

The Women's Sacred Music Project  
is proud to present their  
*25th Anniversary Gala Concert*



Cynthia Folio  
Temple University  
Composer

featuring the world premiere of:

*Lydia's Giving*  
text by Susan Albertine

*Dedicated to Founding President  
Lisa Neufeld Thomas*



Kun-Yang Lin  
Temple University  
Choreographer

Also featuring commissioned works by  
Anne Neikirk, Norfolk State University:  
"The Soul's Beauty" (St. Augustine of Hippo)  
"O Leafy Branch" (St. Hildegard of Bingen)

And a new commission by  
Audrey Wu, Guildhall School of Music and Drama:  
"The Earth Melts" (Psalm 46:6)  
2021 YWCC Commission Winner



7 November 2021, 2:00pm  
Daylesford Abbey  
220 S. Valley Rd., Paoli, PA  
[womenssacredmusicproject.org](http://womenssacredmusicproject.org)

## O LEAFY BRANCH

**Text: St. Hildegard of Bingen**

**Music: Dr. Anne Neikirk**

*O Frondens Virga  
in tua nobilitate stans*

O leafy branch, standing in your nobility  
as the dawn breaks forth:  
now rejoice and be glad!

*sicut aurora procedit  
nunc gaude et letare*

And deign to set us frail ones free,  
free from evil habits.

*atque manum tuam portige*

And stretch forth your hand  
and lift us up!

WSMP 2021 Festival Choir  
Gareth Haynes, conductor

## I CANNOT DANCE, O LOVE

**Text: Jean Wiebe Janzen**

**Music: Sarah Kitten**

I cannot dance, O Love, unless you lead me on.  
I cannot leap in gladness unless you lift me up.  
From love to love we circle, beyond all knowledge grow,  
for when you lead we follow, to new worlds you can show.

Love is the music 'round us, we glide as birds in air;  
entwining soul and body, your wings hold us with care.  
Your Spirit is the harpist and all your children sing;  
her hands the currents 'round us, your love the golden strings.

O blessed Love, your circling unites us, God and soul.  
From the beginning, your arms embrace and make us whole.  
Hold us in steps of mercy from which you never part,  
that we may know more fully the dances of your heart.

WSMP 2021 Festival Choir  
Dr. Ted Latham, conductor

## LYDIA'S GIVING

Text: Dr. Susan Albertine  
Music: Dr. Cynthia Folio  
Choreography: Kun-Yang Lin

Dr. Cara Oestreicher Latham, The Voice of Lydia  
Dianne Rotwitt, Narrator  
Grace Stern, Lydia

Dr. Azer Damirov, violinist  
Antonello DiMatteo, clarinetist/bass clarinetist  
David Lu, percussionist  
Dr. Anna Meyer, flutist/alto flutist  
Elena Kile Smith, cellist  
Katherine Ventura, harpist

Kaitlyn Waterson, soprano  
Eva Kastner-Puschl, alto  
Sam Barge, tenor  
Erik Potteiger, bass

David Matthew Brown, conductor

<i>Lydia (Narrator)</i>	<i>Chorus/Townspeople of Philippi</i>
<b>I. Tyrian Purple</b>	
Humble thing the snail unfurling in an instant dies yields precious beauty Tyrian purple	You snail, from dying dye purple, royal imperial resplendent
<b>II. I Wondered, What Else?</b>	
I, Lydia, I understood that ancient practice knew I could profit in purple ply this trade staining fabric make it yield a living of my own	But women shouldn't don't won't can't do business shouldn't .... ssssshe shouldn't
So they said women don't, shouldn't Yet I did	Look a great house, goods, wealth see what she did

I willed it plied my trade became rich	how much she has
For years I worked Older then, I wondered what else Is it all—worth—worthy Great house, goods, wealth What else?	Now she doubts and doubting seeks hungry for something What?
<b>III. By the River</b>	
Beyond the city by the river Met friends women turned to faith Learned to pray Sought Company Consolation Community together With the flow, the river	This, this turn to faith shared in prayer Will it do? Will it answer yield what she needs what she seeks?
By the river, praying We women met travelers men who walked came to us Paul, Silas I talked with them Felt drawn to them	Outside the gates of Philippi by the river Lydia meets listens talks long with these men What does it mean?
<b>IV. Open My Heart, My Home</b>	
From Jerusalem they came to Tarsus, Derbe, Lystra A story Paul told a dream of Macedonia—here—this place, a vision, man begging for help, beckoning Paul believed Traveled here his mission news	The people cry—suspicious Paul and Silas, what do they intend? What change do they bring? We jail them, Paul and Silas stop their heresy until, stunned, earthquake shakes us, breaks the jail sets them free

of revelation of Jesus the Christ of salvation I listen	
My home is here to welcome Paul, Silas accept the Christ I listen feel heart opening feel faith unfurl like the snail humble font of beauty through sacrifice feel myself yield to give yield to live yield to love acceptance growing take faith baptized open my heart, my home rejoice and give in love reborn	In the quiet, succeeding shock conversion comes We watch Lydia she felt, she knew Now we feel, hear, follow encouraged embrace the good news
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>[Narrator and Chorus]</b>  You snail  From dying dye  Tyrian purple  Color of piety  Color of calling  The gospel's purple  The gospel's purpose</p>	

## THE EARTH MELTS

**Text: Psalm 46 (adapt.)**

**Music: Audrey Wu**

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God.  
The holy place, where the Most High dwells.  
There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God.  
The holy place, where the Most High dwells.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.  
Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way  
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.

Though its waters roar and foam  
and the mountains quake with their surging.  
God is within her, she will not fall.  
He lifts his voice, the earth melts.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God.

WSMP 2021 Festival Choir  
Dr. Ted Latham, conductor  
Gareth Haynes, pianist

## **THE SOUL'S BEAUTY: A CHORAL SONG CYCLE**

**Text: St. Augustine of Hippo**

**Trans.: Dr. Allan Fitzgerald**

**Music: Dr. Anne Neikirk**

### **I. The Times**

The times are evil, the times are troubled, that's what people say.  
Let us live good lives, and the times are good.  
We ourselves are the times; whatever we are like, so too are the times.

### **II. Perfection**

Let us confess how imperfect we are in order to deserve to be made perfect.

### **III. Striving**

Do you want to be great? Start from the bottom.  
Are you thinking of constructing a great skyscraper of a building?  
First give thought to the foundation of humility.

### **IV. Beauty**

Beauty grows in you to the extent that love grows,  
because love itself is the soul's beauty.

### **V. Restlessness**

Our heart is restless until it rests in you.

VI. Beauty

Late have I loved You, O Beauty ever ancient and ever new. Late have I loved you.

VII. Striving

We are striving for great things; let us lay hold of little things and we shall be great.

VIII. Perfection

The perfection of anyone is that he discovers that he is not perfect.

IX. The Times

The times are evil, the times are troubled, that's what people say.

Let us live good lives, and the times are good.

We ourselves are the times; whatever we are like, so too are the times.

WSMP 2021 Festival Choir

Dr. Ted Latham, conductor

Gareth Haynes, pianist

Dr. Azer Damirov, violinist

**WSMP 2021 Festival Choir and \*Soloists**

Barbara Bibby (St. Thomas of Villanova Parish)

Lily Carmichael (Temple University)

Christina Hayes (St. Thomas of Villanova Parish)

\*Dr. Cara Latham (Temple University)

Rosie Makoski (St. Thomas of Villanova Parish)

\*Kaitlyn Waterson (Opera Delaware)

Elaine Zajano (St. Thomas of Villanova Parish)

Mary Bond (Temple University)

Mary Dressler-Carre (St. Thomas of Villanova Parish)

\*Eva Kastner-Puschl, alto (Westminster Choir College)

Anita Loveland (St. Thomas of Villanova Parish)

\*Sam Barge (Temple University)

Gareth Haynes (Daylesford Abbey)

Brady Ketelsen (Temple University)

Dr. Ted Latham (St. Thomas of Villanova Parish)

Eric Borun (St. Thomas of Villanova Parish)  
\*Erik Potteiger (Voces8 Scholars)  
Baker Purdon (Temple University)

### **The WSMP: A Brief History**

In 1995, following the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ordination of women in the Episcopal Church (USA), a movement began locally at St. Mark's Church on Locust Street in Philadelphia to encourage women to find their voices in worship. Very little music by women was found in the authorized hymnals so Lisa Neufeld Thomas, organist for a small group of women meeting at St. Mark's, began the research that yielded hymns and antiphons by women dating back to Hildegard of Bingen (12<sup>th</sup> C.). This work came to the attention of Bishops Allan Bartlett, Frank Griswold and Barbara Harris, and, at the 1997 General Convention of the Episcopal Church Philadelphia, a resolution was passed to begin work on a supplemental hymnal lifting up women's voices. The hymnal, *Voices Found*, was published by Church Publishing in 2003 and a Leader's Guide followed shortly thereafter.

The Lady Chapel Singers evolved from the small group of women at St. Mark's and became the performing ensemble that gave regular concerts using this repertoire in the U.S. and abroad. They produced two CDs as well.

WSMP has continued to lift up women's voices by commissioning new pieces with a special emphasis on biblical women: Jacoved, Miriam, Hannah, and, today, Lydia. We have commissioned renowned composers including Andrea Clearfield, Renee Orth, and Cynthia Folio to increase our repertoire.

We have recently enriched our work by establishing a commission prize to be awarded to a promising young person from the Young Women Composers Camp, founded in 2018 at Temple University. Our tradition of presenting concerts has continued using talented singers and musicians from the Philadelphia area. Today we are happy to add liturgical dance.

### **Acknowledgments**

*Special thanks to Lisa Neufeld Thomas, the Founding President of the Women's Sacred Music Project, for her leadership over the past twenty-five years; her ideas served as the inspiration for the commission of "Lydia's Giving" in her honor. Special thanks also to President Virginia Ratigan and the WSMP Board of Directors, for their tireless support of our commissions and outreach. Thanks to Robert Stroker, Dean of the Boyer College of Music and Dance, Dean of the School of Theater, Film, and Media Arts, and Vice Provost for the Arts at Temple University, for his support of today's program, and to both Andrew del Rossi and Fr. Andrew Ciferni, O.Praem. at Daylesford Abbey, for their gracious hospitality and timely assistance.*



### **O Leafy Branch** (notes by composer Dr. Anne Neikirk)

“O Leafy Branch” was commissioned by the Women’s Sacred Music Project as part of their 2010 celebration of the feast day of Hildegard of Bingen. The text is an English translation of a poem written by Hildegard entitled *O frondens Virga*. Hildegard composed a chant setting of her Latin poem, which I have interspersed into this work, along with my own four-part setting of the English translation.

### **I Cannot Dance, O Love** (notes by WSMP Executive Director Dr. Ted Latham)

Commissioned by the Women’s Sacred Music Project in 2019 as their inaugural Young Women Composers Camp Commission, this piece was premiered virtually during the pandemic at a Zoom event hosted by Rosemont College. The full event is available for viewing on YouTube here: <https://youtu.be/gV2el6V-fYU> and the virtual premiere itself is viewable here: <https://youtu.be/RT0uKyicWnM>. The first video includes excerpts of composer Sarah Kitten’s comments about her writing process, and the inspiration she found in Jean Wiebe Janzen’s moving poem, originally published as part of the WSMP’s *Voices Found* hymnal (<https://www.churchpublishing.org/products/voicesfound>) in 2003—the only text in the hymnal without a musical setting.

### **Lydia’s Giving** (excerpted from WomenGive, inFaith Community Foundation, inFaithFound.org)

“Come and stay at my home.” These weren’t Lydia’s first words to the Apostle Paul. Much conversation had already happened. Deep conversation. The kind of conversation that comes from listening eagerly to one another with open hearts and minds. The kind of conversation that opens the way to faith and leads to conversion.

Lydia and Paul first met outside the gates of Philippi, a city in Macedonia, now part of modern Greece. Lydia lived and worked in Philippi, dealing in textiles colored with the purple dye for which the region was famous. Her wealth allowed her to live independently in a spacious house. She was also a religious seeker. Though she was a Gentile by birth, Lydia worshipped the God of the Jews. When Paul saw her, she was with a group of devout women who gathered to pray at a place by the river just outside the city.

Paul was in Philippi on a mission. Literally. After frustrating attempts to preach Christ in Asia Minor, he heard the call in a dream to come over to Macedonia. He met with great success there and founded congregations in several cities, beginning in Philippi. And Lydia was the first in that community to believe in Jesus Christ, the first Christian convert on the European continent.

As a newly baptized Christian, Lydia extended the invitation to Paul and Silas and other co-workers to come and stay at her home. Having a place to stay freed them to preach and minister without working at other jobs. Lydia’s home became the place where the congregation that developed in Philippi gathered for worship and fellowship.

## **The Soul's Beauty** (notes by composer Dr. Anne Neikirk)

*The Soul's Beauty* was commissioned by Dr. Ted Latham for the St. Thomas of Villanova Parish Choir. The text is comprised of nine excerpts from the writings of St. Augustine, forming a chiasmus of nine micro-movements, listed below:

- I. The Times
- II. Perfection
- III. Striving
- IV. Beauty
- V. Restlessness
- VI. Beauty
- VII. Striving
- VIII. Perfection
- IX. The Times

The first and last movements are identical, while the inner movements (II and VIII, III and VII, IV and VI) each mirror one another in some way, with the middle movement (V) standing alone in the center. The two “perfection” movements play on perfect and imperfect intervals as the perfect/imperfect dichotomy is explored in the text. The two “striving” movements feature a bass and a soprano soloist respectively, emphasizing the outer extremes of the vocal registers. The “beauty” movements feature simplicity through repetition and pedal tones in the accompaniment and consonant diatonic harmony in the voices. They are loose retrogrades of one another, a literal musical mirror image. Finally, “restlessness” has no partner as the middle movement, but features fast moving 16th-note runs in all voices in close imitation.

## **The Young Women Composers Camp**

The Young Women Composers Camp (YWCC) is a two-week music composition program for young female, trans, and nonbinary composers between the ages of 14 and 19. The program is hosted at the Boyer College on the Temple University main campus, and took place virtually for the 2020 and 2021 seasons. Students participate in college-level coursework, take private composition lessons, and receive the world premiere of a new work for our resident ensemble. Past instructors include inti figgis-vizueta, Flannery Cunningham, Niloufar Nourbakhsh, Bahar Royaei, Tonia Ko, Melissa Dunphy, Cynthia Folio, and Sabrina Clarke, and we have hosted guest composers Jennifer Higdon, Andrea Clearfield, Gabriela Lena Frank, and Missy Mazzoli, among others. Our students have composed for the International Contemporary Ensemble, the ATLYS Quartet, members of the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Peridot Duo, and the andPlay Duo. Stay tuned for our 2022 season announcement in January.



**Anne Neikirk** is a composer and music educator. She divides her compositional pursuits between acoustic and electroacoustic composition, and is drawn to creative processes that involve interdisciplinary work. Influenced by her own liberal arts education, her works are generally inspired from some other area of study, and often focus on telling a story or depicting a non-musical idea.

She has worked with poets, scientists, painters, and numerous performing artists who have commissioned her. Her performance background in vocal music instilled a particular interest in the relationship between music and the written word. Some of the accolades that these projects have received include a Presser Music Award, an American Composers Forum Subito Grant, and publication on the SCI CD Series. Her work has also been selected for presentation at many regional and national conferences including the Society of Composers, the College Music Society, the Society for Electroacoustic Music in the United States, Electronic Music Midwest, the North American Saxophone Alliance, and the American Harp Society, among others. Her music is distributed by ADJ•ective New Music, LLC, and she is a member of the ADJ•ective Composers' Collective.

Neikirk received her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Composition from Temple University in Philadelphia, preceded by a Master of Music degree in Composition from Bowling Green State University in Ohio and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music from Hamilton College. Upon completing her education, Dr. Neikirk worked as an adjunct faculty member at Temple University and at the University of Delaware. In 2016 she began as an Assistant Professor of Composition/Theory at Norfolk State University in Virginia, where she currently teaches courses in Music Theory and Composition. She serves on the Executive Committee of the Society of Composers, Inc., and lives in Norfolk with her husband and two children.



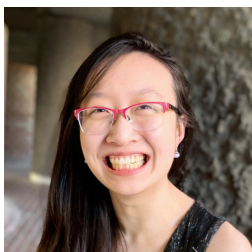
**Sarah Kitten** is a composer from Beaverton, Oregon who began piano lessons when she was 5 and composing when she was 9. She plays piano and saxophone, and is currently studying music and computer science as an undergraduate at the University of Oregon. Sarah has participated in the OMTA state Composition Celebration, Portland's Young Composers Project, and Philadelphia's Young Women Composers Camp, and received an honorable mention in the 2014 Hal Leonard Carol Klose Composition Competition and finalist status in the 2018 Finale Young Composers Contest. She is grateful to have been commissioned by Portland's Vivaldi Strings orchestra and the Women in Sacred Music Project.



**Cynthia Folio** is Professor of Music Studies at Temple University, where she was honored with the Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching, the Creative Achievement Award, and the Faculty Senate Award for Outstanding Service. Before coming to Temple, she taught theory and flute at Texas Christian University (1980–1990) and played flute and piccolo in the Fort Worth Symphony. She earned her Ph.D. in music theory and Performers Certificate in flute from the Eastman School of Music. (Photo credit: Patrick Snook)

Composition awards include an NEH grant, composer residencies at the Yaddo Artist Colony, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and the American Academy in Rome, and grants from Meet the Composer and the American Music Center. Her multimedia composition on the topic of seizures, *When the Spirit Catches You...* (featuring artwork by people with epilepsy and voice-overs by her daughter, Lydia, about what it feels like to have a seizure) received the 2019 American Prize in Composition: Special Judges' Citation for "Raising Awareness and Understanding for those Afflicted with Epilepsy." Her commissions include Network for New Music, the Relâche Ensemble, the Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia, Astral Artistic Services, Pi Kappa Lambda, ZAWA! and the National Flute Association. As a music theorist, her essays on the topics of jazz, contemporary music, pedagogy, improvisation, and the relationship between analysis and performance, are published in many journals and books.

Cynthia's pieces are recorded on many CD's, including a 2014 release, *Inverno Azul*, featuring nine of her compositions (BCM+D label); a 2007 release by the Relâche Ensemble, *Press Play*, (Meyer Music LLC); a 2006 release of *Flute Loops: Chamber Music for Flute* (Centaur Records), featuring eight of her compositions; and a jazz flute CD, *Portfolio* (Centaur Records). In addition to her musical accomplishments, she is a second-degree black belt and winner of the 2019 Student of the Year Award for Region 8 in Tang Soo Do karate.



**Audrey Wu** (she/her) is a composer and performer from Boston, Massachusetts. Studying at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, she has composed works for soloists, chamber groups, choruses, large ensembles, orchestras, and electronics. She is delighted to be the 2020 winner of the Women's Sacred Music Project Commissioning Contest. (Photo credit: [@fngmorsecode](#), Instagram)