

Pioneering conductor Odaline de la Martinez co-curates trailblazing Juilliard Focus Festival acknowledging early 20th-century women composers

Marking the centenary of women's suffrage in the USA



Friday 24 January – Friday 31 January
Trailblazers – Pioneering Women Composers of the 20th Century
Peter Jay Sharp Theater & Alice Tully Hall
Lincoln Center, New York

Featuring music by 32 women composers from 15 countries on five continents

"The exact worth of my music will probably not be known till nought remains of the writer but sexless dots and lines on ruled paper."

Ethel Smyth (1858-1944)

Highlighting the pioneering writing of 20th-century women composers, composer-conductor **Odaline de la Martinez** co-curates **Trailblazers – Pioneering Women Composers of the 20th Century** – a Festival she leads alongside Festival Founder Joel Sachs.

The **Juilliard Focus 2020 Festival** celebrates the centenary of women's suffrage in the USA, with the Nineteenth Amendment first giving women the vote in 1920.

Under co-curator Martinez, the Festival will this year advocate expressly on behalf of historical women composers to overcome the magnified problems they faced in establishing themselves as professional composers in the twentieth century and paving the way for those who followed. Inadequate archives mean many have been almost entirely neglected following their deaths; others, such as **Rebecca Clarke** (1886-1979), gave up composing upon marriage:

"There's nothing in the world more thrilling, or practically nothing. But you can't do it – at least I can't, maybe that's where a woman's different – unless it's the first thing I think of every morning when I wake and the last thing I think of every night before I got to sleep."

– Rebecca Clarke

Decades after composition, many pieces will be given American or New York premieres and performed for the first time in the young Juilliard performers' lifetimes. 32 women composers are featured during the week-long celebration, including composers from 15 countries on five continents.

The award-winning Cuban American composer-conductor **Odaline de la Martinez** is one of Britain's most dynamic and gifted musicians, in 1984 becoming the first woman in history to conduct a BBC Promenade Concert at the Royal Albert Hall, later conducting Ethel Smyth's *The Wreckers* there in 1994. She created her chamber ensemble Lontano in 1976 to commission, produce, perform and record the work of living contemporary composers and female composers from all periods. She has long championed gender equality in the works performed in her biennial London Festival of American Music.



Martinez with Maconchy (1992)

During her career Martinez has worked with many of the composers featured: she studied with **Elisabeth Lutyens** (1906-1983), toured with **Myriam Marbe** (1931-1997), and **Elizabeth Maconchy** (1907-1994) attended Lontano's first recording sessions at the end of her life. She personally tracked down much of the music featured from crumbling manuscripts and obscure sources including the 1988 French film *Une Histoire De Vent* (in which **Liu Zhuang's** (1932-2011) music is featured).

The Festival opens on **Friday 24 January** with the **New Juilliard Ensemble** and director **Joel Sachs** performing modernist works by **Ruth Crawford Seeger** (1901-1953), **Ursula Mamok** (1923-2016), **Elisabeth Lutyens** (1906-1983), **Galina Ustvolskaya** (1919-2006) and **Jaqueline Fontyn** (b. 1930) in a concert that also sees Martinez introduced to the audience.

On **Friday 31 January**, the **Juilliard Orchestra** and conductor **David Robertson** lead a grand finale celebration of three remarkable composers still writing: **Betsy Jolas** (b. 1926), **Sofia Gubaidulina** (b. 1931) – recently awarded the RPS Gold Medal – and **Thea Musgrave** (b. 1928). Their orchestral works are heard alongside *The Cliffs of Cornwall* by **Ethel Smyth**, the astonishing British suffragette composer imprisoned for her principles.

"It was your music that cured me for ever of the old delusion that women could not do man's work in art and all other things"

– George Bernard Shaw to Ethel Smyth

Those profiled over the course of the Festival include both well-known and unknown figures, members of the vanguard and the establishment. Besides Smyth, well-known composers featured include the prodigious young talents **Lili Boulanger** (1893-1918) and **Vítězslava Kaprálová** (1915-1940) who both died too young, or **Germaine Tailleferre** (1892-1983), the only female member of Les Six. The Festival also traces more reticent legacies including those of US composers **Margaret Bonds** (1913-1972) and **Louise Talma** (1906-1976), and composers **Priault Ranier** (1903-1986) and **Grete von Zieritz** (1899-2001).

A panel discussion on **Tuesday 28 January** involving **Thea Musgrave, June Han** and **Ashley Jackson** is moderated by Martinez and Sachs before a concert including the music of three US composers: **Mary Lou Williams** (1910-1981), **Vivian Fine** (1913-2002), and **Florence Price** (1887-1953), the first female composer of African descent to have a symphonic work performed by a major American symphony orchestra. Following her death, much of her work was not resurrected until a substantial collection of her works and papers were found in an abandoned dilapidated house in 2009.



The Focus festival is Juilliard's weeklong survey of different topics in contemporary music. Recent editions of the Focus festival have included: On the Air!: A Salute to 75 Years of International Radio Commissioning (2019), China Today: A Festival of Chinese Composition (2018); Our Southern Neighbors: The Music of Latin America (2017); Milton Babbitt's World: A Centennial Celebration (2016); and Nippon Gendai Ongaku: Japanese Music Since 1945 (2015).

Listings

Friday 24 January, 7:30pm

Peter Jay Sharp Theater

Jacqueline Fontyn *Méandres* **US PREMIERE**

Ursula Mamlok *Girasol*

Ruth Crawford Seeger *Three Songs*

Elisabeth Lutyens *6 Tempi for Ten*

Instruments **US PREMIERE**

Galina Ustvolskaya *Octet*

New Juilliard Ensemble

Joel Sachs director

Britt Hewitt soprano

Monday 27 January, 7:30pm

Peter Jay Sharp Theater

Rebecca Clarke *Dumka*

Ruth Schonthal *Love Letters*

Verdina Shlonsky *Dapim me'ha'yoman*

[Pages from the Diary]

Barbara Pentland *Variations for Viola*

Liu Zhuang *Wind through Pines* **US**

PREMIERE

Elizabeth Maconchy *String Quartet No.*

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Students from The Juilliard School

Tuesday 28 January, 6:30pm

Peter Jay Sharp Theater

Panel discussion with **Thea**

Musgrave, June Han, Ashley

Jackson, Odaline de la Martinez and

Joel Sachs

Tuesday 28 January, 7:30pm

Peter Jay Sharp Theater

Vivian Fine *Emily's Images*

Florence Price *Piano Sonata*

Young Ja Lee *Le Pèlerinage de l'Âme* **US**

PREMIERE

Priault Ranier *Ubunzima*

Priault Ranier *Dance of the Rain*

Mary Lou Williams *Three Piano Solos*

Students from The Juilliard School

Wednesday 29 January, 7:30pm

Peter Jay Sharp Theater

Miriam Gideon *Suite*

Vítězslava Kaprálová *April Preludes*

Germaine Tailleferre *Sonata for Harp*

Ruth Crawford Seeger *String Quartet*

1931

Margaret Sutherland *Six Songs*

Grete von Zieritz *Piano Sonata*

Students from The Juilliard School

Thursday 30 January, 7:30pm

Peter Jay Sharp Theater

Lili Boulanger *Nocturne, Cortège*

Lili Boulanger *D'un matin de printemps*

Peggy Glanville-Hicks *Sonata for Harp*

Johanna Magdalena Beyer *from*

Dissonant Counterpoint

Louise Talma *Alleluia in Form of*

Toccata

Margaret Bonds *Dream Portraits*

Myriam Marbé *Des-cântec* **US PREMIERE**

Amy Beach *Piano Trio, Op. 50*

Ruth Zechlin *Wider desn Schlaf der*

Vernunft **US PREMIERE**

Students from The Juilliard School

Friday 31 January, 7:30pm

Alice Tully Hall

Betsy Jolas *A Little Summer Suite* **NY**

PREMIERE

Grazyna Bacewicz *Cello Concerto No.*

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Ethel Smyth *The Cliffs of Cornwall*

Thea Musgrave *Rainbow*

Sofia Gubaidulina *The Rider on the*

White Horse **NY PREMIERE**

Samuel DeCaprio cello

Raphael Vogl organ

David Robertson conductor

Juilliard Orchestra

Odaline de la Martinez

Conductor and composer

Cuban American composer and conductor Odaline de la Martinez pursues a demanding and successful career composing - particularly opera and conducting repertoire from Mozart symphonies to the latest contemporary music. Martinez has recorded over 40 CDs with Lorelt (Lontano Records) which she founded in 1992, Chandos, Summit, Albany, Metier, Conifer Classics, DaCapo and BMI.

Martinez was the first woman to conduct a BBC Prom at the Royal Albert Hall in 1984 and has made several return visits since.

Martinez studied at Tulane University, and the Royal Academy of Music, where she founded her ensemble Lontano in 1976. She obtained her MMus in Composition at the University of Surrey, working under Reginald Smith Brindle.

Martinez has received numerous awards including a Marshall Scholarship from the British Government, a Guggenheim Fellowship, National Endowment for the Arts Award, and the Villa Lobos Medal from the Brazilian Government. Her first opera *Sister Aimee: An American Legend* (1984) was premiered at Tulane University in 1984, followed by two other productions at the Royal College of Music (1987) and in Marin County College, California (1995). In 2015 Martinez was awarded an Opera America grant to make the film *Selected Scenes from Imoinda* part I of her opera *Trilogy Imoinda – A Story of Love and Slavery*. The film opened the 6th London Festival of American Music in November 2016. *The Crossing* also from her *Trilogy* was commissioned by Tulane University and premiered in New Orleans in April 2013, by the Tulane and Xavier University choirs, with soloists and the Louisiana Philharmonic, while at Tulane as composer in residence. The work was premiered in the UK on November 2014 at The Fifth London Festival of American Music.

In 2016 Martinez received composition awards from the USA Cintas Foundation and the British PRS Foundation for Music allowing her to complete *Plantation*, the final part of her *Imoinda* Opera *Trilogy*. The complete trilogy received its World Premiere on February/March 2019 at the 7th London Festival of American Music. In April 2017, Martinez received a Lifetime Achievement Award and in 2019 a Doctor Honoris Causa from the University of Surrey. She has recently been awarded a Gold Badge from the Ivors Academy (previously the British Academy of Composers and Songwriters) as well as a Lukas Lifetime Achievement Award for her achievement as a woman and a member of the Latin American Community.

Martinez is the co-curator of Julliard's 2020 FOCUS Festival that will feature Women Composers.

Martinez is co-founder and Music Director of the contemporary ensemble Lontano with whom she has performed and broadcast all over the world, of the London Chamber Symphony and, in 1990, the European Women's Orchestra.

As well as frequent appearances as guest conductor with leading orchestras throughout Great Britain, including all the BBC orchestras, she has conducted amongst others, the San Diego and New Zealand Symphony Orchestras, the Australian Youth Orchestra, the Natal Philharmonic, the Aarhus Symphony, the Canberra Symphony Orchestra, Radio-Television Orchestra of Brazil, the Kansas City Symphony and the Vancouver Chamber Orchestra. She is also known as a broadcaster for BBC Radio and Television.

Odaline de la Martinez is in demand throughout the world both as an orchestra and opera conductor and with her ensemble Lontano. As a musician she has acquired a

remarkable reputation for her versatile and eclectic vision, and supreme ability to work with others to make the vision a reality.

Martinez is published by Composers Edition.

Joel Sachs

Joel Sachs, founding director and conductor of the New Juilliard Ensemble, performs a vast range of traditional and contemporary music as a conductor and pianist. As co-director of the internationally acclaimed new music ensemble Continuum, he has appeared in hundreds of performances in New York, nationally, and throughout Europe, Asia, and Latin America. He has also conducted orchestras and ensembles in Austria, Brazil, Canada, China, El Salvador, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Mexico, Switzerland, and Ukraine, has held new music residencies in Berlin, Shanghai, London, Salzburg, Curitiba (Brazil), Newcastle Upon Tyne (U.K.), Helsinki, and the Banff Centre (Canada), and has given recitals of post-traditional piano music worldwide.

One of the most active presenters of new music in New York, Sachs founded the New Juilliard Ensemble in 1993. He produces and directs Juilliard's annual Focus festival, and he has been the artistic director of Juilliard's Summergarden concerts at MoMA since 1993.

A member of Juilliard's music history faculty, Sachs wrote the first full biography of the American composer Henry Cowell, which was published by Oxford University Press in 2012. Sachs often appears on radio as a commentator on recent music and has been a regular delegate to Netherlands Music Days and other international music conferences.

A graduate of Harvard, Sachs received his PhD from Columbia University. In 2011, he was made an honorary member of Phi Beta Kappa at Harvard University for his work in support of new music, and received the National Gloria Artis Medal of the Polish Government for his service to Polish music. In 2002, he received Columbia University's Alice M. Ditson Conductors Award.

The Juilliard School

Founded in 1905, The Juilliard School is a world leader in performing arts education. Juilliard's mission is to provide the highest caliber of artistic education for gifted musicians, dancers, and actors from around the world so that they may achieve their fullest potential as artists, leaders, and global citizens.

Located at Lincoln Center in New York City, Juilliard offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in dance, drama (acting and playwriting), and music (classical, jazz, historical performance, and vocal arts). Currently more than 800 artists from 40 states and 41 countries are enrolled at Juilliard, where they appear in more than 700 annual performances in the school's five theaters; at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully and David Geffen halls and at Carnegie Hall; as well as other venues around New York City, the country, and the world. Beyond its New York campus, Juilliard is defining new directions in global performing arts education for a range of learners and enthusiasts through The Tianjin Juilliard School and K-12 educational curricula.

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