nadia Boulanger. She supported herself during her twenties as a flutist, playing for several seasons with the Totenberg Instrumental Ensemble, and as principal flutist for one season with the Boston Pops; and during her thirties as an orchestrator, mainly at NBC-TV, as well as for the Lincoln Center Theater revivals of *Annie Get Your Gun* and *Showboat*. In 1966 she joined the faculty of Hunter College in Manhattan, where she was the founding director of the Electronic Music Studio, and taught composition and theory, until retiring in 1989. Her composition, *Points*, is available on CRI's collection, *Women in Electronic Music - 1978* (CD 728); *I come out of your sleep* is available on the XI label (CD 118).

Text

"I give you back"

I release you, my beautiful and terrible
fear. I release you. You were my beloved
and hated twin, but now, I don't know you
as myself. I release you with all the
pain I would know at the death of
my daughters.

You are not my blood anymore.

I give you back to the white soldiers
who burned down my home, beheaded my children,
raped and sodomized my brothers and sisters.

I give you back to those who stole
food from our plates when we were starving.
I release you, fear, because you hold
these scenes in front of me and I was born
with eyes that can never close.

I release you, fear, so you can no longer
keep me naked and frozen in the winter
or smothered under blankets in the summer

I release you
I release you
I release you
I release you

I am not afraid to be angry.
I am not afraid to rejoice

I am not afraid to be black.
I am not afraid to be white.
I am not afraid to be hungry.

I am not afraid to be full.
I am not afraid to be hated.
I am not afraid to be loved.

to be loved, to be loved, fear.

Oh, you have chocked me, but I gave you the leash.
You had gutted me but I gave you the knife.
You have devoured me, but I laid myself across the fire.
You held my mother down and raped her, but I gave you the
heated thing.

I take myself back, fear.
You are not my shadow any longer.
I won't hold you in my hands.
You can't live in my eyes, my ears, my voice
my belly, or in my heart, heart
my heart my heart

But come here, fear
I am alive and you are so afraid of dying.

From the book *She Had Some Horses* by Joy Harjo.
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Production Notes

Conceived and produced by Joseph R. Dalton

Mastered by Robert Wolff, engineer at Sony Music Studios, NYC.

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