

One of its most important activities was its educational outreach program for high school students. The program, titled "A Multicultural Mosaic of Music by Women," was designed to reflect the diversity within the public schools, and the program introduced the works of Latino, Eastern European, Asian, and African American women composers. AWC-M's goals were to develop ethnic and racial pride, to acquaint students with the work of women composers, and to encourage young women to consider a career in music.

As the AWC-M grew, the opportunities for performances expanded. The year 1986 was an especially busy one. Members of AWC-M traveled to the University of Illinois at Urbana for the National Women's Studies Association conference. We presented "A Concert of Twentieth Century Music by Women" on June 12, playing works by Lili Boulanger, Beatrice Witkin, Janice Misurell Mitchell, Ruth Lomon, Thea Musgrave, Patricia Morehead, and me.

On September 19, 1986, AWC-M supplied music for an event at the gala grand opening of River City, a new complex south of the Chicago loop, and the first of many new buildings in the development of the loop south and west. Our performance was entitled "Contemporary Pieces and Sound Exploration." The program included works by Judith Shatin, Jan Remer, Dorothy Rudd Moore, and Ruth Lomon, plus my *Songs of Quiet*, which was literally just finished; we read from xerox copies of my pencil score! One got the impression that Chicago was at the forefront of contemporary music that summer, as the Chicago Cultural Center's summer concert

series featured several groups performing works by 20th-century composers.

The following year, 1987, was another active one for AWC-M members, and it was particularly memorable for me. A special "Morning Musicale" at the Nineteenth Century Woman's Club in Oak Park on February 2, featured a program of my music. That spring, Mary Stolper presented a recital at Ganz Hall, Roosevelt University, to honor the fifth anniversary of AWC-M. She played works by Lili Boulanger, Germaine Tailleferre, Ruth Crawford, and me. The following week, she repeated the program in Washington, D.C. to honor the national AWC's 10th anniversary. The organizations AWC-M, CSC, NMC and ASUC kept me very busy!

I mentioned that the year was a memorable one for me, and that was because I had to leave my colleagues. My husband, who was in the military, was posted to Fort Devens in Massachusetts. AWC-M presented a farewell concert for me at the Chicago Cultural Center, performing my new piece *Watery Moon*, for alto flute/bass flute and mezzo-soprano with AWC-M members performing. The text from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* expressed my feelings: "The moon methinks, looks with a watery eye; and when she weeps, weeps every little flower lamenting some enforced chastity."

After my departure, AWC-M continued to be active, and in 1993, it left the national organization and became an independent, non-profit organization. AWC-M is no longer active; it ceased functioning around 1999. As many of you may be aware, the national AWC merged with two other organizations in 1995 to form the IAWM.

MUSIC EDUCATION

Redesigning Private Music School Education in Sweden: Gabriele Katthän on Challenges and Strategies

PAUL-ANDRÉ BEMPÉCHAT

An interview with Gabriele Katthän, Founder and Director of LIMUS (Lund's International Music School), a pioneer of innovative, private musical education in Sweden. (This interview was conducted in German, Swedish, and English.)

Paul-André Bempéchat: It is a great honor to meet a colleague with such a remarkable history of personal and professional

resilience! Please tell us a little about your life and training.

Gabriele Katthän: Thank you! I'm thrilled that IAWM is interested in learning about music education in Sweden, and I am also delighted to have the opportunity to meet you! I was born sixty years ago in Northeim, near Göttingen, in Germany. My parents and all of my five brothers and sisters played instruments, so there was always music in the house. After Gymnasi-

I was never able to continue my work with AWC-M. In 1990 the military sent us to Europe, first to Belgium and then Germany, and when we returned to the U.S., I eventually took a position at the University of Nebraska-Kearney and taught there for fifteen years until I retired; however, I still maintained my membership in professional organizations for both fellowship and community.

Earlier this year, I joined IAWM, and I look forward to working with and meeting my new colleagues. In addition to being active in promoting women composers and performers, I have taught women in music courses, and I often use texts by women poets and writers as well as themes related to women in my compositions. One example is an early piece of mine that honors a woman's voice: *Of things I'd rather keep in silence* (1983). It is an improvisatory/indeterminant work using frame notation and loop techniques, based on the writing of Beatrix de Dia, a medieval troubairitz. The work was performed at an AWC-M concert at the Cultural Arts Center in Columbus, Ohio. Since then, I have set several texts by Hildegard von Bingen and have found inspiration in her writings for purely instrumental works; two examples are *Whirling Wings* (2003), for solo flute, and *Visions*, a tuba concerto (1995). Other works use texts by women writers such as Kathleen Norris and Simone Weil. My *Songs of Women* (1994) uses biblical texts from Ruth, Sara, and Judith.

Of the roughly 140 compositions I have written, over half were inspired by women poets, spirituality (Christian as well as Buddhist, Native American, and others), ecology, and the desire for peace. Almost all are the result of connections and community.

(high school), I started my studies in musicology and art history at the University of Göttingen. But one year later, when I was just eighteen, I was accepted at the HDK, Hochschule der Künste (University of the Arts) in West Berlin, and I moved to Germany's most exciting cultural capital, which was divided by a wall at that time. In Berlin, I studied for many years and became a piano teacher, concert pianist, and harpsichordist.

PAB: Impressive, indeed. What are your musical preferences and inclinations?

GK: This is a tricky question as my preferences have changed a lot throughout different periods in my life. Roughly, I would say I prefer Haydn to Beethoven, Messiaen to Prokofiev, and Louis Couperin to François Couperin, and Debussy makes me feeling good even on bad days. Bach, of course, is a favorite, and just now I am working intensively with Beethoven. In Berlin, I frequently performed with chamber music ensembles, and I made my debut with the Philharmonie at the age of 22 playing Bach's Fifth Brandenburg Concerto. I had my radio debut shortly thereafter with a concert for harpsichord and mandolins.

PAB: Why did you move to Sweden?

GK: I moved to Lund, in southern Sweden, in early 1989, because I fell in love with a blonde Swede; he gave me some headaches but also two lovely daughters born in 1993 and 1996. Now, both are musicians and the younger one just moved to Berlin.

PAB: How did your career in Sweden evolve?

GK: My first position in Sweden was as a teacher of harpsichord and chamber music at the Malmö Academy of Music. Soon afterwards, I combined this with a position at the Municipal Culture School (*Kulturskolan*) in Lund. Many interesting years with talented students and good colleagues followed. But the years also demonstrated that music teaching in Sweden was controlled by political ideologies rather than by artistic vision. I found that immense, unexploited creative potential was inhibited, stifled, or actually prevented by traits of jealousy and suspicion.

In 1997, I decided to open a private music school, and I began by testing different formats. After several years, in 2010, I finally founded the ultimate construction, LIMUS, Lund's International Music School.¹ It is a school for life-long learning, independently directed by the visions of professional musicians and teachers, and it is the first one in Sweden with fully developed departments for different ages and music subjects. I'm proud to see more private schools opening now all over Sweden.

PAB: Given your superb training in Berlin as a soloist, what brought you to teaching?

GK: I have been teaching piano since I was 15. At a very early age, I became passion-

ately interested in the impact music makes on people. I found that by teaching I could help young people develop authentic personalities, able to listen to their own inner voices but also to others. I could help them learn the discipline of practicing, of daring to dream, and never giving up. At age 18, I decided that teaching music privately would be the *cantus firmus* of my life. I wanted to work with students of all ages who would take music lessons after school.

I had excellent teachers in Berlin who assisted in my development as an independent musician, a skilled teacher, and a creative entrepreneur. At the piano, I was fascinated when I discovered the secrets of how to create a soaring tone by free movements with weight but without pressure and how to sustain a free-flowing musical mind. While other students in the room next to me plowed through all the Chopin Etudes,



Gabriele Katthän
(photo by Jan Nordén,
Lund)

I devoted days to working on the first eight bars of Beethoven's E-flat major Sonata, op 27, no 1. I listened to the finest artists visiting Berlin, spent days at exhibitions and late nights in small, off-beat theaters where the young creative scene performed exciting cross-overs. The *Piano Technique* book by Karl Leimer and Walter Gieseking and *Dynamic Piano Teaching* by Margit Varró as well as the method books by J J Quantz and CPE Bach attracted my attention much more than practicing to become just another pianist performing in a concert hall.

By the age of 21, I had started teaching at Europe's largest municipal music school in Berlin-Steglitz, and at age 24, I was trusted to hold training days for about 70 of my piano colleagues at this conservatory. I would like to honor the leader of this school, Rüdiger Trantow, for mentoring and encouraging the young woman I was for a lifelong commitment to music schools. At the Hochschule der Künste, I was a pianist in the Lieder class of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, and I participated in many masterclasses; I was mainly interested in how the instructor was teaching and

what impact the teaching had on the student. By the time I moved to Lund, early in 1989, I was extremely well equipped with knowledge, experience, and commitment.

PAB: And did this fantastic amalgam of experience support or enhance your work in Sweden?

GK: To be honest, during the first years, I thought I would need to switch to another profession. I am a positive and curious person, and I tried to adapt without losing my own track and focus. It was difficult, but looking back on it now, my good education gave me the security I needed.

The first apparent difference between Germany and Sweden that I noticed after arriving in 1989 was a distrust in Sweden of both classical music and professionals in the field. Classical music and private lessons were judged as "exclusive"—a rich man's hobby. Friends would remind me that Sweden, until just 120 years ago, had been a country with mostly peasants; the field of classical music never reached more than the upper society. Concerning music education, Sweden, in the 1950s, initiated municipal music schools, offering affordable music lessons that were highly subsidized through public funding. In the beginning, this attracted parents, as it suddenly seemed "cheap" to learn how to play an instrument.

PAB: So, the state controlled all private music education.

GK: Yes. As we say, the Swedish state still considers two things worth controlling: the price for alcohol and the price for private music lessons. Regarding state control of music education, I think nobody cared about the consequences. What had been private music lessons became organized teaching directed by the municipalities. By 1989, this system had nearly eliminated all the private teachers' studios, which also meant a big loss of good, competent teachers and their commitment to traditional musical excellence. Private music schools nearly disappeared throughout the entire country. Instead, thousands of children waited in queues to be admitted for subsidized lessons. When, in 1997, the government decided to impose a 25% VAT (Value-Added Tax) on private music teaching, there was a quick growth of black-market teaching. To hire a private music teacher who would not declare income and taxes became so common that even highly respected families took advantage of the situation.

PAB: How did this impact you?

GK: I found that my profession was now devalued to a non-profession without any labor market. There was no diversity, no natural competition between schools, no creative renewal. Today, Sweden's largest employer of after-school music teachers is the municipal music school, nowadays operating as *Kulturskolor*, or "Schools of/ for Culture." Indeed, Sweden is losing the identity of the music school in its endeavor to gather the learning of all types of cultural expressions in just one municipal institution.

PAB: What are the differences in pedagogical orientation between the municipal schools and yours?

GK: The municipal culture schools are not run by the government. But they get subsidies from both the government and the municipality. Sweden has no formal curriculum for music subjects that are taught in these schools. What is taught is up to the teacher according to the teacher's musical education, background, and preferences. Some might teach classical music, but, according to the teachers, what they mainly teach is what "the children want to learn and are able to play." Nowadays, I would estimate that 92% of what is taught in these schools is popular music.

PAB: That's incredible, coming from the land that produced Birgit Nilsson, Jussi Björling, Greta Garbo, Elisabeth Söderström, Nikolai Gedda, Anne-Sophie von Otter, Anna Larsson, and, and, and...

GK: Sweden rules by *Jantelagen* (The Law of Jante).² It means that nobody should be treated better than anyone else. *Jantelagen* is not doing classical music any favors. You can't learn Beethoven in the 20-minute lessons that the municipal culture schools are offering under the pressure of the thousands of students waiting for subsidies. The curriculum for music in primary schools includes playing keyboard, guitar, and drums. This gives every child an opportunity to get acquainted with an instrument. After school, children have different needs, different preferences and must be afforded diverse ways to develop. Diversity is needed.

Of course, generous subsidies are good, but they need to follow the individual child, not focus on just one institution. It should be possible for every child to be subsidized and be able to choose the teacher and the school.

We should not limit our discussion to just after school lessons. Today, orchestras are bleeding, and so are the institutes of higher education in classical music. Nowadays, Sweden offers no specialized higher education for private music teachers. Instead, culture schools are claiming to produce "culture teachers" who can teach a variety of subjects such as piano, circus acts, and drawing. Creating secure positions for teachers at a municipal culture school has become more important than a flexible working environment for those able to teach classical music. This is also a result of the workers' unions, which are very strong in Sweden. In their endeavor to impose equal working conditions they subvert the individuality of cultural enterprises.



Gabriele Katthän teaching Jessica Lin
(photo by Erik Mårtensson)

PAB: This must present enormous challenges for someone such as yourself, striving to encourage and develop independent creativity. How was LIMUS able to grow, survive, and thrive?

GK: I decided to build a pilot-project. I wanted to show that diversity is necessary and valuable. I wanted to prove that the young Swedish generation has been keen to attend a school such as LIMUS. At the same time, I knew that dedicated teachers all over Sweden were longing for a more liberal working situation. Today, my private music school, built only upon the fees paid by parents, is fully developed along different lines: The Music Kindergarten, the continuous teaching of children and young adults, the Young Academy, the adults taught by punch-tickets (ten lessons in a package, valid for six months), the music theory department, and the ensembles.

PAB: What subjects are taught at the school, and how many teachers and students does the school have?

GK: At LIMUS, we teach mainly classical music, but also film music and sometimes popular music. We are not teaching jazz yet, as I am still looking for the ideal teacher who can ensure a consistent presence and high-quality service. Twenty-four teachers of all classical instruments instruct about 500 students of all ages, and we present about 25 concerts every year. Most of the teachers are active performers. We also organize the exams of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) with excellent results, and we collaborate with contemporary composers who write new music for us. For example, I am looking forward to the premiere of Staffan Storm's *Berlin im Licht* ("Berlin, Illuminated"), written for two of my students, now professional pianists and also teachers at LIMUS.

We remain absolutely clear about our aim to maintain classical music through modern teaching approaches and methodologies. Our students learn how to read music, which in Sweden is a rare ability—even for teachers at the primary and secondary school levels. LIMUS is international, as all of us teach in Swedish and at least one foreign language. Personally, I feel the mix of teachers from all over the world to be a huge asset. And I am extremely proud of my colleagues! Through projects like "Beethoven's Own Day," LIMUS Contemporary, or "Pappa Bach's Birthday," we demonstrate our ability to combine a high artistic level with good, basic teaching. Young people are passionately interested in learning classical music when offered a place to grow. From there they can make an impact on the musical life of our country.

PAB: Your school then can serve as a model.

GK: Yes, our school can serve as a model for redesigning private music school education in Sweden. It is really important to understand that I needed a platform for creative work and therefore designed the school to its present state of pedagogical freedom and dynamic musical reorientation. Finally, with the music-check the school has become a model for a vital blend of private financing and public subsidies.

PAB: A music-check? This sounds interesting.

GK: The music-check enables children to make their own choices between different authorized music schools. They all receive the same subsidies, and the subsidies follow the child. This gives children greater access and encourages new music schools. In Lund, it took twenty years of negotiations to establish the music-check. Finally, in 2019, it started with two grades. This year, it is already three and next it will be five. In LIM-US, about 20% of all students are able to use it. More and more municipalities in Sweden are adopting the music-check system, aware that public subsidies need backup by private initiatives and creative renewal.

PAB: You mentioned your interest in women composers. Please elaborate.

GK: LIMUS is very active in presenting concerts and developing projects that introduce and promote women composers. We offer programs specifically devoted to music by women, and we include music by women in the standard repertoire. After all, progress must be made to establish women composers as part of the basic musical canon. For example, when, in 2015, a new anthology of Swedish piano music was launched, my Young Academy was requested to record the women composers for YouTube.³ The repertoire included works by Valborg Aulin, Laura Netzell, Elfrieda André, and Victoria Borisova-Ollas. Subsequently, my students played these pieces many times afterwards in concerts. In another concert (May 2016), students performed music by Lily Boulanger, B. A. Miller, Joanna MacGregor, and others.⁴

On the pedagogical front, and most especially for LIMUS, I have been collabo-

rating for over twenty years with the Swedish-Danish contemporary composer Åse Söderquist Spering, who mainly writes and arranges music for piano students. She is a master of arranging classical and popular music for small hands without losing the essentials of melody and sound. I have translated some of her books into German, and we have maintained a lively creative exchange.⁵

And, of course, dear Clara Schumann! Upon moving into our new home in 2019, I named our little concert hall after Clara. It was her bicentenary, and we dedicated an entire concert to her that September, during which I also read from her letters and lectured on her life.

So, I dare say that students at LIM-US are quite knowledgeable about women composers. They also have opportunities to meet contemporary composers in workshops, where they can develop warm, working relationships, which contribute to their creative endeavors.

PAB: You told me about your fight with cancer and how music has kept you going.

GK: In 2013, I was becoming tired and had pains in the stomach. I thought it was normal when working hard. But it was colon cancer. And it was nearly too late when it was discovered in spring 2014, just the day before an important piano competition with my students. I was saved by Lund's and Malmö's famous cancer specialists. I needed to be saved several more times, the latest from breast cancer in fall 2019. I know all about tough treatments and the pleasure of receiving negative x-rays. But I also know that making music is one of the best medi-

cines one can have. I have been very open about the fact that it is my body, not my mind, that is ill. Considerate colleagues, students, and their parents make it possible for me to continue teaching, sometimes even when I am lying down on the couch. Still, my batteries are low chargers, but life with music always sustains one's curiosity about how to move on to the next phrase.

PAB: Thank you, Gabriele, and all the best—from all of us—for sustained good health and much happiness.

NOTES

¹ www.lundsmusiksalong.se

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_of_Jante

³ http://www.lundsmusiksalong.se/?page_id=4455

⁴ http://www.lundsmusiksalong.se/?page_id=4926

⁵ http://www.lundsmusiksalong.se/?page_id=1743

Pianist Paul-André Bempéchat has toured in virtually every country in Europe and across North America. In 2021, he will begin recording all of Beethoven's sonatas for Danacord Records. As a music historian, he researches and champions the music of Europe's unfairly forgotten composers and is the international authority on the Franco-Breton Impressionist Jean Cras. He has for four years served as Artist-in-Residence at Harvard University's Leverett House and is now music fellow at Cabot House. M. Bempéchat continues as research scholar at Harvard's Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, where he exploring theological underpinnings in the works of Chopin and Rachmaninov. In 2017, the French government knighted him as Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres; that year, Uppsala University conferred him the title of Hederskapellist, Honorary Fellow of the Royal Chapel and Academic Orchestra.

Young Women Composers Camp: Reflecting on Our First Virtual Summer

ERIN BUSCH, Founder and Artistic Director

It has been a summer of change for everyone, and one of great transition for educational and performing arts organizations across the nation. Those of us at the Young Women Composers Camp, a summer camp sponsored by Temple University in Philadelphia, made the decision back in March to transition our program online, and we implemented several structural changes in order to design a more organic virtual program. Our mission is to amplify the voices of female-identifying and non-binary composers, to allow them access to a high level of musical training, and to work towards a more equitable and diverse composition

field. We knew that we needed to make some adjustments in order to create a successful online realization of our program, which we initiated in 2018.¹ But we also knew that our program and community were needed more this summer than ever before.

One large structural change that we made this summer was to reduce camp hours. We normally hold our in-person program from 9 am to 4 pm on weekdays for two weeks at Temple University, but given the harsh realities of screen fatigue (as well as the many unknowns that our students may have been dealing with this summer), we decided to hold classes for

just a few hours each day. We also decided to welcome undergraduate students to apply to our program, in addition to our normal cohort of high school composers. This decision was made in light of the many summer festivals that were cancelled or postponed this summer, as well as the understanding that many undergraduate students were without the necessary resources or funding to continue to create music or receive guidance. The expansion of student eligibility contributed to our largest cohort ever—comprised of 50 students from across the U.S., Canada, Asia, and Australia—and also helped to