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**Portrait of Nancy Galbraith**

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## Portrait of Nancy Galbraith

by Kristin Tjornehoj

The music by Nancy Galbraith reflects national heritages and transcends international boundaries. As conductors search for quality repertoire of music for their wind band, a composer to watch is Ms. Galbraith. Her list of compositions has no boundaries between genres, as she willingly writes for nearly any kind of musician. However, it is her wind band and chamber wind pieces that will be the focus of this article.

My first exposure to Nancy Galbraith was when I agreed to speak and guest conduct at the 11<sup>th</sup> Festival of Women Composers International Conference held at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA. Aiming to present a regional artist as guest conductor, Nancy Galbraith seemed to be the natural choice. Nancy was born January 27, 1951 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA. Her family was musical and studies of piano began at the young age of 4 under the tutelage of her mother. Then interest in the clarinet, with classes in theory absorbed her time and interest. Her participation in honors bands, festivals, clinics and contests paved the way toward her successful musical career. Nancy earned a degree in composition (1972) from Ohio State University; a Master's Degree in composition from West Virginia University (1978), and currently is teaching composition at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA.

Currently her catalogue lists 121 published pieces. Notable wind pieces include *Danza de los Duendes*, which is the composition I selected to feature at the International Women Composers Conference. The work is an energetic, colorful composition inspired by creatures (*los duendes*) of South American folklore. Originally composed for Argentina's Orquesta Sinfónica de Tucumán with conductor Eduardo Alonso-Crespo in 1992, Nancy scored the work for wind band in 1996. This composition has been performed over 100 times around the world. A fine recording exists by the North Texas Wind Symphony, under the baton of gifted conductor Eugene Corporan (Dreamcatchers, KCD, 11089). This composition has also been heard at competitions in Germany and Norway. The original symphony orchestra scoring included 3 flutes (pic), 2 ob, 2 cl, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones (bs), tuba, timpani, 4 percussions, harp, piano, and strings. The wind band instrumentation is 3 flutes (pic), 2 oboes, eb-clarinet, 3 soprano clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 2 alto saxophones, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, 4 horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, euphonium, 2 tubas, timpani, 4 percussions, piano, and string-bass.



Nancy Galbraith

Many commissions come from Latin American ensembles as they celebrate the rhythmic energy and thick orchestration of composer Galbraith. The conductor, players and audience are stimulated and encouraged by her music. It celebrates harmonic texture, emotional depth, spiritual energy, rhythmic vitality and a wide range of expression.

The latest work for wind band, *Febris Ver* (Spring Fever) held its premier in March at Indiana University of Pennsylvania with Jack Stamp conducting. *Febris Ver* is a post minimalist composition inspired by the sensuous essences of spring. Galbraith reflects the aromas, colors and visions of spring that she translates into chorale-like textures. The layers pass around the ensemble in this 8:15 composition. Her music is a bridge between the avant-garde and traditional wind band sounds. Instrumentation for *Feris Ver* includes: piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contra-bassoon, 2 alto saxophones, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, 4 horns, 4 trumpets, 2 trombones, 1 bass trombone, 2 euphoniums, 1 tuba, 4 percussions, piano and contrabass.

Brass band compositions include *Luminosity* and *Washington's Landing*. As with most composers, Nancy Galbraith writes on commission for special events. *Luminosity* was commissioned to commemorate the 250<sup>th</sup> celebration of the birth of Pittsburgh, PA. The "luminous city", as quipped in the city's historical publicity, becomes the bright, shimmering character of brass music with colorful interplay of piano and mallet instruments. *Washington's Landing* celebrates the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season of the River City Brass Band with a 2006 premier. Just one year later, Ms. Galbraith rescors the work for wind band.

### New Members

|                                     |                     |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Otto M. Schwarz                     | Austria             |
| Adam Gumble                         | USA                 |
| Thomas Doss                         | Austria             |
| Bert Appermont                      | Belgium             |
| Chun Kit Yip                        | Hong Kong           |
| Bradley Ethington                   | USA                 |
| Josu Camacho / Perform in Spain     | Spain               |
| Nivaldo Alves Da Silva              | Brazil              |
| Arthur Himmelberger                 | USA                 |
| Andrea DeRenzis-Strauss             | USA                 |
| Marcel Meier                        | Switzerland         |
| Gérard Bauer                        | France              |
| Patricia Wood Winn                  | Spain/USA           |
| Mark Rogers                         | USA                 |
| Ange De Beer / Wens Travel          | Netherlands         |
| Daniela Ivanova                     | Section Switzerland |
| Etienne Mounir                      | Section Switzerland |
| Stefan Roth                         | Section Switzerland |
| Tom Wulff                           | Norway              |
| Trond Korsgard                      | Norway              |
| Demi Wang / Motif Music             | China               |
| Kelly O'Neill                       | USA                 |
| Culture Affairs Bureau, Chiayi City | Taiwan              |
| John Stewart                        | USA                 |
| Tom Briers                          | USA                 |
| Rodolfo Maia                        | Portugal            |
| Wolfgang Dautel                     | Switzerland         |
| Boon Hua Lien                       | Singapore/USA       |

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Other notable wind works for wind band include:

*with brightness round about it* (1993)

*Wind Symphony No. 1* (1996)

*Elfin Thunderbolt* (1998)

*Dream Catchers* (1998)

*Concerto for Piano and Wind Ensemble* (2000)

*Internal Combustion* (2001)

*Washington's Landing* (2006)

Other music of interest to the wind band conductor is Nancy Galbraith's music for chamber ensemble.

*Time Cycle* (1984)

*Fantasia* (1986)

*Into Light* (1989)

*Aeolian Muses* (1993)

*Incantation and Allegro* (1995)

*Rhythms and Rituals* (1995)

*Island Echoes* (2000)

*Atacama Sonata* (2001)

*Dos Danzas Latinas* (2002)

*Of Nature* (2003)

*Sonata for Bassoon and Piano* (2004)

*Traverso Místico* (2006)

Out of the variety of chamber music, I enjoy *Atacama Sonata*, composed for Chilean artists Alberto Almarza (flute) and Luz Manriquez (piano). Juilliard School hosted the premier in 2001 of this 3 sonata in 3 movements –

*Capricho, Nocturno, Volante*. The lively work evokes visions of desert moods and is named after Chile's Atacama Desert. Here the composer's trademark modally – inflected, slightly, beautiful slow melodies, this work adds multi-phonics, breath-tones, and other jazzy effects.

Nancy Galbraith's music is fresh. Her skills as an orchestrator of winds and percussion are to be celebrated and supported. The incessant rhythms reflect society today. Minimalism skills are subtle and the exotic atmospheres created show her grandeur and creativity.

As conductors continue to seek out new ideas, fresh textures and colorful orchestration, plus internationally inspired works, Nancy Galbraith deserves attention and respect. Visit her website for inspirational art work, audio-clips and program notes

<http://www.nancygalbraith.com>



## STAR ARCHITECTS CREATE DIFFERENT AUDIENCES

In some cities around the world, budgets for cultural institutions like orchestras are getting cut quickly. In other communities, millions of dollars, euros, francs are spent for buildings where the orchestras and opera companies perform. In the city of Hamburg the new Elbphilharmonie will be open in 2014, a concert hall which was supposed to cost about 120 million Euros, when it's finished, it will be exceeded that amount by four times. The building is designed by the star architects Herzog & de Meuron, who designed, among others, the world famous "birds nest" for the Olympics in Beijing and the Allianz Arena, the home of the soccer team Bavaria Munich.

The new Elbphilharmonie will look like an iceberg in the harbor area in Hamburg. It will be much more than just a concert hall. It will stand as a landmark, like the opera house in Sidney, a place where people will visit not just for the music, but for the concert complex itself. I am sure every single euro is a good investment for the city of Hamburg.

In Lucerne, Switzerland, we have a similar kind of situation. Some of you might remember the location for the WASBE conference back in 2001. The event took place in the newly opened Culture and Performance Center called KKL, designed by the French star architect Jean Nouvel and the acclaimed Russel Johnson was responsible for the acoustics.

Does this outstanding building and its wonderful acoustics influence the overall concert activities in Lucerne? The city of Lucerne has been a great site for concert performances, especially during the summer, ever since Arturo Toscanini's Lucerne Music Festival began in 1938. For many years, some of the greatest orchestras including the

Berlin and the Vienna Philharmonics perform annually in Lucerne. The Chicago, New York and Boston Phil's are also regular guests in the summer. Since the new KKL opened in Lucerne, the concert activities throughout the year are much richer. Some of the best orchestras worldwide choose Lucerne as a place to perform during their tours. The Lucerne Symphony Orchestra, the resident orchestra of the KKL, performs not only with their regular conductor but with some of the most prestigious conductors from all over the globe. Leading guest soloists perform regularly. Lucerne is a very attractive place for all great artists in the music business.

What is interesting to me is the comparison between audiences in the main concert halls in Switzerland. The Tonhalle in Zurich is probably the most prestigious hall in this country with a history like the Musikvereinssaal in Vienna. Another great hall in the German speaking part of Switzerland with wonderful orchestras and soloists is the Stadtcasino in Basel. Both concert halls were built in the late 19th century. When I go to concerts in these halls (whatever concert I go to), I notice that the average age of the listeners in both halls is far older than in Lucerne. It seems, the KKL has an attraction beyond the music and it is certainly more appealing to a different and younger public. In the mean time, this "new" audience gets, probably for a different reason, exposed to great music and might come back for a different aspect.

Last weekend I was in Valencia to attend a "Don Giovanni" performance in the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia (see cover photo of the December issue of WASBE World). I wanted to see a performance in this outstanding opera house designed by Santiago Calatrava. And I wanted to see Zubin Metha conduct (the next time I go in the cold season, I will even bring a coat. It seems Calatrava did not think of the heating....).

I am sure Rem Koolhaas, Zaha Hadid, Frank Gehry, Henning Larsen, Jean Nouvel, Santiago Calatrava, Norman Foster, Jacques Herzog, Pierre de Meuron, Renzo Piano and many other star architects will bring a different clientele to the concert halls and opera houses all over the world. These visitors might not go there at first for musical reasons but they might come back as music lovers.

If you still need a reason to go to the next WASBE Conference to in Valencia: The Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia is an outstanding venue!

Best wishes,  
Felix Hauswirth

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Music Education, Instrumental Conducting,  
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Dr. Kristin Tjornehoj is an Associate Professor at UW-River Falls where she conducts the UWRF Symphonic Wind Ensemble and St. Croix Valley Orchestra, and teaches related courses. She holds a BA and BM from Luther College in Decorah, IA, a Master's degree in performance from the University of Minnesota, and a Ph.D. in Music Education from the University of Minnesota.

Dr. Tjornehoj is active as a conductor, lecturer and performer. She is in demand as a guest conductor throughout the region. Dr. Tjornehoj has been involved in the commissioning of numerous pieces for wind band. As a lecturer, Dr. Tjornehoj has presented sessions on conducting, repertoire, and motivation at numerous conferences for the music and medical communities. In the fall of 2005 she served as a visiting professor in Dalkeith, Scotland as part of the Wisconsin in Scotland program. Kristin has served the Wisconsin School Music Association as Vice President and Public Relations chair.

Dr. Tjornehoj has led international concert tours to China, England, France, Iceland and Scotland. She has performed at Carnegie Hall in New York, the Alberta Festival of Bands in Canada, and throughout the Midwest region for conventions and concerts. She has participated in many music festivals and is a frequent performer on saxophone and piano. Dr. Tjornehoj is an active member of Music Educators National Conference and Wisconsin Music Educators. Ms. Tjornehoj is active in church music, and is currently church choir director at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in Lakeland, MN.

Kristin is also the staff conductor for the Concert Band Camp in Shell Lake, WI. She has participated in many music festivals and is a frequent performer on saxophone and piano. Dr. Tjornehoj is an active member of Music Educators National Conference, College Band Directors Conference, St. Croix Valley Music Teachers Association, and Wisconsin Music Educators. Dr. Tjornehoj is active in church music and is currently music director at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in Lakeland, MN.

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