

## Family Traditions

Featuring:



The Amalias



The Amazing  
Garcias



Chaminade



The Fays



Julianne McLean



Libby Larsen

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The Maud Powell

# Signature

## Women in Music



*Pauline Viardot-Garcia*



❖ FROM THE DESK OF

## *Libby Larsen*

PHOTO: ANNE MARSDEN



I AM HONORED TO BE WRITING TO you through this new publication, **The Maud Powell Signature**. This magazine recognizes how important it is that we performers, composers, educators and music lovers of all kinds can speak to each other through our own history, past, present and future.

As a composer, I find myself in a complex, exciting flow of history. The last decades of this century have underlined some sea-changes in our musical world. Never before have so many kinds of music been so abundantly available worldwide. Marvelous performers abound. Cultures, nations, and cultures within nations share their spirits through music. Through technological advances in recording since the 1950s, an ordinary person can take a private musical tour of the world in a single afternoon. Music is literally everywhere.

And yet, in the midst of so much music there is a growing urgency to understand what music is to contemporary life. Music exists beyond its accompaniment of life's events, beyond the entertainment of the moment, beyond the performer or the composer. It comes from an essential source, out of time, creed and culture. It speaks about human existence giving form and voice to emotions too deep to express in words or over borders and generations. How then, do we listen to music? How do we teach about music? What is music's purpose? It seems to me that composers are central to addressing these questions.

In my music I try to communicate something about what it is like to be alive now by arranging sound in space and time, for that's what composing is. I am intensely committed to living in my own times. I find new musical forms in things as diverse as traffic patterns and modern architecture. Infinite possibilities of rhythm and melody exist for me in our own fluid language, American English. In the ways we live there are fresh views of texture, color and dynamic range.

Early in my own work I saw that we composers were often set apart from the larger musical world in which we operate. I wondered how our lives could fully benefit from music if its creators were marginalized. Through co-founding the Minnesota Composers Forum and through my work with Meet the Composer and other musical organizations, I work to ensure that living composers are always part of the concert experience.

I hope that in composing music and in working to have the music of living composers performed regularly in the traditional concert hall, I can add to the understanding of what music is in our lives.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Libby Larsen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

*Libby Larsen is an American composer based in Minneapolis, Minnesota.*

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# *Amy Fay, American Pianist*

## *Something to Write Home About*

PHOTO: TUTTLE COLLECTION, INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN PRAGMATISM, TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY



*"Unless people have an enthusiasm for art I don't see the least use in their coming abroad," Amy Fay wrote in 1871. "If they cannot appreciate the culture of Europe, they are much better off in America."*

**A**MY FAY'S *MUSIC-STUDY IN GERMANY* won thousands of readers at a time when Americans believed that a European "finishing" and debut were indispensable to a career in music. Beginning in 1881, the book was published in more than 25 editions in the United States and was said to have inspired over 2,000 Americans to go abroad to study prior to World War I. Her book was published in England and France and even translated into German at the request of Liszt.

Amy Fay was one of the first American women to study music in Europe on her own, from 1869 through 1875. She had plenty to write home about and her letters reveal an intelligent young woman bursting to share her experiences. Her letters, collected in *Music-Study in Germany*, were written to her elder sister Melusina ("Zina") (1836-1923), Amy's surrogate mother, who recognized their historic value and arranged their publication. The sequel Zina may have planned, based on the letters Amy continued to write her family to the end of her life, had to wait until 1986 and the publication of *Amy Fay: The American Years, 1879-1916*, Edited by S. Margaret William McCarthy, (Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1986).

Amy's entire family was strong on music and the arts, full of talent inherited from, among others, her maternal grandfather, the Episcopal Bishop of Burlington, Vermont, a poet, musician, author, architect and painter, and her mother, Charlotte Emily Hopkins (1817-1856), a gifted visual artist and pianist who gave Amy her first formal piano lessons. Her father, Charles Fay, a distinguished scholar and Harvard graduate, served as an Episcopal minister in Vermont, Louisiana and Michigan, until his retirement to Cambridge about 1870.

Amy was born in Bayou Goula, Louisiana, on May 21, 1844, the fifth of nine

children. At five, she was able to extemporize on the piano and perform at a high level of technical and musical proficiency. Her gifts must have prompted Reverend Fay to obtain a parish in St. Albans, Vermont, where the children could benefit from New England's rich intellectual and cultural climate, despite the retarding influence of the Civil War.

Her father, a strong advocate of a thorough classical education, personally supervised his children's study of languages. Amy learned to converse, read and write in Latin, Greek, German and French. Her mother, a self-taught pianist and gifted singer who also played organ, guitar, violin, flute and harp, created a rich musical environment for her family. She tutored Amy in drawing and writing as well as music and instilled in her nine children (six girls, three boys) a keen awareness of the cultural and social value of participation in music. Amy was the most gifted musician among her siblings, but her sister Kate Fay Stone (1846-1928) was a good pianist while Laura Fay Smith (1841-1920) was a skilled singer and watercolorist.

Married at sixteen, Amy's mother died at the age of thirty-nine when Amy was only twelve. At eighteen, Amy went to live with her older sister Melusina after Zina's 1862 marriage to Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), who had read mathematics and physics at Harvard and worked for the U.S. Coast Survey (1861-91). Known as a brilliant mathematician, philosopher, and scientist, Charles Peirce was an original thinker who used pragmatism to construct his theory of relations and signs and discovered quantification theory—preludes to the computer. Amy grew fond of Charles' brother Benjamin and the two may have been considering marriage before Amy went abroad.

Zina was a pianist and a "doer" with executive ability like her mother. A strong feminist, she was a prominent writer, lecturer, and organizer. At a time when divorce was viewed as scandalous, Zina's husband divorced her in 1883. Relieved from the burden of contending with his difficult nature, Zina moved to New York City. A year later, her popular book *Cooperative Housekeeping: How Not To Do It, How to Do It: a Study in Sociology* (Boston: J. R. Osgood, 1884) was published. She later wrote the novel *New York: A Symphonic Study in Three Parts* (New York: Neale, 1918). Without a doubt, Zina provided a powerful

role model for Amy, bolstering her growing feminism.

Amy studied Bach with John Knowles Paine (1839-1906), music professor at Harvard, and attended the piano classes of Otto Dressel at the New England Conservatory of Music. At seventeen, she studied piano with the Polish artist Jan Pychowski at a summer school in Geneseo, New York, and then again with him at age twenty-one in New York. Encouraged by her sister Zina and John Knowles Paine, Amy went to Germany to study music between 1869 and 1875 with the most prominent teachers in Europe.

The first year, she studied in Berlin with Carl Tausig (1841-1871), who, as Paine described him, "plays the piano like forty thousand devils!" When Tausig abruptly closed his conservatory in 1870, Amy "suffered terribly over Tausig's going off." Adding to her distress was the stunning news of the death of her potential fiancé Benjamin Peirce, followed in July 1871, by news of Tausig's sudden death of typhoid fever at age 31.

The young pianist resolutely continued her studies with Theodore Kullak (1818-1882) in Berlin for three years. With Kullak, she faced the common European prejudice against Americans.

"Kullak has a deep rooted prejudice against Americans, and never loses an opportunity to make a mean remark about them," Amy writes, "and though he has some remarkably gifted ones among his scholars, he always insists upon it that the Americans have no real talent. As far as I know anything about his conservatorium just now, his *most* talented scholars are Americans."

William Sherwood, at seventeen, and Amy herself were among them. She had only one direct way to avenge his prejudice. When Kullak said to Amy, "Fraulein, you can take Schumann's concerto or *my* concerto," the plucky Amy relates, "I immediately got Schumann's."

Exposed to a panoply of great artists in Berlin, Amy writes enthusiastically that the pianist Clara Schumann (1819-1896) gave the best concert of the season in 1871. Discovering the Hungarian violinist Joseph Joachim (1831-1907) in 1870, she characterizes him as "the wonder of the age...so bold!...So free! And then his conception!! It is like revealing Beethoven in the flesh, to hear him." "It was worth a trip across

### ❖ *Writing a Musical Woman's Life*

For over a decade I have been on the trail of Amy Fay, a journey that has taken me half way around the world, through Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Belgium as well as to places in the United States as far removed from each other as Lubbock, Texas, and Chicago, Illinois. I have retraced Amy Fay's steps in Berlin and Weimar and taken a Rhine cruise similar to the one she took in the summer of 1872. In 1986, following the publication of my book *More Letters of Amy Fay: the American Years 1878-1916*, I became convinced that the time for a full-blown biographical study of Amy Fay had come. Very early in the process it became clear that the biographer's challenge would be not only to track Amy Fay's outer journey, but also to follow her inner pilgrimage, her "journey of the heart."

Crafting Fay's life so that it would reflect both the inner as well as the outer person involved charting a passage into the unknown, passing through waters that would at times be turbulent and at other times serene. It meant searching out answers to questions for which there were not always clearcut responses. The questions were many. What, for example, were the formative influences in Amy Fay's life? What precipitated her severe case of "nerves" six months after her arrival in Germany, a condition that lasted for twenty years and that threatened to undo the progress she had made under the tutelage of the most renowned musical mentors in Europe. Liszt included? And why, at age twenty-seven, did she declare in a letter home that she would never marry or even do housework if she could help it? And how did she find meaning in her life? Could present-day feminist theory note in Amy Fay's life choices patterns which have been identified as central in the lives of musical women of her era and social class?

Attempting to answer such questions has been both challenging and rewarding. It has pointed up the value of human documents, especially letters. It has brought home to me the international dimensions of scholarship. And most of all, it has demonstrated the beneficial difference that one person, in this case Amy Fay, can make in our world.

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the Atlantic” just to hear these two friends of Brahms perform together in concert.

In 1873, she sought instruction and inspiration from Franz Liszt (1811-1886) in Weimar.

Amy’s word portraits of Liszt-in-action during her Weimar summer of 1873 leap from her pages and stay in the mind. They still constitute a major source record of that remarkable personality at a time when he was “finishing” most of the world’s great pianists. The young American spent hours in close observation of Liszt as music master, social grandee, and human being, played in his classes and accompanied him on the concert trips and banquets he was always arranging for his pupils.

Amy managed to establish a personal friendship with her teacher, something few pupils ever achieved. She was considered to be one of his most promising students, and Liszt seemed to regard her intelligence, hard work, sensitivity and social poise with respect.

“On Monday I had a most delightful *tête à tête* with Liszt, quite by chance. Strange to say, he was alone, sitting by his table and writing. It was the first I ever heard Liszt really talk, for he contents himself mostly with making little jests. We were speaking of the faculty of mimicry, and he told me such a funny little anecdote about Chopin.”

Amy is stirred by the first performance of Liszt’s oratorio, *Christus*. “I wish it could be performed in Boston, for his orchestral and choral works, I am sorry to say, make their way very slowly in Germany. ‘Liszt helped Wagner,’ said he to me sadly, ‘but who will help Liszt?’” Amy did her best to gain a performance of Liszt’s *Bells of Strassburg* in Boston on her return home.

The level-headed Amy takes a dim view of humbug and her letters bubble over with humor, as in her Balzacian estimate of a certain haughty countess: “She always seems to me gradually going to wreck—a burnt-out volcano, with her own ashes settling down upon her and covering her up.”

The young American was not immune to the appeal of men, and more assured men responded to her spirited animation. On an excursion to Jena with Liszt and his pupils, she was charmed by the Belgian pianist and visual artist William Gurickx, “who only speaks French.” He sent to her dinner place “an exquisite rose, petals furred, which he molded from new bread” then and

there. “Since then,” she writes, “we have become very good friends and he is teaching me to speak French.” She relates how she admires his playing of Liszt’s Rhapsodies but cuts her tale short with “But back to Jena....”

Amy did become romantically involved with the Belgian but her brother insisted that she end the relationship. Amy kept Gurickx’s portrait in a heart-shaped locket which she wore even after Gurickx married. Their deep friendship endured through visits and correspondence.

Amy never did marry. Ultimately, music claimed her heart and she found the inspiration she sought from Liszt: “Oh! you cannot *conceive* anything like Liszt’s playing of Beethoven. When *he* plays a sonata it is as if the composition rose from the dead and stood transfigured before you. You ask yourself, ‘Did I ever play that?’”

Lest her sister think that Amy had lost her American good sense, she scribbles this perceptive afterthought to a description of one of Liszt’s lessons: “Everything is so topsy-turvy in Europe according to *our* moral ideas, and they don’t have what we call ‘men’ over here. But they *do* have artists we cannot approach! It is as a Master in Art that I look at and write of Liszt and his mere presence is to his pupils such stimulus and joy, that when I leave *him* I shall feel I have left the best part of my life.”

The Liszt canon still feeds on pages she meant for Zina’s eyes and ears. Unforgettable is her portrait of “*der liebe Meister*,” like a “big tabby cat,” “lazily” proposing to a young lady, at a passage in his E-Flat Concerto where the hands begin midway and run to both ends of the keyboard, to “*Alles zum Fenster hinaus werfen*” (“Throw it all out the window!”). One such picture from Amy’s camera eye catches both Liszt’s uniquely “ideo-kinetic” command of the keyboard and the seductive power that nicknamed him “The Wizard of Weimar.”

By December of 1873, Amy had completed four years of piano study in Germany with three teachers. She returned to Kullak in Berlin, where she met Ludwig Deppe (1828-1890), who would be her last teacher. She had heard about Deppe from the American pianist William H. Sherwood (1854-1911) and others.

Deppe, as a violinist and conductor, had long exercised his arms in what he



Melusina Fay Peirce, “Zina,” was a surrogate mother to young Amy after their mother died at the age of 39. Zina, a feminist, was a pianist, writer and lecturer who possessed a sharp business sense. (Courtesy Jane Ambrose)

felt pianists in their hidebound formalistic training needed most—a coordinated body rhythm to energize and free the expression of their musical impulses. Although not a pianist, he had taken time to discover and test the steps that lead to such freedom, from the simple fall of the fingers “like drops of water,” through the full range of “conscious” (*bewusst*) sensations of the movements of finger, hand and arm that correspond to the spectrum of sound colors.

Sound was everything. As he discovered the principles that underlay the remarkable post-Lisztian development of the mechanical side of playing, Deppe’s central concern was always, and rightfully, a good sound.

“If only I had found him before Liszt,” wails Amy, as Deppe reveals to her, one by one, the conditions of Liszt’s “unearthly” sound and shows her how to draw it from the piano. “Deppe is not a pianist himself, he has the funniest little red paws that don’t look as if they could do anything, but he’s got the same touch and tone that Liszt has—that indescribable *something* that when he plays a few chords, merely, he makes the tears rush to your eyes. It is too heavenly for anything.”

Amy’s belated discovery of Deppe coincided with his rising fame as the pianistic guru many had been seeking, the careful builder of skills which lead to virtuosic freedom.

“Deppe teaches more for the love of Art than for love of money,” Amy writes



Rose Fay Thomas used her position as wife of Chicago Symphony Orchestra conductor Theodore Thomas to champion higher musical standards for women in composition and performance. She was an organizer of the National Federation of Music Clubs. (The Maud Powell Archive)

on December 11, 1873, "a rare thing in these materialistic days!" Deppe never shied from the groundwork often delegated by European piano "professors" to their female assistants. He devoted to it an infinite patience; three-hour lessons were the rule.

Deppe called technique "the smallest difficulty." "Anybody can master execution if they know how to attack it, unless there is some want of development in the hand." At their first meeting (lasting three hours) he asked Amy to show him her hand without a glove. She refused, however, "because I was afraid he might find some radical defect or weakness in it." But Deppe let Amy play her pieces **through** (which others had not been allowed to do) then returned his verdict: the difficulties were primarily mechanical. "You have conception and style, but your execution is uneven and hurried, the wrist stiff, the fourth and fifth fingers very weak, the tone not full and round enough, you do not know how to use the pedal, and finally, you are too nervous and flurried."

Many would have hit the floor, but Amy had "invoked the demon" as she put it, and "felt bound to give the pledge Deppe required" to "give up all playing for the present except what I give you to study, and those you must play very slowly." Back to square one, after four years of hard effort!

One measures the depth of Amy's

determination to learn by her willingness to start yet again and by recalling an earlier painful experience with Kullak. Amy was slated at last to play a concerto (Anton Rubinstein's Fourth) with orchestra at one of Kullak's twice-a-year "academies." She had hardly performed in all her study years and keenly felt her lack of experience. She worked hard and felt ready when the day arrived.

She went to the hall and waited. A Haydn Symphony was played, then Beethoven's Fourth Concerto ("wretchedly"). Then when her turn came, and she sat wiping the keys after her nervous predecessor, "a young man came up beside her. 'Fraulein Fay,' shouted Kullak, 'you have the same concerto? Very well, you can play it next time. Today Herr So-and-So plays it.'" Amy knows that may mean never. "Such is Life! I had eaten no end of 'the bread of carefulness' and the result is—nothing at all—not even a failure. Oh, the difficulty of doing **anything** at all in this world!"

Amy's *cri de coeur*, rare in one so plucky, re-echoes in her sister's editorial comment that ends *Music Study in Germany*: "My sister hopes that no American girl (Amy was the first) who reads this book will be influenced by it rashly to attempt what she herself undertook, viz.: to be trained in Europe from an amateur to an artist. Its pages have afforded glimpses, only, of the trials and difficulties with which a girl may meet when studying art alone in a foreign land, but they should not therefore be underrated."

She counsels tyros to choose an excellent American teacher, like William Mason (1829-1908) (an earlier student of Liszt), William Sherwood, and Julie Rivé-King (1857-1937), who can take them all the way. "American teachers best understand the American temperament and therefore are by far the best for American pupils until they have gotten beyond the pupil stage." Who knows what worlds of grit, disappointment, forbearance, and humor those words conceal? We now know her well-proven advice has put Americans-trained-by-Americans at the top of the world's concert lists in this century.

Amy's one-and-a-half years of study with Deppe (his "course" took three) ended reluctantly, then delightedly, with technical rehabilitation with one of his assistants in Hamburg. The positive benefits of Deppe's approach convinced

Amy to base her future playing and teaching on Deppe's principles, as did the eminent pianists and teachers William Sherwood, Donald Francis Tovey (1875-1940) and Emil von Sauer (1862-1942).

Amy then returned to Weimar for a few more weeks of study with Liszt before returning to America in October 1875. She managed, just before the end of her time in Europe, to test and realize her grounded strength in a successful public performance and carried that impetus of certified success into her more than 35 years of professional activity in America.



...she attributed her lack of pupils to discrimination against women.

"Women are beginning to realize that they, too, have brains..."

On her return to the United States, Amy gave her first concert in New York's Chickering Hall in December 1875. Her sister Zina lectured on the duties of women, a fitting preface to a career that forthrightly championed women in music. Amy's piano recitals in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she made her home in 1876-78, were attended by the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, a close personal friend, and the American critic John Sullivan Dwight. She also performed with the Theodore Thomas Orchestra and became the first artist to play an entire piano concerto at the Worcester Music Festival (Beethoven's B-flat major concerto with the Germania Orchestra conducted by Carl Zerrahn).

Between 1878 and 1890, she lived in Chicago with her brother Charles Norman Fay ("Norman") (1848-1944), a Harvard graduate and prominent Chicago utilities executive. There she taught and performed, developing "Piano Conversations," her own recital form that included a brief talk before each piece she was to play. She gave these lecture-recitals throughout the Midwest, steadily educating largely unsophisticated audiences to appreciate classical music. It was a format that William

Sherwood and many others adopted in their appearances before American audiences whose cultural circumstances and musical understanding could not compare with those in European cities. During her Chicago days, Amy shared the stage with prominent singers and instrumentalists and counted the pianists Ignaz Paderewski (1860-1941) and Fanny Bloomfield-Zeisler (1863-1927) among her close personal friends. She even toured throughout the Northwest and West with soprano Emma Thursby's Concert Company.

Teaching in Chicago, she introduced the *Deppe Method for the Pianoforte* to American pupils for the first time. The composer John Alden Carpenter (1876-1951) was one of the most prominent of her students to benefit from Deppe's revolutionary teaching approach to piano technique.

Believing strongly in the mission of the women's music clubs that worked to develop taste and understanding among amateurs, she joined the "Amateur Musical Club" and founded the "Artists' Club." Amy continued to write, contributing frequently to *The Etude*, and was a popular lecturer, frequently speaking at national meetings of the Music Teachers' National Association.

The young pianists she had encountered in Europe frequently impressed her as "persons destitute of culture outside of their music, either of mind or heart." Consequently, in her writings and lectures, she emphasized the musician's need for a well-rounded education.

Meanwhile, her brother Norman began the movement to found the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, established in 1891, and hired Theodore Thomas (1835-1905), America's then best-known conductor, to lead them. In 1890, Amy's sister Rose (1856-1929) became the second Mrs. Thomas. Rose used her position to champion higher musical standards and women's full participation in composition and performance by moving to organize what was to become the National Federation of Music Clubs, still a potent force.

Rose chaired the four-day national convention of thirty-eight women's amateur musical clubs at the Music Building during the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The reports of each club's activities remain a testament to their signal importance in laying the foundation for appreciation of classical music in America.

During the Exposition, on July 7, Rose also delivered a paper "The Work of Woman's Amateur Musical Clubs in America" at the Women's Musical Congress (July 5-7), chaired by the prominent Chicago musician Mrs. George B. Carpenter. Rose emphasized the fact that the musical culturing of the nation was mainly in the hands of the women and urged the assembly to persuade their men to support their educational efforts.

At the same session, violinist Camilla Urso (1842-1902) strongly advocated the right of women players to be admitted as members of professional orchestras. At that time, the all-male musicians' unions barred women from membership and from playing in orchestras, thus spawning the formation of women's orchestras with which Amy and her sister Zina were to become involved.

On July 5, Amy delivered a paper on "The Piano" at the Women's Musical Congress during the same session that violinist Maud Powell (1867-1920) spoke on "Woman and the Violin." Amy's remarks revealed her deep love for the piano, "a companion and friend...a lifelong source of joy...A whole orchestra in itself, ...the only instrument which can reproduce the music which is written for all the others; and if one be living in a remote country town,...he can still make the acquaintance of Beethoven's symphonies, with a piano...."

Pianist-composer Amy Beach (1867-1944) performed her own compositions and two songs of Cécile Chaminade (1857-1944) were sung at that session, vividly demonstrating the growing contributions of women to music.

Moving to New York in 1890, Amy continued all aspects of her professional life, even giving evening piano recitals sponsored by the Board of Education in the New York public schools. Although she maintained her good reputation as a teacher, she forthrightly attributed her lack of pupils to discrimination against women in the profession on the part of young students. "As a rule, boys and young men do not study music. Young girls find it more interesting to take of a man teacher...A woman of my acquaintance...said... 'Will you please tell me of some good man teacher in New York! My niece is going to take lessons in music this winter, and she declares she won't take of a woman.' I meekly named several men teachers and did not once suggest that in my own

misguided opinion I could teach the young girl as well as any of them. I knew it would be of no use, for a man she would have!"

Amy wrote sympathetically of the dilemma facing women teachers: "If women teach in schools, it is usually as under-teachers, poorly paid. If they do not teach in schools or conservatories, they must depend upon their own magnetic qualities to attract pupils. It is a precarious means of support, and I often wonder what becomes of the old music teachers....The elderly teachers must be shelved, and how in the world do they save enough to live on?"

Amy's feminism grew stronger through the years as she experienced the inequalities in her profession. As a student, Deppe's manner of working with his two female assistants provided her with an ideal of partnered abilities. Amy writes, "Together, they form a very strong pair...*He* has made *them* magnificent teachers, and they employ their gifts to further *him*. Through them his method will be perpetuated [it was], and he has given them something to live for. Curious that the *practicalness* of this association with women doesn't strike the masculine mind oftener!"

By 1900, Amy had observed and experienced enough of the obstacles facing women with artistic talent to write perceptively in the October issue of *Music*: "Women have been too much taken up with helping and encouraging men to place a proper value on their own talent, which they are too prone to underestimate and to think not worth making the most of...Ruskin was quite right when he so patronizingly said that 'Woman's chief function is praise.' She has praised and praised, and kept herself in abeyance." However, Amy was encouraged enough by women's progress to note a change. "Women are beginning to realize that they, too, have brains, and even musical ones." She did much to fuel that awakening.

In New York, Amy and Zina joined forces to encourage women, as performers, composers, and organizers, to take the fullest part. In 1899, Zina founded The Women's Philharmonic Society of New York. Amy served as its president from 1903 through 1914. The Society, which lasted at least until 1916, supported women musicians in performance, composition, theory, and music history. By 1910 it had more than 200

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# *The Triumph of Art*

## *Musical Life at the House of Prussia*

**T**HE BEST-KNOWN MEMBER of the musical Royal House of Prussia is Frederick the Great, but two of his sisters, Wilhelmina and Anna Amalie, and a niece, another Anna Amalie, also made important contributions to the art.

Each might have experienced greater success and higher recognition had their aspirations and gifts not been ridiculed and maligned by young Frederick's cruel, intolerant and abusive father, King Frederick William I (1688-1740).

The 10 surviving children of this tyrant grew up in a household where disharmony and violence were part of a routine that often left them cowering in fear. The only stabilizing force in the family was Frederick William's wife, Sophia Dorothea, (1687-1757), the daughter of King George I of Great Britain. While her husband hurled insults at his talented son, berating his love of music, calling him "effeminate" and "dirty," taking books away from him and subjecting him to frequent beatings, the long-suffering but shallow and pretentious Sophia Dorothea encouraged her children in their musical pursuits, arranged concerts at her castle (when her husband was away) and generally treated them with kindness.

Her elegant and comfortable room in the palace provided a safe haven for the children who loved to be with their mother when they were little. As they grew older, they began to see through her thin veneer and were inclined to distance themselves from her.

Young Prince Frederick's greatest ally against his father in the family was not his mother, but his sister Frederica Sophia Wilhelmina, born in 1709. Nearly three years older than her brother, Wilhelmina exercised considerable influence over him and was a willing accomplice and instigator with him in childhood acts of revenge against their father. She was also a stabilizing force in his life, encouraging him to read and study and helped him establish traits that led to his fame. Later, in writing about her life in the royal house, Wilhelmina gives the impression that she and Frederick were the only children.

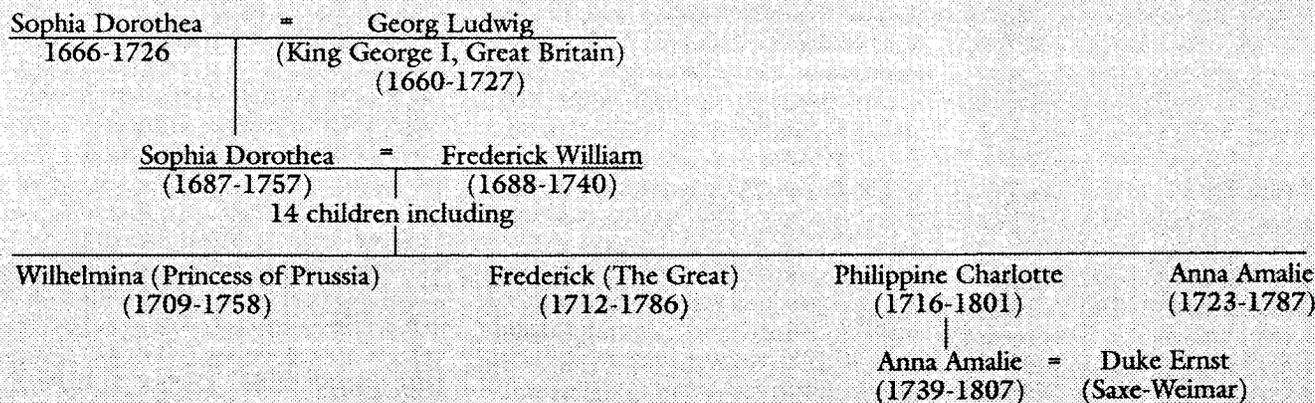
Strong-willed, independent and defiant, Princess Wilhelmina also suffered cruelly at the hands of Frederick William, whose only interest in his daughters was to use them as pawns in establishing his own significant political alliances through their marriages. He cared nothing for the sensitive natures of some of his children which he regarded as

weakness. He would kick and beat them, drag them by the hair, and have them shut up like prisoners when they did something he did not like. In what stands as an act of outrageous cruelty, he made young Frederick witness the beheading of his friend Hans Hermann von Katte, who had helped Frederick in an aborted attempt to flee to England to escape his father in 1730.

However, when Frederick William was away, life in the royal household was happy and the castle in Berlin was alive with music and parties. And at the center stood Wilhelmina and Frederick with their "angelic looks." Wilhelmina played her lute named "Principe" while her brother played his flute which he called "Principessa."

Frederick had discovered the flute on a summer evening in 1727 when Sophia Dorothea organized a trip on the river Spree to her castle Monbijou. As they drifted along the river the sounds of his friend Katte's flute blended with the gentle sounds and fading light that mark the close of day. Frederick was delighted. When they arrived on shore, he took the flute from Katte and holding it expressed the first "tender root" (*zarten Wurseln*) of his affection for the instrument. In 1728 his studies with

### THE ROYAL FAMILY OF PRUSSIA A FAMILY TREE





The music room where Frederick the Great received Bach.

Johann Joachim Quantz (1697-1773) were pursued in earnest against the wishes of his father. He was forced to work on his music in secret, resorting to clandestine evenings in his apartment with the musical servants he had engaged and with his friends.

Wilhelmina also played the flute and clavier, sang, composed music and poetry and wrote librettos. In the midst of marital intrigues created by her scheming parents who were trying to marry her off to the politically or socially appropriate partner, the princess would retreat to her room and find consolation in music.

"To rid myself of these torments, I returned to my room, where I sat down before my piano-forte, as if I were setting an air." When Frederick was away on state matters from the late 1730s on, he sent many of his compositions to Wilhelmina and often wrote to her on musical matters.

In 1732, Princess Wilhelmina married Friedrich of Bayreuth, of the House of Brandenburg, after her parents' efforts to marry her to the Prince of Wales failed. The Margrave was not an ideal choice in the eyes of Sophia Dorothea, who told her daughter to live with her husband "as a sister" so the marriage could be annulled eventually. Despite the mother's misgivings, the couple lived compatibly and had one child, Elizabeth Frederica Sophia who became the Duchess of Württemberg.

In 1735, the generous Margrave built a villa for his wife called "The Her-

mitage," a palace resembling a French country house. Here Wilhelmina built an opera house which opened in 1740 with her starring in her own opera *Argenore*. She also worked on her *Memoirs* and entertained some of the great personages of the day including Frederick's friend Voltaire who found her presence soothing after being in the company of her sometimes contrary brother.

In 1740, the tyrannical Frederick William died, ending a paternal reign of terror that had so badly scarred his children. Prince Frederick ascended the throne and became an absolute ruler who ranks among the most notable of benevolent despots. He continued to pursue his interests in the arts, science, philosophy, history and poetry, all of which he studied diligently. He invited Johann Sebastian Bach to visit him in 1747 and the master accepted. Without any preparation, Frederick played an "exceedingly beautiful" theme and requested Bach to develop a fugue from it, a pleasant task that resulted in the famous *Musical Offering*. In 1758, Frederick the Great suffered the deepest grief of his life when Wilhelmina died. Never a healthy woman, she was prone to illness and had survived scarlet fever and small pox. Her final ailment confined her to bed for months with "a headache all over her body," painful abscesses, and her face, hands and legs swollen. With her death, the powerful bond of childhood had been broken and Frederick was left to face the rest of his



Wilhelmina, 6 and Frederick, 3 in an engraving from a painting. Wilhelmina was a stabilizing force in her brother's life. She encouraged him to read and study and helped him establish traits that led to his fame. (Courtesy Jane Ambrose)

life without his trusted confidante and friend. "There is no happiness for me in life without you," he wrote shortly before her death. No one could take her place. He soon described himself as "eaten with grief, riddled with infirmities, just about fit to be thrown to the dogs." The light had gone out of his spirit.

His brothers and sisters attempted to console him, but they were much younger and had not suffered the extreme stress, imprisonments and brutal abuse that had driven Frederick and Wilhelmina to cling to each other. A shared love of music did exist, however, between Frederick and his youngest sister Anna Amalie, Princess of Prussia, born in 1723.

Encouraged by Frederick, Anna studied music from an early age. Her brother was her first teacher and like him, her taste in music was conservative, a fact revealed later both in her own compositions and in the works she collected.

At the age of 17, she began the study of the harpsichord and piano with Gottlieb Hayne, a Berlin cellist and cathedral organist. She became a "brilliant" keyboard performer and later studied flute, organ and violin. During the period of her studies with Hayne,

she started a collection of music which would eventually include autograph scores by Bach, early printed editions of the **Brandenburg Concertos**, **St. Matthew Passion** and the **B-minor Mass** as well as works by Handel, Telemann and Palestrina. The collection reveals her own high level of musical education. Known as the "Amalien Bibliothek", it is housed in Berlin and regarded as one of the most valued collections of its kind in the world today.

Although Anna Amalie began composing around 1744, she did not formally study composition until 1758 when she appointed Johann Philipp Kirnberger (1721-1783), a pupil of Bach, as court composer. Kirnberger did not allow his students to attend concerts because he feared they might be misled by "new music." Her teacher's conservative approach fit perfectly with her own attitudes and she eventually lost touch with the work of her contemporaries.

She steadfastly rejected music in the new "galant" rococo style in favor of the old baroque style. She rejected opera reformer Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787), declaring he would never be successful because he composed boring melodies and had no invention. However, she was a disciple of Bach and among her contemporaries admired his son, C.P.E. Bach (1714-1788).

The Princess of Prussia was a harsh critic of her own compositions and very few survive. Although she wrote sonatas, songs and chorales, she began producing marches for band in 1767 and is probably the only woman composer to devote so much effort to this form.

Anna Amalie suffered her own hardships and has been described as an eccentric whose "abruptness and lack of balance in her nature gave her a singular place in the court and in her royal family."<sup>1</sup> When she fell in love with Charles Theodore, Duke of Deux-Ponts-Neubourg (1724-1799), Frederick, in an act characteristic of his own father, had the young man imprisoned for ten years.

The Princess never left Berlin and lived out her days as Abbess of Quedlinburg, a royal holding, accepting her brother's dictum that she must never marry. She died in 1787 after a long illness that blinded her and robbed her of the use of her hands.

The fourth member of the Prussian royal musical quartet was the second Anna Amalie, born in 1739. Named for

her aunt, she was the daughter of Frederick and Wilhelmina's younger sister Philippine Charlotte (1716-1801) and her husband Duke Carl I of Brunswick. Like her aunt and uncle, she possessed a fine musical talent and received a thorough music education at the court where she studied with Friedrich Gottlob Fleischer (1722-1806), court pianist, organist and composer.

Early in life, she distanced herself from her parents, feeling that they neglected her in favor of her brothers and sisters. In 1756, she left their court when she married 18-year-old Duke Ernst of Saxe-Weimar, a move that would eventually lead to a friendship and collaboration with the great romantic poet and writer Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832).

Shortly after her arrival in Saxe-Weimar, Anna Amalie, now the Duchess, hired composer Ernst Wilhelm Wolff (1735-1792) to give her private lessons and to teach her sons the art of music when they were older. A nephew and student of Bach, Johann Ernst Bach (1722-1777) was serving as Kapellmeister. The seeds for what would become "The Court of Muses" had been planted and throughout her life Anna Amalie would nurture them.

At the age of 19, the young Duke died leaving his wife a widow with an infant son and a second son yet to be born. Anna Amalie was unexpectedly thrust into leadership roles as guardian of her two children and Regent at the helm of Saxe-Weimar until her son Karl August took over in 1775.

Weimar was a small village of 6,000 inhabitants, mostly peasants who worked the land. The rural lifestyle and bucolic setting lent a "domestic air" to the place that poets and artists found attractive.

Able to draw on her own interest in the arts, Anna Amalie, as Duchess of Saxe-Weimar, found herself in an enviable position. She could easily enliven her court with intellectuals and artists, including Goethe who came to Weimar in 1775 at the urging of Anna's son Karl August. At Weimar, Goethe found a "true home" and a "spiritual family." Between August 1788 and June 1790, the Duchess followed in Goethe's footsteps visiting the places he wrote about in his *Italian Journey*.

Her residence was adorned with objects of classical art, particularly portraits. She possessed "a great round table about

which she gathered the literary lights of Germany...the whole place seemed to be filled with the spirit of an intellectual princess, one of the finest and noblest of Germany's women, one whose name is held in the highest esteem."<sup>2</sup>

Despite her commitment to the arts, Anna Amalie had no lofty ambitions of her own and seemed content in her role as a patron and friend of other artists. Yet her own gifts were significant. In addition to music, she studied art, Greek and Latin and wrote an occasional essay.

While her catalogue of music is not large, it contains work of high quality, particularly in the two *Singspiels*—opera with spoken dialogue—**Erwin und Elmire** and **Das Jahrmarktsfest zu Plunderweisen** based on texts by Goethe. **Erwin** has been revived numerous times even in the 20th century. The Duchess was a proficient and polished miniaturist who composed songs and harpsichord sonatas. She occasionally produced successful works in larger forms including oratorio, sacred choruses for voice and orchestra and instrumental works.

Although few people today have heard of Anna Amalie, the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar, and her aunt the Princess of Prussia, both women made major contributions to music and poetry that continue to enlighten and inform new generations all over the world. The Princess left a library of rare music manuscripts that provides an invaluable resource for



To rid herself of "torments" in the Royal House of Prussia, particularly at the hands of her brutal father, Wilhelmina retreated to her room and found solace playing the piano. (Courtesy Jane Ambrose)

musicians and scholars today. Her niece, the Duchess, created an atmosphere that enabled poets, composers, writers and painters to give full expression to their gifts.

When the Duchess died in 1807, all of Weimar mourned her. One hundred years after her death a massive three-volume study of her life was published.

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<sup>1</sup> Curt Sachs, "Prinzessin Amalie von Preussin als Musikerin." *Hohenzollern Jahrbuch*, Vol. XIV, Berlin 1910, 181.

<sup>2</sup> R.W. Moore, *Weimar, the Athens of Germany* (1908).

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Anna Amalie, the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar, center, surrounded by her "Court of Muses," including the Romantic poet Goethe whose texts she set to music. (Courtesy Jane Ambrose)

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◆ BY ELAINE FINE

## The Amazing Garcias

# *Pauline Viardot, Maria Malibran and the First Family of 19th-Century Opera*

**P**AULINE VIARDOT-GARCIA, one of the most remarkable women of all time, was the youngest child of singers Joaquina Stiches, an actress and soprano from Madrid, and Manuel Garcia, a tenor from Seville. Her family inspired composers from the 19th to the early part of the 20th century—Rossini through Fauré—to write opera roles, lieder, and instrumental works. Many novelists used Garcia family members as models for characters. Her elder sister Maria Malibran was one of the first opera super stars to command a huge salary and be heralded in cities like Venice with a fanfare of trumpets to announce her arrival. Pauline's brother Manuel Patricio Garcia, who lived more than 100 years, was celebrated as the inventor of the Laryngoscope, a device that revolutionized diagnostic medicine.

Michelle Ferdinande Pauline was born in Paris on July 18, 1821, the third gifted child of Manuel and Joaquina. In the years before her birth, however, her parents lived like characters in a novel, their lives full of drama, deception, intrigue, romance, adventure and adulation.

Joaquina Stiches was born in 1780 and came from a theatrical family who used the stage name of Briones. At twenty-two when she met Manuel Garcia (1775-1832), she had been a widow for two years. They met on stage, and soon married despite the fact that Manuel was already married to a dancer Manuela de Morales. Since divorce in Spain was impossible, Joaquina masqueraded as Manuel's mistress in order to cover up his crime of bigamy. Eventually Manuel Garcia and his two wives traveled to France believing they could obtain a divorce, but found the laws there as strict as they were in Spain.

Joaquina and Manuel left their son Manuel Patricio, born in 1805, in Spain with Joaquina's family and remained in France. Morales returned to Spain, never to be heard from

again, and the Garcia family never returned to Spain. The Garcias created a fanciful story to cover Manuel's bigamy: that Joaquina was of noble birth and upon preparing to enter a convent was taken, one last time, to the theater. There she heard Manuel Garcia sing and fell in love with him.

Their second child, Maria Felicia, was born in 1808, shortly after her parents arrived in Paris. She was tri-lingual from birth: Spanish was spoken at home, French was the language of their country, and Italian was the language of opera. At the age of five, Maria played a child's role in the now forgotten opera *Agnese* in Naples. Several nights after

the opening, in an act of unusual boldness for so young a child, she won cheers from the audience when she started to sing the part of Agnese in a duet in the second act!

She began studies of sight-reading and piano at the age of seven. In 1817, Manuel Garcia and his family crossed the English Channel and settled in London for two years where Maria learned the language and made such impressive progress on the piano that by the age of 11 she could play many of Bach's complex clavier works.

She and her brother, who had been reunited with his parents in 1814, began taking voice lessons together from

their father. Manuel senior was a strict and very abusive teacher who would not permit the word "cannot" to be spoken in the home. The children feared his rages. Maria developed the rare ability of being able to sing and cry at the same time because she often cried during lessons and would turn her back to her father so he wouldn't see her crying.

Manuel Patricio had little interest in becoming a professional singer and quit the stage in 1829 to devote his energies to teaching, scientific studies of the voice and writing. He taught many famous singers of the day including the "Swedish nightingale" Jenny Lind. He retired from teaching at the age of 90 and the



All photos from the Maud Powell Archive

Her father, the famous singer Manuel Garcia was Maria's teacher. A strict and abusive man, he would not allow the word "cannot" to be spoken in the home and once threatened to shoot Maria if she did not learn an opera role in a matter of days.

American painter John Singer Sargent painted his portrait in honor of Manuel Patricio's centennial.

Maria made her debut in London in 1825 at the age of 17 playing Rosina in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*. She had known the opera since early childhood, and Rossini had written the part of Almaviva for her father. Though she was only given three days to prepare for the



*"Manuel [Garcia] was a strict and very abusive teacher who would not allow the word 'cannot' to be spoken in the home."*

role, her debut was a success and she continued singing throughout the 1825 season, even performing with Velluti (1781-1861), the last castrato. For the six weeks she worked in London, she earned £500, a substantial income at a time when a salary of £100 a year was considered generous.

With the help of Lorenzo da Ponte, an Italian poet and librettist for some of Mozart's most famous operas, the Garcia family presented *The Barber of Seville* later that year in New York. This production marked the first time that Italian grand opera was performed in the "New World," and Maria was an instant star in her portrayal of Rosina. Her father played Almaviva, her brother played Figaro (his operatic debut), and her mother played Bertha.

Maria continued playing Rosina to her father's Almaviva and Desdemona to her father's Othello on stage and off. Their relationship was very difficult and April FitzLyon, Pauline's biographer, even suggests the possibility of incest. At 17 Maria tried desperately to find a husband in order to escape the tyranny of her father, and soon married Eugene Malibran, a seemingly wealthy 45-year-old Spanish-American businessman/banker. Her father "charged" him a great deal of money for Maria, but within a year Eugene Malibran was bankrupt and New York had been saturated with Maria's art. She returned to Paris alone in 1827 in order to raise money to pay her husband's debts. Though Maria enjoyed the freedom that being married gave a woman, she soon forgot her husband. The condition of his bank-

ruptcy left her legally free to leave him and she seized the opportunity.

Young, vivacious, daring and darkly beautiful, Maria dazzled audiences in London, the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival and Paris with her originality and spirit. She was commanding as much as £125 per night payable in advance for a performance. When soprano Henriette Sontag (1806-1854) married and retired from the stage Malibran had no rivals. Instead of becoming indifferent to her art now that she alone was the prima donna, Malibran continued to improve her technique, interpretation and presentation.

Malibran was an extraordinarily gifted woman. In addition to singing, she also composed music which was very popular. Her work *Les dernieres pensees musicales* was a best seller, and her music was praised by Berlioz, Schumann and later Debussy. The song *Leve toi Jeune Enfant* is a haunting, simple melody in the style of a Spanish ballad, similar in color to Almaviva's Spanish ballad in Rossini's *Barber of Seville* (a song if not written by her father, was written for him). The melodic tension evokes melodies of Chopin, a great admirer of Malibran's singing. He said he learned his "rubato" style from her. Later, Malibran's sister Pauline became a close friend of Chopin, who loved making music with her. She set some of his mazurkas to texts by Louis Pomey, and said that she learned her rubato style from Chopin!

An avid sportswoman, Malibran rode horseback, swam and learned to fence.



*"Young, vivacious, daring and darkly beautiful, Maria dazzled audiences... commanding as much as £125 a night payable in advance for a performance."*

She was also talented artist who painted portraits—the opera composer Bellini (1801-1835) was one of her subjects—and she liked to amuse herself drawing caricatures of her friends and associates. She pushed herself unmercifully at times and even appeared on stage when she was ill.

## ◆ A Time Line *Pauline Viardot-Garcia*

<b>1800</b>	
Louise Farenec, b. 1804	
Fanny Mendelssohn, b. 1805	
Maria Garcia (Malibran), b. 1806	
Marianne von Martinez, d. 1806	
Josephine Lang, b. 1815	
Clara Wieck (Schumann), b. 1819	
<b>1821-1830</b>	
Pauline Garcia, b. July 18, 1821, Paris	Maria Teresia von Paradis, d. 1824
Travels to London, 1824	Louise Reichardt, d. 1826
Travels to NYC, 1825, where her father introduces Italian Grand Opera to America	Three lieder by Fanny Mendelssohn published under brother's name in his Op. 8, 1825
Travels to Mexico, 1826, bandits steal \$100,000 from family	Clara Wieck writes first compositions
Returns to Europe, 1828	Maria Garcia (Malibran) debut <i>The Barber of Seville</i> , 1825
	Maria Garcia performs in New York, marries Eugene Malibran
	Malibran leaves her husband
	Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel composes 4 cantatas
	Malibran has great success in London, 1829
	Malibran meets Beriot, ca. 1830
<b>1832-1839</b>	
Death of father, 1832	Clara Wieck acclaimed as virtu
Studies composition with Reicha	composes <i>Piano Concerto in Minor</i> ; appointed "Kammer Virtuosi" to Austrian Court, 1836
First solo voice recitals with her sister, 1835	Malibran triumphs in Italy, marries Beriot, 1836; injured in riding accident; dies Sept. 23, 1836
Studies piano with Liszt, debut as singer, Brussels, 1837	Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel publishes under her name, 1837
Meets Clara Wieck	Lady John Scott (Alicia Anne Spottiswood) composes <i>Annie Laurie</i> , 1838
Meets George Sand	
Debut as opera singer, Desdemona in Rossini's <i>Othello</i> , London, 1839	
<b>1840-1849</b>	
Marries writer-impressario Louis Viardot (1800-1883), 1840	Clara Wieck marries Robert Schumann, 1840; composes lies included in Robert's Op. 12
Visits Fanny Mendelssohn in Italy	George Sand writes <i>Consuelo</i> , 1842
Daughter Louise, b. Dec. 14, 1841	Amy Fay, b. 1844
Tours Russia, 1843, meets Ivan Turgenev (1818-1883)	Fanny Mendelssohn, d. 1847
European Tours	Augusto Holmés, b. 1847
Appears in Paris Opera in Meyerbeer's <i>Le Prophète</i> composed for her, 1849	

## 821-1910

### 1850-1860

composes songs  
creates title role of Gounod's  
**apho**, 1851  
daughter Claudie, b. 1852  
daughter Marianne, b. 1854  
son Paul, b. 1857  
sings in Berlioz's revival of  
Moussis's **Orphée** in 150  
performances, 1859

Teresa Carreño, b. 1853  
Julia Rivá-King, b. 1857  
Chaminade, b. 1857  
Ethel Smyth, b. 1858  
Emma Calvé, b. 1858

### 1862-1880

retires from opera, 1862  
moves to Baden-Baden  
composes 3 operettas in  
ballets by Turgenev  
Schubert composes **Alto**  
**hapsody** for her  
is forced to leave Germany in  
Franco-Prussian War, 1871  
settles in Paris, teaches at  
Paris Conservatoire  
composes opera **Conté de**  
**les**, 1879

Fanny Bloomfield-Zeissler, b.  
1863  
Amy Beach, b. 1867  
Margaret Ruthven Lang, b.  
1867  
Louise Viardot marries, lives  
in Paris & S. Africa  
Ethel Smyth studies in  
Germany  
Louise Farrenc, d. 1875  
Louise Viardot-Haritte  
composes opera **Uindoro**,  
1879, & cantata **Das**  
**Bacchusfest**, 1880  
Chaminade piano debut,  
Paris, 1875

### 1883-1910

death of husband, 1883  
death of Turgenev, 1883  
lives in her home  
composes the opera  
**endrillon**, 1904  
dies in Paris, May 18, 1910

Augusta Holmès premieres  
**Irlande**, 1882  
Mary Howe, b. 1882  
Amy Beach makes piano  
debut w/Boston Symphony,  
1885  
Rebecca Clarke, b. 1886  
Florence Price, b. 1887  
Clara Schumann's last public  
appearance, 1891  
Ethel Smyth composes **Mass**  
**in D**, 1891; **The**  
**Wrackers**, 1902/04  
Premieres of Beach's **Mass**  
**in E**, 1892; **Gaelic**  
**Symphony**, 1897; **Piano**  
**Concerto**, 1900  
Lili Boulanger, b. 1893  
Clara Schumann, d. 1896  
Lady Scott, d. 1900  
Elinor Remick Warren, b.  
1900  
Augusta Holmès, d. 1903  
Elizabeth Maconchy, b. 1907  
Ethel Smyth awarded  
honorary doctorate, U. of  
Durham, 1910

The year 1830 was one of transition and change for the young singer. She was at the height of her career, unrivaled, in great demand and well-paid when she met and fell in love with the Belgian violinist Charles de Beriot (1802-1870).

A handsome yet cold man, de Beriot is best remembered today as the teacher of Henri Vieuxtemps and as the founder of the Franco-Belgian school of violin playing that was carried forward by Eugene Ysaye and his many pupils.

Maria wanted to marry de Beriot, but since she was unable to obtain a divorce from Malibran, she echoed her father's marriage situation and had an unrecognized "secret marriage" with de Beriot. When a highly prudish France learned that she was pregnant with de Beriot's child, her followers refused to acknowledge Maria's relationship and abandoned her. She moved to Brussels with de Beriot in 1831, where they built a handsome villa in a suburb. After her father's death in 1832, Malibran supported her mother and sister Pauline. Her son Charles Wilfred was born in February 1833 and she finally obtained her annulment from Eugene Malibran in 1836. She was free to marry de Beriot and on March 26 of that year became Maria Felicia de Beriot (ex Malibran).

Meanwhile her career flourished in England and Italy where followers cheered her for 30 minutes after a performance in Venice. She earned a staggering £2,775 for 24 appearances in London in 1835 and her position in the world of music was secure. Then tragedy as dramatic and unlikely as some opera plots struck the young woman in her prime.

In April 1836, while she and de Beriot were visiting England Maria fell from a horse, her foot caught in the stirrup and she was dragged some distance down the road. She had suffered a serious head injury but told her husband that the accident was the result of a fall on a step. She was pregnant and not supposed to be riding. Malibran had moved through her life recklessly at times, spurred on perhaps by the sense she had that she would die young.

After the accident, she continued to work, however, and in September returned to England to appear at the Manchester Festival. The first night there she sang 14 pieces and on the second day, although she was weak and ill, she insisted on singing a duet with Madame Caradori Allan. The audience, not

knowing of Malibran's weakened condition, demanded an encore, which she gave them. Then as the applause still thundered in the hall, she collapsed backstage, unable to take a final bow. She was taken to her hotel where she lingered for nine days in "a nervous fever." She died 20 minutes after midnight, September 23, 1836, at the age of 28.

Pauline Garcia was only 15 when her sister died. Like Malibran, she possessed extraordinary gifts and was tri-lingual from birth. She grew up in an atmosphere of art and adventure (during a trip to Mexico when she was about 7 years old the family was robbed by highway bandits) and displayed a singular intelligence and aptitude for learning

◆

*"[Pauline] grew up in an atmosphere of art and adventure... and displayed a singular intelligence and... possessed an innate force which she could apply at will to anything she undertook."*

and retaining everything she learned. Languages came to her as easily as play and she had a facility for painting, particularly portraits, that was equal to her other gifts. Pauline possessed an innate force which she could apply at will to anything she undertook.

Although she lived primarily in the world of opera, her first love was the piano. Her father treated Pauline much differently than he treated his older children. Pauline cites only one instance when he struck her—she had repeatedly made a mistake playing one of his pieces at the piano. The blow was followed by an explanation that was almost an apology.

While waiting for Pauline's voice to mature, Manuel sent her to Meysenberg and Franz Liszt for piano instruction, and to Anton Reicha for counterpoint and composition. Though Pauline certainly absorbed a good deal from as the piano accompanist for her father's voice lessons, she never studied formally with him since he died when she was eleven.

At age 14 Pauline began playing concerts with Maria and Charles de Beriot,



Pauline Viardot-Garcia, painted by Ary Scheffer, 1841



Maria Malibran

Top to bottom:

Maria Malibran became one of opera's first superstars to command huge fees and attract legions of followers throughout Europe.

Pauline fascinated both men and women. George Sand's novel *Consuelo* draws a fictional portrait of Pauline while composers like Saint-Saëns, Schumann, Gounod and others composed music for her.

Louise Hérítte-Viardot was Pauline's eldest child. As a composer and pianist, she was largely self-taught but she studied voice with her mother.



Pauline Viardot-Garcia

but on her fifteenth birthday Joaquina made her close the piano and she began training her daughter's voice.

Thanks to the supreme organization of her mother, Pauline made her singing debut in Brussels with de Beriot 1837, one year after her sister's death. This performance was followed by an appearance in Germany, where Pauline met Clara Wieck (Schumann) who wrote in her diary that Pauline had the soul of a genuine artist and "is the most musical singer who exists." Years later in a letter to Brahms, Clara wrote, "[Pauline] is the most gifted woman I have ever met."

Pauline's formal debut took place on May 9, 1838, at Her Majesty's Theatre in London as Desdemona in Rossini's *Otello*. Her Paris debut that autumn in the same role was immortalized in a popular poem by Alfred de Musset (1810-1857), who was still recovering from a tumultuous relationship with George Sand (1804-1876). De Musset wrote a great deal in various publications about Pauline's singing and is largely responsible for her public success in Paris and the opening of her career.

Joaquina was grateful to him for doing so much for her daughter, and when he made it evident that he wanted to marry Pauline, she had few reservations. Fortunately, when Pauline was singing at Charlotte Marliani's Salon, she met George Sand who discouraged her from marrying the brilliant and talented but alcoholic and unstable de Musset. Sand took on the task of "arranging" a marriage with their mutual friend Louis Viardot, a politically liberal Hispanophile who had helped both Sand and Maria Malibran with their divorces.

Sand thought that as an artist Pauline

needed a stable, passionless (on her part) marriage to an older man. The 45-year-old Viardot was already the manager of the Theater Italien in Paris, where Pauline was singing, and was quite willing to court his 18-year-old prima donna. When they married in 1840, he resigned his post and devoted himself to managing Pauline's career. Upon returning to Paris, after their honeymoon trip to Italy, where she met Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel in Naples, Pauline found that she had been replaced by back-biting, mediocre singers. She found refuge at Sand's estate Nohant.

Sand began work on *Consuelo*, a novel whose heroine is modeled on Pauline: a diligent, hard-working, homely girl with acute intelligence, a beautiful voice, and "sensible shoes," who travels from 18th-century Venice through the capitals of the musical world. The novel is concerned with the purpose of art and the role of the artist, religion, and social reform.

Pauline loved this portrait, and held many of Sand's ideals, but was not a fictional character. When George Sand found that Pauline had fallen in love with her son, Maurice, she immediately set



*"...in a letter to Brahms, Clara wrote '[Pauline] is the most gifted woman I have ever met.'"*

to work on arranging a marriage for her son. Maurice eventually grew out of his infatuation, and Pauline and George remained life-long friends.

In 1843, the Viardots left their 2-year-old daughter Louise with Sand and Chopin in Nohant and journeyed to St. Petersburg, Russia, where Pauline became the first foreigner to sing the Italian repertory and Russian music in Russian. She was so highly respected in Russia that she eventually became the channel through which Russian music flowed into Europe.

Throughout her long life, Pauline was an attractive figure for both men and women of letters, artists, composers, musicians and intellectuals who were fascinated by her and whose imaginations she stirred. Berlioz, Gounod and



Louise Hérítte-Viardot

a Belgian painter Ary Scheffer fell in love with her.

During her first visit to Russia, Pauline met Ivan Turgenev, who fell passionately and publicly in love with her. She appeared in his short stories and plays, and though later she reciprocated his love and his friendship, at first she saw him as only one of her many admirers. Pauline's husband, whose greatest literary achievement was his translation of *Don Quixote*, must have been amused by this real-life Don Quixote who held Pauline as his Dulcinea. Louis eventually welcomed Turgenev as a perpetual house guest at their castle-estate Courtavenel, and later their home in Baden-Baden, where he spent his days hunting with him and his nights translating Turgenev's works into French.

The nature of Pauline's relationship with Turgenev was complicated. She had never been in love with her husband, but also had tremendous "will power" to control her emotions when necessary. Perhaps the most important result of her relationship with Turgenev was their mutual support of and respect for each other's work.

On stage, Pauline's powers of execution were astonishing and original. She possessed a remarkable inventive power, intellectual force and consummate mastery over all the resources of her art. A mezzo soprano, her voice encompassed more than three octaves, from the bass C to F in alt., and has been described as "expressive" though "thin and sometimes even harsh," but she had the ability to turn her deficiencies into art.

She toured Europe until her retirement from opera in 1862, appearing in London every season from 1848 to 1858, often commanding twice the usual fee for her work. She created the title role of *Sapho* in Gounod's opera and Meyerbeer wrote the role of *Fidès* in *Le prophète* for her. She gave the first performances of Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody*, and Schumann, Saint-Saëns and Fauré all dedicated music to her.

In 1863, the Viardots retired to Baden-Baden and Pauline continued to appear in recitals. She also turned her energies to composition, spent more time playing the piano and resumed her friendship with Clara Schumann who, encouraged by Pauline, had purchased a cottage at Baden-Baden. Writing in his memoirs published in 1919, composer Camille Saint-Saëns recalled



Vivacious, daring and darkly beautiful, Maria lived recklessly and pushed herself unmercifully, even appearing on stage when ill. She was an avid sportswoman who rode, fenced and swam, but she also painted and composed music.

Pauline's great talent as a pianist.

"We saw this [great talent] one evening at a concert given by Madame Schumann. After Madame Viardot had sung some of Schumann's lieder with the great pianist playing the accompaniments, the two great artists played the illustrious author's (Schumann) duet for two pianos, which fairly bristles with difficulties, *with equal virtuosity*." (Saint-Saëns' emphasis)

During the Baden-Baden years adventure entered Pauline's life again when the Franco-Prussian War threatened the

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*"Pauline's powers of execution were astonishing... She possessed a remarkable inventive power, intellectual force and consummate mastery..."*

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calm of their village. After the declaration of war, Pauline's husband left immediately for France, but Pauline and her children (three daughters and a son) stayed behind. Battle raged around

them and the reverberation of heavy gun fire nearby shook the ground in Baden-Baden. Pauline and her daughters stayed on making clothes and helping wounded soldiers until Napoleon was captured. According to Clara's daughter Eugenie, as the news of his defeat reached her, Pauline "got up and put down her scissors, saying, 'Venez, mes enfants,' and went out with her daughters. A few days later they left for Paris, never to return to Baden."

She joined her husband in Paris, devoting her time to teaching and composition. She published 60 songs from her collection of more than 100 and composed operettas including three written to libretti of Turgenev. In 1904 at the age of 83 she composed *Cendrillon*, a grand opera in the French style. Viardot-Garcia also wrote a great deal of piano music and even composed violin music. Her *Sonatine*, written in the 1890s, is dedicated to her son Paul's teacher Hubert Léonard. It is very much in the French style of the 19th century, but her more adventurous *Six Morceaux* reveal more of her polycultural life. The *Romance* is very much like Fauré, *Bohemienne* reflects the Franco-Belgian character style popularized by de Beriot and Vieuxtemps, the *Berceuse* is like a Russian ballet scene, the *Mazurka* plays homage to Chopin, but is more international and gypsy-like, the *Vielle Chanson* is much like the writing Kreisler did thirty years later, and the *Tarantella* is very much in the style of opera buffa. Her work was praised by her contemporaries, particularly by Tchaikovsky, and she remained an important friend and adviser to Berlioz, Gounod, and Saint-Saëns.

Her compositional style traverses the 19th century: dramatic scenes set to words of Racine, songs set to poetry of Turgenev, Pushkin, Gautier, and de Musset, and transcriptions of Gluck and Jomelli. Her songs are superbly crafted and confident, and the music always seems drawn from the poetry. Viardot's Pushkin songs in German translation, with an energetic Spanish piano part, have the feeling of Zarzuela (19th-century Spanish operetta), with harmonic tensions that sound Russian. Chopin greatly admired the vocal transcriptions she made of some of his Mazurkas.

Louis Viardot died in 1883 and Pauline remained in Paris where she became a highly respected professor of singing at the Paris Conservatoire. She

## Eugenie Schumann Remembers Pauline Viardot-Garcia

*She was not beautiful, I even thought her features plain, but they possessed an exotic and fascinating charm which held the eyes riveted upon them. Her manner was that of a great lady, self-assured, vivacious, and energetic in every movement; her conversation was sparkling and original. Her whole personality expressed joy of life, of activity and movement.*

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*She once sang a duet with a tenor, when her part ended with a shake [trill]. She held on and on; the audience was breathless; her partner glanced at her in amazement, then he offered her a chair. She smiled and continued her shake. He drew out his watch and held it towards her. When at last she ended with a perfect appoggiatura, the audience broke into thunderous applause. An encore was insisted upon; she sat down at the piano and sang a Chopin mazurka to French words. Turning sideways to her audience, she gave a performance such as I have never seen or heard since. She sang, spoke, acted, smiled so that each individual felt she was singing, speaking, smiling for him alone. Not a muscle in her face remained inactive; vitality, fire, charm animated every feature. Had it been done for mere effect by anyone not a genius, one would have thought it grotesque, but no one could ever have felt this about Pauline Viardot. She studied effects in minutest detail; but is not that the highest art which, after having given the artist sleepless nights and many hours of strenuous work, appears perfectly simple and spontaneous? Pauline Viardot's art was like this. She gave herself, expressed her own personality to perfection.*

*From The Memoirs of Eugenie Schumann, English edition, 1927*

lived her remaining years teaching, composing, entertaining, painting and adding to her important collection of autographs which included the original score of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Bach's cantata *Schmucke dich*, Mendelssohn's setting of the 42nd Psalm and a scherzo by Beethoven among others. She died quietly in Paris on May 18, 1910, at the age of 89 having herself produced another generation of musicians.

Her son Paul (1857-1941) won early success as a violinist and also became a composer, conductor and writer whose books include a history of music in Paris, a study of Scandinavian music and an autobiography.

Pauline's oldest daughter Louise, born in 1841, was also a composer and a professional singer. Though she spent little of her childhood with her family, times between their tours and her boarding school were filled with visits from adult friends who enjoyed Louise's diligence and talent. Like her father, she enjoyed hunting and writes as perceptively in her *Memories and Adventures* about the natural world as she does the musical one.

As a pianist and composer she was self-taught, but she studied voice with her mother. Louise served as the pianist for Pauline's popular Thursday Salon, often sight reading for an audience of Europe's most critical and important musicians and writers. She married a diplomat and traveled to South Africa. Eventually she joined the faculty of the St. Petersburg Conservatory and after establishing her own opera school in Berlin, spent the rest of her life in Heidelberg.

Louise wrote five piano quartets, four string quartets, two piano trios, some lieder, an operetta, and some cantatas. Her 1883 piano quartet "Im Sommer" was published in 1912 under the name L. Héritte-Viardot. This work has German structure and harmony, French texture and color, and Russian-influenced melodic material. This quartet is a fine work that is virtually unknown, at least in America (the score is in the Washington University of St. Louis Library).

Louise's sister Claudie (1852-1914) had more childhood time with her family and extended family. She was the favorite Viardot child of Turgenev and an excellent painter. She married a printer and had three children. Her younger sister Marianne is primarily known as the

woman who broke the heart of Gabriel Fauré. Fauré dedicated many works to the Viardots: the songs, opus 4 and 7, to Pauline, and opus 8 and 10 to Claudie and Marianne, and his first violin sonata to the youngest Viardot child Paul.

Pauline Viardot-Garcia was a remarkable woman, a genius and visionary of the highest spiritual order who traced her deep "innate faith" to earliest childhood. She held the firm conviction that the soul is immortal, and that all loves shall one day be united: "[I]n order to reach the goal, one must be put to the test of several existences in the spheres, in worlds ever lovelier and better... I DO know... that there is within us a divine spark which does not perish, and which will end in becoming part of the great life. Do you believe so, my friend? Oh, try to have confidence and faith like me—you will see how good and beautiful it is!"

**Elaine Fine** is a native of Boston now living in Charleston, Illinois, where she is classical music director of WEIU-FM and plays viola in the LaVeck String Quartets.

### *Resources on the Garcia Family*

#### Select Discography

Pauline Viardot-Garcia Songs, Karin Ott, soprano, Christoph Keller, piano, CPO #999 044-2

Lieder (also features Clara Schumann, Fanny Mendelssohn, Josephine Lang), Katherine Ciesinski, mezzo-soprano  
John Ostendorf, bass-baritone  
Rudolph Palmer, piano

(Leonarda LPI 107 record issued 1981)

Women's Work, Works by Famous Women Composers, features 3 songs by Pauline Viardot-Garcia (Dites, Que Faut-Il Faire, Fluestern, athemscheues Lauschen, Die Sterne), one song by Malibran (Le Reveil d'un Beau Jour) and the Serenada from Quartet, Op. 11 by Héritte-Viardot

Mertine Johns, mezzo-soprano, Roger Rundle, piano, Yvonne Cable, cello, Michael May, piano, The Vieuxtemps Quartet  
Gemini Hall, RAP-1010 / 2-record set with excellent notes issued in 1975

#### Select Compositions in Print

Hildegard Publishing Company, Box 332, Bryn Mawr, PA 10010 offers a selection of Viardot-Garcia's lieder and works for violin and piano and Héritte-Viardot's Piano Quartet. Phone 610-649-8649 for information.

Other compositions by Viardot-Garcia were published by Breitkopf and Härtel, Schirmer and Hamelle.



After her retirement from the opera, Pauline taught and composed. She was such a fine pianist that Saint-Saëns once declared her ability equal to that of the great virtuoso Clara Schumann.

Boosey and Hawkes, Peters and Hofmeister published works by Hérítte-Viardot in 1883 and 1909.

During her life, Malibran composed and published nocturnes and songs. A collection of her unpublished music was collected and published by Troupenas in Paris under the title, "Dernières Pensees musicales de Marie-Félicité Garcia de Bériot" (date not available).

#### Select Bibliography

For a detailed bibliography of Pauline Viardot-Garcia and Maria Malibran see entries in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 1980.

*Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 1926 edition contains long biographies of Malibran and Viardot-Garcia as well as an important entry on the Garcia family.

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## A Musical Portrait

# Cécile Chaminade

**W**HEN CÉCILE LOUISE STÉPHANIE CHAMINADE reached the pinnacle of her fame as a composer in the early 1900s, she scaled heights few women had ever reached. Her 1908 tour of the United States was hailed in a *Washington Post* article entitled: "Mme. Chaminade, Greatest Woman Composer, Who Is Now Visiting America, Tells Of Her Dreams."

Chaminade was feted by kings, queens, and heads of governments. Among her many honors, she received the Diamond Jubilee Medal in England from Queen Victoria, the Chefekat from the Sultan of Constantinople, and France's highest award, the Chevalier of the Legion of Honor.

In the United States as many as two hundred Chaminade Clubs sprang up, yet she died in relative obscurity in 1944. Less than forty years later an article appeared in her hometown magazine, *Le Vesinet*, entitled "Who was Cécile Chaminade?"

Today few musicians, professional or amateur, could answer that question. Upon reopening the pages into the life of one of the most fascinating women in the annals of music history, one cannot help but recall these lines from the poem "Ozymandias," by Percy Bysshe Shelley:

*And on the pedestal these words appear:*

*"My name is Ozymandias, the king of kings:*

*Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!"*

*Nothing besides remains. Round the decay*

*Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare*

*The lone and level sands stretch far away.*

Cécile Chaminade was born on August 8, 1857, in Paris, although she listed her birth year as 1861. Her family was upper-middle class and her father,



PHOTOS FROM THE MAUD POWELL ARCHIVE

*Chaminade was a savvy businesswoman who sensed momentous changes awaiting women. She believed "There is no sex in art. Genius is an independent quality."*

## Discovering Chaminade: Lisa Hansen and Wendy Kerner Lucas

*Lisa: The inspiration and implementation of this article was similar to a chamber music performance. It actually grew out of a concert program our trio, Serenata, performed commemorating the 100th anniversary of the New York Chaminade Club on April 2, 1995. Wendy and I decided to divide our tasks: she would do the research and I would write the article.*

*As a flutist, I already knew of Chaminade's lovely piece Concertino, but I had no idea she had been so famous at one point. While on vacation I was browsing in an antique store in New Hope, Pennsylvania, and came across a stack of old Etude magazines dating from the 1880s. There were frequent references to Chaminade up to a certain point, and then it was as though she vanished.*

*I was astounded that she garnered such incredible honor and then she died in near obscurity, and Shelley's poem, Ozymandias, came to mind. For me, the trajectory of Chaminade's life poignantly evoked the evanescent quality of fame and this became the focal point of both the program and this article.*

*Wendy: I had known that Cécile Chaminade was a female composer who wrote the Concertino for Flute and Orchestra, but not much more. When the program manager for the New York Chaminade Club contacted us about performing for their 100th anniversary gala, I began to read about Cécile Chaminade, her life and her music, and I became intrigued. This woman was immensely famous in her time and now few musicians even know her name.*

*I read what I could about Chaminade in the library and I began to search for her music but found that few works are currently in print. I sent queries to various music publications and just as I was starting to get discouraged, I heard from a gentleman in Arizona with an interest in 19th century composers who has a collection of Chaminade's music. Eventually I had five "Chaminade Correspondents" across the United States, three compact discs of her music, and a large stack of compositions.*

*I have enjoyed the connections and communication around the country, getting to know Chaminade's music, and learning about this fascinating and talented individual. Cécile Chaminade became, for me, a real personality for whom I feel a great warmth and admiration. I hope this article can bring her alive to others as well.*

Hippolyte, was the Paris branch manager of a British insurance firm. Both parents were amateur musicians — her father, a violinist, and her mother, a pianist, who taught Chaminade the piano.

Before she was three, little Cécile was found in her bed singing the *Andante* of one of Beethoven's sonatas for piano and violin that her parents were fond of playing. She wrote her first composition when she was seven and as a child was introduced to many important musical figures in her parents' country home at Le Vesinet.

"One evening," she recalled, "I was called to the drawing room and introduced to a stout, swarthy gentleman who made me play all the compositions I knew. My childish compositions amused him very much, and he submitted me to such a musical examination.... When I had finished, the gentleman said to my father, 'She undoubtedly has the gift. Give her all the opportunity for coming to the front, and she cannot fail, but, above all, do not bore her.'"

The gentleman was Georges Bizet.

Besides Bizet, Chaminade was encouraged by the composer Benjamin Godard while tutored privately by Felix Le Couppey in piano, Martin Marsick in violin and Augustin Savard in theory. Although Le Couppey recommended that she study at the Paris Conservatoire, the idea ran contrary to her father's sense of female decorum. At sixteen, Chaminade began to work seriously, composing a trio, opus 11, and training herself by "writing whole scores over again" — producing her own versions of Gounod's *Faust* and Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*. At the same time she continued her general education — on which her father insisted.

In 1875, Chaminade attended the disastrous premiere of Bizet's *Carmen*. This experience may have affected her own opera career, for in 1882, she directed and mounted a private version of her opéra-comique, *La Sévillane*, which was never staged, perhaps because of the dread instilled in her by the *Carmen* debacle.

In 1880, at age eighteen, Chaminade presented her first recital, at the Salle Erard, devoted solely to her compositions. The programming became the model for future concerts on tour. "Ambroise Thomas [composer] was among the audience," she remembered. "When he had heard some of my works, he said aloud: 'It is not a woman who

composed these, it's a man!'"

The 1880s ushered in a period of creativity and expansion into larger forms, including her first work for piano and orchestra, *Concertstück*; her first symphony, *Les Amazones*; and her first ballet, *Callirhoë*. A piano arrangement of the *Scarf Dance* from this ballet reportedly sold over a million copies.

In 1886 Chaminade's younger sister, Louise Henriette, became engaged

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*"There is no sex in art.  
Genius is an independent  
quality."*

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to the pianist and composer Moritz Moszkowski, completing, as Chaminade wrote, "the circle of musicians who were on intimate terms at our home." However their father Hippolyte could not abide her marriage to both a German and a Jew and broke off all ties with Louise.

Hippolyte's unexpected death the following year created severe financial pressures, causing Chaminade to shift her artistic direction away from composing in the larger forms toward the more commercially viable piano solos and songs. She was also spurred into a career as a concert pianist.

Chaminade considered the piano "the first of instruments." "It is the one which forms the ear best, it is the most complete instrument; it is also the only one that can be a reduction of the orchestra," she observed during an interview that appeared in *The Strand Musical Magazine*.

In the early 1890s, Chaminade became internationally known as a pianist and composer. She toured the Continent and from 1892, appearing annually in England, where she was received at Windsor Castle by Queen Victoria. She was in demand for performances of her *Concertstück* with orchestra and recitals of her piano pieces and songs. Audiences encountered a brunette, although... "not very dark; her eyes are very large, round and brown, with that absent-minded look in them so peculiar to artists; her hair...she wears short and

curled; her underlip is rather large and protruding, and her chin very short. She is of medium height and good build; her hands, however, are very delicate-looking things, and when she plays you wonder where the strength comes from...."

In the following decade Chaminade's popularity spread to the United States, where numerous Chaminade clubs formed, and leading publications including *Ladies' Home Journal* and *The Etude* featured her. Twice, she was commis-



*"Her songs were performed by opera singers Lillian Nordica, Emma Calvé, and Nellie Melba with Chaminade at the piano."*

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sioned to compose piano works for publication in the *Ladies' Home Journal*: February 1906, *New Debutante Waltz*; November 1908, *Rosemary: A Pastel*.

The French composer was especially famous for her songs — settings of romantic poetry to lyric themes gracefully supported by fluent, tasteful, finely blended harmonies. Her songs were performed by opera singers Lillian Nordica, Emma Calvé, and Nellie Melba with Chaminade at the piano.

"How do I compose?" she once responded to an interviewer. "Sometimes travelling, sometimes at the piano, often at my table, but never in the morning. I must gradually warm to my work. I prelude for ten days or a fortnight, and when the ideas come I set to work. I cannot work to order, but only by fits and starts." (*The Strand Musical Magazine*)

"When I complete a work I am reluctant to have it published immediately, preferring to keep it hidden in a drawer...until I come across it again and find that I have confidence in it," she observed in another conversation. "If...it continues to please me I send it to the publisher."

To her family's surprise, on August 29, 1901, Chaminade married Louis Mathieu Carbonel, a music publisher from Marseilles who was twenty years

her senior. Prior to the marriage she insisted on an agreement which stipulated that each person reside in his or her former home, (she at Le Vesinet, near Paris, and he in Marseilles), and although he could visit her periodically and accompany her on tours, there would be no sexual relations.

A year after Carbonel's death in 1907, Chaminade mused that "marriage must adapt itself to one's career...usually it ruins the woman's art.... A woman should choose one or the other. When a woman of talent marries a man who appreciates that side of her, such a marriage may be ideally happy for both."

In the fall of 1908, Chaminade embarked on a highly successful United States tour that began and ended in New York's Carnegie Hall. Chaminade was greeted with a luncheon at the French Embassy, and received the next day at the White House by President and Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt. To honor the French composer, the American violinist Maud Powell announced that her Trio would perform Chaminade's piano trios during their 1908-09 United States tour.

During the tour Chaminade was asked to speak about contemporary composers and while she praised Camille Saint-Saëns, she was less glowing about Debussy: "Debussy, of course, depends very heavily on his orchestra for his ef-



*"...marriage must adapt itself to one's career... usually it ruins a woman's art."*

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fects, and his music is to my ears, well, ...insincere."

Chaminade's failure to embrace the rising waves of Impressionism which ultimately revolutionized the course of music history, washing away the genteel tide of "La Belle Epoque," ultimately doomed her own compositions. Her professional decline was mirrored by a series of personal disasters beginning in 1912 with the death of her mother, who had been her lifelong companion. Chaminade, who had previously embraced mysticism, attended seances to summon her mother's spirit.

During the mid-1920s Chaminade moved to Monte Carlo where she was diagnosed with severe decalcification of her left foot. Two years later, the composer's foot was amputated, but Chaminade, at 72, her spirit indomitable, refused a wheelchair and became an invalid. At that time, in 1928, her last composition was published.

For her 80th birthday in 1939 Chaminade received several thousand letters written at the urging of *The Etude* magazine. Yet she wrote to an American friend of her isolation: "I see that you haven't been forgetting you musical friends. Not to be forgotten...is the supreme consolation for an artist...."

Chaminade's life was ultimately a paradox. Although her music was praised for its "feminine" charm and grace, she herself stepped far outside the feminine role dictated by her era in her career, her unique marriage, and her role as savvy businesswoman. With her precocious sense of the momentous changes awaiting women, she reflected in *The Washington Post*, "There is no sex in art. Genius is an independent quality. The woman of the future, with her broader outlook, her greater opportunities, will go far...in creative work of every description."

Chaminade died on April 13, 1944, at the age of 86. Ironically, given the multitude of solo piano works and songs she wrote, the piece most known today is the *Concertino for Flute*, which is known to virtually all flutists. *Time Magazine* reported her death, ironically ridiculing the art of the world's once most famous woman composer:

In Monte Carlo last week death came to the most famous woman composer who ever lived.... [S]he died in comparative obscurity. The era that her fragile, saccharine little piano pieces... represented had long since closed. Hers had been the age of rubber plants, stereoscopic views, and parlor trances....

Shelley's *Ozymandias* suggests that one never knows how the sands of time will shift. As they shifted for Georges Bizet, burying the critics who pilloried *Carmen*, perhaps the sands will shift once again for Cécile Chaminade in the not too distant future.

Lisa Hansen, flutist, and Wendy Kerner Lucas, harpist, are members of the chamber music trio *Serenata* that performed for the centennial celebration



Cécile Chaminade was a successful pianist and composer who was honored for her work by kings and queens yet she died in obscurity in 1944.

concert of the New York Chaminade Club.

The authors thank Albert Fillmore, Enid Katahn, Jeannine Morrison, Charles P. Phillips, Del Rosenfield, Richard Turk for their assistance in the preparation of this article.



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#### Music in Print

Cécile Chaminade wrote over 400 works: about 200 for piano, about 130 for voice and piano, as well as 2 piano trios, an opera, a ballet, a dramatic symphony, and other works. Very few are in print today, though many music library collections include Chaminade's previously published works. Currently in print (partial listing):

*Concertino, Op. 107, for flute and orchestra*

*Cécile Chaminade, Selected Compositions for Piano*, published by Kalmus, Belwin Mills Publishing Corp. K09219

#### Select Discography

##### Piano Works:

P. Jacobs, piano (Hyperion CDA 66584)

*Cécile Chaminade: Music for Piano*, Enid Katahn, piano (Gasparo Records #GSCD-247)

*Cécile Chaminade: Piano Works*, Eric Parkin, piano (Chandos CHAN 8888)

*Concertstück for Piano and Orchestra*, Rosario Marciano, piano; Vienna CO, Kurt Rapf, conductor (Vox/Turnabout TV 34754, LP)

*Woman's Work, Works by Famous Women Composers, Caprice Espagnole* by Chaminade; M. May, piano (Gemini Hall Records, RAP 1010, LP)

**Piano, Violin and Cello:** *Trio No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 11*

*Chamber Works by Women Composers*, The Macalester Trio (Vox Box 2-CDX 5029)

**Flute and Piano:** *Concertino, Op. 107*, A.G. and M. Duchenim, flute and piano (Musica

Viva MVCD-1025)

*Laurel Zucker, Virtuoso Flutist*, R. Sutherland, piano (Cantilena 660012)

**Flute and Orchestra:** *Concertino, Op. 107*

*La Flûte Enchantée*, S. Milan; R. Hickox, City of London Sinfonia (Chandos CHAN 8840)

K.B. Sebon; U. Lajovic, Berlin RSO (Koch Treasure #3-1613-2)

M. Wiesler; P. Auguin, Helsingborg SO (Bis CD-529)

**Orchestra:** *Autumn*, Michael Guttman, violin, José Serebrier,

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, ASV Quicksilver, The Four Seasons Series, CD QS 6115

**Violin and Piano:** *Romanza appassionata, Op. 31, Sérénade espagnole*

A. Steinhardt; V. Eskin, Northeastern (Classical Arts), NR 222-C

**Voice and Piano:** *Rosemonde, Chanson Brétonne, L'Été*

*Women at an Exposition* (music composed by women and performed at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago), S. Mentzer, mezzo-soprano; S.J. Langton, soprano; K. Schmidt, piano (Koch International Classics #3-7240-2H1)

#### Discography of Lisa Hansen & Wendy Kerner Lucas

*Concierto Pastoral* — for flute and orchestra, L. Hansen, flute, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (EMI Classics, CZS 7674352)

*Suite de Ballet* — works for flute and piano, L. Hansen, flute; Allison Brewster, piano (Musical Heritage Society 312029 M)

*Fantasia para un gentilhomme* — transcribed for flute & orchestra, L. Hansen, flute; State of Mexico Symphony (EMI - to be released)

**Sounds of the Seine** — French chamber music works, W.K. Lucas, harp; The Glorian Duo (Delos International, DE 3143)

For more information about the **Serenata Ensemble**, contact them at 116 Pinehurst Ave., #C-14, New York, NY 10033; 212/795-8967 phone; 212/781-4248 fax.

# Julianne McLean

— *Her Music Never Stopped* —



*At the height of a career that seemed “unstoppable,” critics throughout Europe praised Julianne for her “force,” “intelligence” and “extremely rich expressiveness.”*

**M**Y EARLIEST MEMORIES ARE OF MUSIC, which occupied such an ubiquitous and natural part of my early life that I grew up under the privileged “illusion” that music is as basic and essential to the sustenance of human life as eating, drinking, sleeping, and breathing. Not until well into my adult life did I discover with dismay that everyone else in the entire world had not grown up under the same impression. I am still trying to figure out why not.

In my mother’s household, the music never stopped. My mother is Julianne McLean.

Julianne McLean’s most vivid childhood memory is of the extraordinary playing of Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943) in recital in Wichita. Young Julianne felt as though Rachmaninoff performed his music with her in mind, so personal was his playing. While taking his bows, Rachmaninoff did notice the attentive child seated in a front row and looking directly at her, nodded his head to acknowledge her presence. A small but gracious gesture by a giant musical figure. Soon after this experience, the six-year-old Julianne began formal, private lessons on the piano.

My mother was born in 1928 in Massachusetts into an atmosphere of active involvement with and a deep, abiding appreciation for the classics, the humanities and all artistry. Julianne’s mother, Anna Mabry, a Canadian of French and British descent, enjoyed composing her own songs as a child and accompanying her father, an accomplished violinist, on the organ. She went on to study at New York’s National Academy of Design and became a notable painter in her own right, winning many coveted awards for her Rembrandt studies.

Julianne's father, Benjamin Drew McLean, a Harvard graduate, taught English literature at an East coast college for men. He was a fine writer and played the piano.

Shortly after Julianne's arrival, her family relocated to Wichita, Kansas, where her father would eventually follow in his father's prominent footsteps as a leading public figure and as director of what was then and remains today the largest bank in Kansas. Julianne's paternal grandfather, Benjamin Franklin McLean, is still remembered as one of the city's best loved "founding fathers" and "pioneers," who played a key role at all levels in the development of the city. Arriving in Wichita in the late 1800s "with nothing other than his unending capacity for hard work and his innate honesty," this "hardy Scot" soon acquired his own business, became president of a leading bank, and later was elected mayor three times.

In Wichita, Julianne's first two piano instructors were women who provided her with the solid technical foundation and the encouragement she needed as a child. But the youngster was driven onward in her music by the realization that she "loved music above all else in the world." This was a perception, whether conscious or subconscious, of which she was always aware.

There was never a time when she wondered or had any doubts about what she would do "when she grew up" — she always knew. When a child, she was already thinking in "professional" terms, choosing music as her career or, perhaps more accurately, knowing that music had chosen her.

Serving as her constant, underlying inspiration was the memory of hearing Rachmaninoff play. Yet from the start, lacking female role models, Julianne (as other women have had to do) created herself as an artist.

Progressing rapidly, her talent seemed to emerge naturally and pervade all aspects of her life. Her mother recalls a time when Julianne had been outside playing.

"Suddenly she burst into the house and without uttering a word charged directly towards the piano. She instantly thrust herself full force into a Beethoven sonata." The precocious child played with such an unrestrained, impassioned intensity that her mother's eyes welled with tears. When she stopped, her mother approached to say how she had

never heard her play with such beauty before. Tears were streaming from the youngster's eyes as she turned from the piano. Julianne was covered from head to toe with hornet stings! At this early age, Julianne's immediate and most natural reaction was to express herself through her music.

During her piano studies in Wichita, the young hopeful won all the local competitions. At sixteen, she graduated from high school. Her audition, including a performance of *Les Adieux* (Beethoven's Sonata, Opus 81a), for Dr.

Julianne continued her studies with Rosinna Lhevinne (1880-1976) at the Juilliard School. "Madame" Lhevinne and her late husband Josef (1874-1944) had brought with them to New York the rich legacy of the Russian Romantic musical tradition of the late 19th- and early 20th-centuries which was their heritage. They imbued their students with the legendary artistic richness of that Golden Age of Tchaikovsky (1840-1893), Anton Rubinstein (1830-1894), and Paderewski (1860-1941). Most thrilling to Julianne was the knowledge



Anna McLean, Julianne and Angela in a 1982 photograph.

Wiktór Labunski, Dean of the Kansas City Conservatory of Music, won her a full scholarship.

At the Conservatory, Dean Labunski introduced his students to the leading musicians of the day. He summoned Julianne to play the Rachmaninoff 4th Piano Concerto for William Kapell's (1922-1953) master class. Julianne received individual instruction during a summer seminar with pianist Olga Samaroff (1882-1948). Even Dr. Labunski's brother-in-law, Arthur Rubinstein (1886-1982), visited the Conservatory occasionally and offered words of wisdom to the students.

At twenty, Julianne completed her Bachelor's Degree in Music, as valedictorian, with a minor in voice. At twenty-one, she received her Master's Degree. Both degrees required performances of concerti with the Kansas City Philharmonic, recorded live.

On the advice of Dr. Labunski,

that Rosinna and Josef had worked intimately with their cherished friend Sergei Rachmaninoff at the famed Moscow Conservatory.

The Lhevinnes were noted for demanding from their pupils a severe and unforgiving physical and mental discipline which was inseparable from the complete, rigorous, austere training of that era and which the faint-of-heart simply did not survive. Josef Lhevinne's *Principles of Pianoforte Technique* remains one of the more enlightened and authoritative gems in music's pedagogical literature.

Among Julianne's classmates to benefit from this training were Van Cliburn and John Browning. Through Madame Lhevinne's influence, Julianne's playing reflects a thorough integration of the Russian tradition of the Golden Era, as *Washington Star* critic Robert Evett noted in an early 1970s Washington, D.C., performance: "...Miss McLean

◆ BY ANGELA ADDARIO-MCLEAN

## A HAUNTING IMAGE



Ben McLean in a portrait by Anna. He never returned from war and Anna feared that she had lost her daughter too when the *Andrea Doria* sank.

July 25, 1956. *The middle of the night.*

*Anna McLean found herself standing by a large body of water that she sensed was the ocean. But the darkness and dense fog swirling around her made it impossible for her to identify where she was. She walked up to a figure, a sailor dressed in a blue uniform.*

*"Is everyone all right?" she asked.*

*"We're trying to save as many people as we can," he replied. Suddenly, the thick blanket of fog lifted like a stage curtain and Anna McLean awoke.*

*The eerie dream haunted her throughout the morning and she grew increasingly uneasy. Although it was the middle of the week, she felt an unexplained but powerful need to go to church. As she drove through the streets of Wichita, Kansas, with the car radio playing, a newscaster announced that the Italian passenger ship the *Andrea Doria* had been struck by the Swedish vessel the *Stockholm* and had sunk in the deep waters off Nantucket Island. Anna's daughter,*

*Julianne, was on the *Andrea Doria*, returning home from two years of music study and performing in Europe. The news report was vague and gave no indication of the number of casualties.*

*Dazed and trembling with fear, Anna McLean entered the church and sat in the back row. As the words of the priest floated past her unheard, she gave way to her feelings and she began to cry. The priest observed her distress and in a rare act abruptly stopped the Mass. He walked back to her and gently asked her what was troubling her. After she described the news report she had just heard, the priest resumed the Mass, dedicating it to the passengers on the stricken *Andrea Doria*.*

*An unbearable tension filled the rest of the day because Anna had no way of receiving news on the fate of her only remaining child. Still recovering from the loss of her son Ben who was killed in the Battle of the Bulge in World War II, Anna kept praying: "Dear Lord, not my other child, not my other child..."*

*Halfway across the country, Julianne McLean had been enjoying her last night aboard the luxury liner with friends in the ship's elegant main lounge when the *Stockholm* rammed the *Andrea Doria* at 11:15.*

*There was a terrific crash and jolt which threw Julianne across the room and pitched the ship sideways at a 45 degree angle. The stunned passengers quickly formed a chain of hands and managed to pull each other up an incline to the deck.*

*"We stood on the deck in the fog and the darkness not knowing what had happened, only that it was something terrible," Julianne recalled. "A priest came up to us and gave us final absolution. That made us all feel awfully strange."*

*Believing she was going to die, Julianne sat on the deck in the darkness looking out into the impenetrable wall of fog. Then something happened that Julianne believes was a miracle. Suddenly the dense fog lifted like a stage curtain and vanished. Fog never lifts at night; it needs the warm rays of the sun to burn it off the water.*

*And in the clear night, the survivors saw a "heavenly vision" moving toward them — the bright lights of the liner, the *Ile de France*.*

*"Every light on it was lit, and what a glorious sight it was," said Julianne. "They dropped all their lifeboats into the water and took us off the *Doria*." She lost everything she owned — her clothes, her money, all her music and her shoes. A passenger aboard the *Ile de France* gave her a pair of slippers and a stranger in New York City gave her a dime to make a local phone call to friends who called Anna McLean in Wichita.*

*Julianne and her mother were reunited a few days later. In recounting the events of the tragic night, she did not mourn the loss of her possessions. Fifty-one passengers had died and she was grateful to be alive.*

*Anna McLean listened quietly as her daughter described haunting images that were already familiar to her: the dense fog on the water, miraculously lifting in the middle of the night, and the sailors on the *Ile de France* — sailors wearing blue uniforms.*

is a fire-breathing pianist of The Old School."

"Madame" Lhevinne sent her top students to Carl Friedburg (1872-1955), a rare sage with doctorates in medicine, philosophy and music, of considerably advanced years, who also taught at the Juilliard. Friedburg had been a student of Johannes Brahms (1833-1892) and Clara Schumann (1819-1896) when he was a child. He imbued Julianne with his own insights into the interpretation of the Romantic music literature, passing on his direct knowledge of the music of Brahms and Schumann.

While at the Juilliard, Julianne sang in the Collegiate Chorale, which frequently performed at Carnegie Hall. The Chorale was formed and directed by Robert Shaw, who later established "The Robert Shaw Chorale" and became director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. From Shaw, Julianne learned invaluable refinements of phrasing and principles of "breathing" which are as critical to the interpretation of piano music as they are to vocal works.

How well she learned them is reflected in a critic's assessment of Julianne's performance of Chopin's *Four Ballades* and *Barcarolle* in the 1980s: "It was here, and indeed in all of the *Ballades* that the pianist showed her wealth of maturity, sensitivity to line, and her special gift for preparing and molding the beginning and end of phrases. Here the artist took confident time to 'breath' the phrase, much like a singer with a vocal line."

Julianne's Town Hall debut was hailed by New York critics. "A distinguished showing...her delineation of the composers' ideas was clear and meticulous..." (*New York Herald Tribune*). The *Staatszeitung und Herold* pronounced her "a born pianist, with an intelligently selected and dramatically built program for Town Hall...an excellent musician, with hands that seem created for the piano...very well able to take the highest hurdle!... the audience was full of enthusiasm!"

Following a round of performances — at Avery Fischer and Carl Fischer Concert Halls, over radio station WNYC, among others — the native Kansan was granted a scholarship to continue her piano studies with Carlo Zecchi and Rodolfo Caporali at the Santa Cecilia Academy in Rome. Zecchi carried forward the Beethoven/Czerny

lineage from his teacher Artur Schnabel (1882-1951).

During this time, Julianne participated in the Salzburg Mozarteum in Austria and became a semi-finalist in the Queen Elizabeth International Concours in Brussels, Belgium — the gold medalist was Vladimir Ashkenazy.

Concertizing for ten years throughout Europe, she was hailed as a “Volatile American Pianist” who conveys much “force and intelligence...taste and extremely rich expressiveness...a warm, cordial capacity for performance...” (*Il Popolo*, Rome). Her performances were marked by “much charm and delicateness...suppleness and a fleet touch...much sensibility...” (*La Cité*, Brussels).

The Italians titled her “The [Renata] Tebaldi of the piano,” no doubt for her tall and slender figure as well as for her dynamic range on the piano. Her numerous performances, especially within the Italian capital, included concerts at Castel Sant’Angelo. Most notably, this American pianist became the first woman concert pianist whose performance was permitted to be broadcast live over Vatican radio. Julianne McLean’s career seemed unstoppable.

With the entry of the United States into World War II, Julianne’s world began to change. Her only sibling, an elder brother who had shown exceptional artistic talent, fought as a paratrooper in the Battle of the Bulge. At the age of 23, he was numbered among the countless soldiers who never returned home.

Then, on July 25, 1956, during one of her regular trans-Atlantic crossings between Italy and the United States, Julianne found herself aboard the ill-fated Italian liner *Andrea Doria*, when it was struck by the Swedish liner *Stockholm* and sank. Less than 100 passengers aboard the *Doria* lost their lives. Julianne (along with actress Ruth Roman) was rescued by the French liner *Ile de France*, which deposited her safely in New York. Undaunted, she continued her trans-Atlantic voyages and her music.

In 1958, the year that her Juilliard classmate Van Cliburn caused a sensation winning the Tchaikovsky International Competition in Moscow, Julianne married an Italian physician from Rome in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican. Her career never skipped a beat during the three years preceding my birth in 1961. A few months later my mother was faced

with rearing her child alone. Despite her diminished freedom, her music continued and expanded to include me.

Before I was two, my mother took me to the piano and taught me what to do, beginning formal lessons. I learned to read music before I learned to read words. With three pianos in the house, it was not possible for me to crawl or walk from one room to the other without at least being tempted to play the piano!

My earliest performances were with my mother’s other students at her “recitals” and before my classmates at school. These increased in frequency and in level throughout the years, and I recall that from an early age the relatively advanced level of my playing seemed to surprise my superiors as well as my peers. To me, I was doing nothing more complex than eating, drinking, sleeping or breathing.

At nine, my violin studies began and for the next few years I performed on this instrument in local student trios, quartets, competitions, and eventually as “concert mistress” of a city-wide student orchestra. Several years in a row, my mother and I performed music for violin and piano for my classmates in the elementary school named after my great-grandfather Ben F. McLean. I remember my mother giving solo recitals to the classes almost every year.

My mother continued to perform publicly during those years. She lost none of her artistry to the duties of motherhood. In 1965, a critic observed: “[P]ianist Julianne McLean was presented in recital before an overflow audience... Miss McLean has mellowed considerably during the few brief years I have heard her since her return from Europe. She used to give the impression of a Goddess on a monument, un-touchable, as her technique was flawless. That technique remains as finely chiseled as her classic features. Added now is a warmth, a soul, a participation and communication with the audience.”

She performed at the 1964 World’s Fair and made two overseas trips as a “cultural ambassador.” Her performances were broadcast over New York radio station WNYC, and she was spotlighted weekly on a local television program in Wichita.

Not only did Julianne’s music never stop during these years, it did not even appear to slow down. Her music seemed indeed to flourish — although, no

doubt, not as fully as it could have without her increasing maternal responsibilities.

Sometime during my earliest years, the young concert pianist faced the need to earn a more reliable income from another line of work. Perhaps because of the mathematical skill that musicians have, Julianne made a smooth transition into the work force as a computer programmer. To the amazement of all who knew her, her progress in this field seemed as rapid as her earlier progress in music. Within a couple of years she was employed at the Pentagon as a systems analyst, first with Naval Intelli-



*Rachmaninoff did notice the attentive child seated in the front row... and nodded... to acknowledge her presence.*

gence, and finally with the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Yet her music never stopped.

Even during those years in the Washington, D.C., area when we no longer had even one piano in our home, I recall most vividly — in addition to many late nights in the recesses of the Pentagon — my mother practicing on the pianos of local schools and churches, continuing to teach students on weekends, and most of all giving public performances on a continuous, regular and vigorous basis. As a young child, I recall attending her performances for the Ambassador and his entourage at the West German Embassy, for the DAR in Constitution Hall, and at the National Gallery of Art. It was from this time (1971) that the critic Robert Evett wrote:

“Last night Julianne McLean held a large audience spellbound at the National Gallery and received a standing ovation at the end of her program...her playing began to soar... in a truly formidable Liszt group. For Miss McLean is a fire-breathing pianist of The Old School... and the more forbidding the technical difficulties, the more she revels in the music... In the piece after the 123rd sonnet of Petrarch (Liszt), there is a great deal of tenderness, and she played it in a supple, sensuous style. The Grand Concert Etude in f-minor is



Julianne and her daughter Angela in 1964.

largely a study in pianissimo and allowed Miss McLean to show how absolute her control is at a high velocity and a low dynamic. The Mephisto Waltz is, of course, a lexicon of brilliant pianistic devices and it was her sizzling performance of the piece that brought the audience to its feet. In this late Romantic music, she is an altogether sensational pianist.”

Her ostensible “career” as a programmer/analyst spanned almost 20 years — from the time when I entered the third grade until my sophomore year of college — yet the primacy of her career as a concert pianist never dimmed. Throughout these years, her music — along with the rave reviews — never stopped. In fact, they always continued, progressed and endured as THE vital element of her life and, consequently, of mine.

From her every move on stage, critics readily perceived that her art was her life: “The picture of grace and elegance, visiting artist Julianne McLean walked onto the stage of the Pan American University Fine Arts Auditorium...and with a commanding presence sat down and assumed control of the piano. Perform-

ing a compendium of masterworks that represent the very finest of Romantic piano literature...” (Texas, 1980s)

Her versatility lifted audiences right out of their seats: “Miss McLean seems to have a special feeling for Chopin. She is strong enough and she has the agile technique he requires. More than that, she is sensitive to the nuances that set this music apart. And how she can pedal. Her foot work was like an artist’s brush, producing tonal shading essential to Chopin.”

Today, as throughout Julianne’s life, the music of the figure who had impressed her so memorably as a child continues to occupy a special place in her heart as well as in her repertoire: “...the Rachmaninoff Variations on a theme of Corelli...show the incisive tightening of the composer’s harmonic idiom, and the etched clarity of his final essays in composition. Here the pianist relished the opportunity to highlight the autumnal colors of this work so well-fitted for the instrument. The maturity, scintillating brilliance, and color of the artist were nowhere better demonstrated than in her first encore, the Liebeslied by the Austrian violinist Fritz Kreisler, and ar-

ranged for the piano in transcription by Rachmaninoff.”

In 1975, when I entered high school, my mother resigned from her position at the Pentagon and returned to her home in Wichita, continuing however to work as a computer analyst until the early 1980s. She then turned to teaching piano full-time once again. But her concert life continued as always.

Julianne most recently performed a benefit recital for the Ben F. McLean Elementary School in Wichita, the school I attended that is named in honour of her grandfather. The institution is now designated a “magnet” school for the sciences and technology. Farther downtown from the site of the concert at the Center for the Arts and across the river on the main avenue, McLean Boulevard, stands a carved, illuminated fountain with the inscription: “In memory of Benjamin F. McLean, whose life and labors contributed greatly to developing Wichita.” Among those attending the poignant concert on September 10 were Julianne’s mother, only two years shy of her centennial birthday, and I, Julianne’s daughter — the most privileged of all the guests. Most notable among her program selections was the monumental **Handel Variations and Fugue**, composed for Clara Schumann by Johannes Brahms, reminding me of the distinguished artistic lineage that she carries forward.

My mother’s primary wish at this stage of her life is that all children, everywhere and at all times, could have the opportunity to study music. She believes that music study can provide each human being with a life-long creative outlet and with “the imperative necessity to express oneself.” She knows that the sound mental and physical discipline involved in music study will serve each individual well throughout their lives, regardless of what other paths they may choose to follow.

I know the validity of her vision, for I have lived it from the beginning. Thanks to my first piano teacher and first musician role-model — my mother — the music in my life will never stop.

**Angela Addario-McLean**, a mathematician/physicist and pianist/composer, is studying the metaphysical connection between music, science and medicine.

# Amy Fay

continued from page 7

members, all professional musicians. The Society supported an all-women's orchestra and a chorus, presenting four large concerts each season (usually in Carnegie Hall) as well as monthly musicales. As she attended business meetings, wrote reports, organized concerts and oversaw the activities of the Society, Amy's writing increasingly focused on the position of women in music as teachers, performers, and composers. Her articles in *The Etude*, *Music* and *Musical Courier* reflect her strong feminist sympathies.

Amy's health began failing in 1916 and in 1919 she moved back home to Cambridge to live with her brother Norman and sister Rose. She died at age 84 on February 28, 1928, in Watertown, Massachusetts, in the same nursing home in which her sister Zina had died in 1923.

Music remained the wellspring of Amy's life and her music reached fruition through her grit and humor that sprang from her Yankee sense of duty. In one of her letters, she recalls to her sister this little rhyme that jingles her morning walk around a hill:

*Curved is the line of beauty,  
Straight is the line of duty;  
Follow the last and thou shalt see  
The other ever following thee.*

It is her devotion to beauty that both guides Amy and defines her difference. Hearing the passionate call of beauty, she was stirred to a life of achievement in music. It made the difference between her and a young Count she describes in a letter as "a perfect materialist, untroubled by the *souffle vers le beau* (the drift toward beauty) which torments so many."

Amy Fay, with her keen intelligence, executive ability, acute powers of observation, balanced perspective, genuine character, and devotion to music made notable contributions to the musical life of generations of Americans. As a performer, writer, lecturer, teacher and clubwoman, this extraordinary woman won a significant place in music history for boldly advancing the place of women in music and the place of music in American society.

**Robert Dumm** was Dean of the Boston Conservatory, Professor of Piano at

The Catholic University, and founding member of the American Liszt Society. He has spent his life teaching piano and teachers, through national workshops and columns on technique and expression for *Piano Today* and *Sheet Music Magazine*, with lessons and features for *Clavier*. His first book, *Pumping Ivory* (New York: EKAY Music, Inc., 1989) has had three printings, and his forthcoming *Composers' Clues to Musical Expression* will be published by the same firm.

**Karen A. Shaffer** is Maud Powell's biographer and president of The Maud Powell Foundation in Arlington, VA.

*Resources on Amy Fay and the Fay Family*

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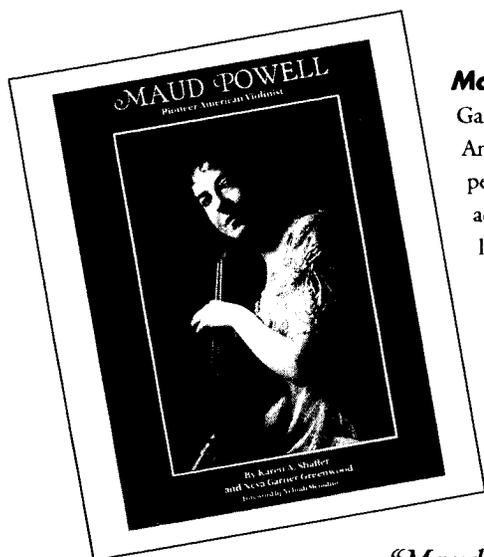
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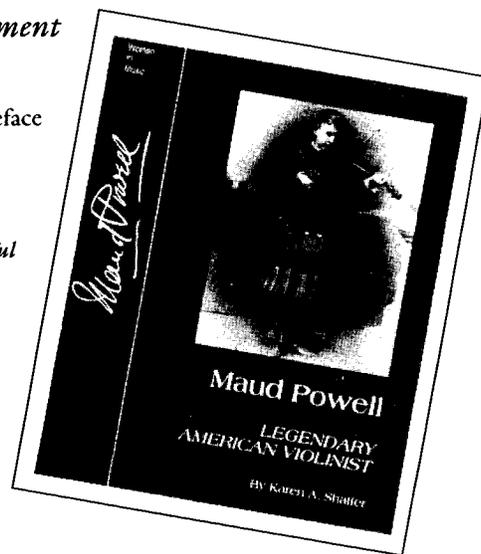


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