

## Composers Guild to celebrate 25th Anniversary of “Creativity: Learning through Experience”

by Mike Telin

**CLEVELAND COMPOSERS GUILD**  
**CREATIVITY: LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENCE**  
 NEW WORKS BY **GUILD MEMBERS**      **25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**  
 COMPOSED FOR **STUDENT PERFORMERS**      **MAY 7, 2017 3PM**  
 JENNIFER CONNER  
 MARY ANN GRIEBLING  
 STEPHEN T. GRIEBLING  
 MARGI GRIEBLING-HAIGH  
 JOSEPH HOLLINGS  
 NICHOLAS PUIN  
 RYAN CHARLES RAMER  
 WILLIAM F. RAYER  
 ROBERT ROLLIN  
 MATTHEW SAUNDERS  
 STEPHEN STANZIANO  
 DOLORES WHITE  
 FEATURING **STUDENT COMPOSERS**  
 MARGARET CHEN  
 LIAM CUMMINS  
 COOPER WOOD

HARKNESS CHAPEL CASE WESTERN  
 11200 BELLFLOWER CLEVELAND  
 RECEPTION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING IN  
 GUILFORD HALL (ACROSS THE COURTYARD)  
**SUGGESTED DONATION \$20**  
**UNDER 18s FREE ADMISSION**

It's never too early for young musicians to begin working with living composers. Since 1992, the Cleveland Composers Guild's *Creativity: Learning through Experience* program has matched talented young performers aged 18 and under with Guild members, who write pieces specifically for the students to perform. On Sunday, May 7 at 3:00 pm, the [Cleveland Composers Guild](#) will celebrate

the silver anniversary of this special program with a concert in Harkness Chapel on the campus of Case Western Reserve University.

During the past 24 years, 296 compositions have been premiered through the program — 409 students have performed, and 317 teachers and coaches have prepared those performances. “It is kind of amazing,” Guild chair Margi Griebing-Haigh said during a telephone conversation. “I have the records of all the pieces, including composers, performers, and private teachers.”

Griebing-Haigh, who has been involved with the *Learning through Experience* program from its inception, credited then-Composers Guild chair Marshall Griffith for its creation. “It really was his brainchild,” she said. “The Fortnightly Club used to have a young persons’ concert where students from the Junior Fortnightly Club would perform works that had been written by members of the Guild. There were no premieres or payments involved.” Marshall had the idea of taking that concert to the next level and teamed up with The Music Settlement, Junior Fortnightly, and the Cleveland School of the Arts. Members of the Composers Guild volunteered to participate.

Over time the program expanded to include works by young composers as well. “I thought it would be nice to have their pieces premiered by professional musicians,” Griebing-Haigh said. “Young composers can learn a lot about their craft by working with seasoned players.” Sunday’s concert will feature *Cello Duet* by Liam Cummins (13), performed by Andris Koh and Lauren Dunseath; *Jazzy Dream* by Margaret Chen (11), performed by pianist Randall Fusco; and *Ghost Interlude* by Cooper Wood (18), performed by violinist Beth Woodside, cellist Lauren Dunseath, and pianist Eric Charnofsky.

Student performers include clarinetist Myles Macke, oboist Leo Sherwood, cellists Kai Berkner, Kaden Runge, and Kevin Williams, guitarists Thomas and Dylan Coble, pianists Joyce Liang, Victoria Zemskov, Farah Sayed, Valerie Bremm, Thalia Lisowski, Abra Lisowski, and Safe Jassani, and vocalist Caprice Trifiro.

The professional composers are Guild members Matthew Saunders, Robert Rollin, Nicholas Puin, Mary Ann Griebing, Margi Griebing-Haigh, Stephen Stanziano, Dolores White, William Rayer, Ryan Charles Ramer, Stephen T. Griebing, Joseph Hollings, and Jennifer Conner.



What do Guild members get out of participating? “All kinds of things,” Griebing-Haigh said. “For example, this year I’ve written a guitar duet, and it’s only the second time that I’ve composed a piece for classical guitar. The first was for an advanced player, and writing for students has been a real learning experience. It’s good discipline for composers to write pieces for young players that are challenging and interesting, but that are also technically appropriate. That’s what

we get out of it, but it’s also fun.”

An added bonus on Sunday is that everyone involved in the *Creativity: Learning through Experience* program will be compensated for their work. “It’s fun to see the reaction of the students when you hand them a check after the concert. For many this is their first professional gig.”

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