

## Montgomery Philharmonic 2016 - 17

### Our 11th Season – Inspired by...

#### Concert 5, Sunday, May 21, 2017 – Inspired by America

Larsen | Poelking | Copland | Still

##### About Libby Larsen –

*“Music exists in an infinity of sound. I think of all music as existing in the substance of the air itself. It is the composer’s task to order and make sense of sound, in time and space, to communicate something about being alive through music.”* — Libby Larsen

Libby Larsen is one of America’s most prolific and most performed living composers. She has created a catalogue of over 500 works spanning virtually every genre from intimate vocal and chamber music to massive orchestral works and over twelve operas. Her music has been praised for its dynamic, deeply inspired, and vigorous contemporary American spirit. Constantly sought after for commissions and premieres by major artists, ensembles, and orchestras around the world, Larsen has established a permanent place for her works in the concert repertoire.

Larsen has been hailed as “the only English-speaking composer since Benjamin Britten who matches great verse with fine music so intelligently and expressively” (*USA Today*); as “a composer who has made the art of symphonic writing very much her own” (*Gramophone*); as “a mistress of orchestration” (*Times Union*); and for “assembling one of the most impressive bodies of music of our time” (*Hartford Courant*). Her music has been praised for its “clear textures, easily absorbed rhythms and appealing melodic contours that make singing seem the most natural expression imaginable.” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*) “Libby Larsen has come up with a way to make contemporary opera both musically current and accessible to the average audience.” (*The Wall Street Journal*). “Her ability to write memorable new music completely within the confines of traditional harmonic language is most impressive.” (*Fanfare*)

Libby Larsen has received numerous awards and accolades, including a 1993 Grammy as producer of the CD *The Art of Arlene Augér*, an acclaimed recording that features Larsen’s “Sonnets from the Portuguese.” Her opera *Frankenstein, The Modern Prometheus* was selected as one of the eight best classical music events of 1990 by *USA Today*. The first woman to serve as a resident composer with a major orchestra, she has held residencies with the California Institute of the Arts, the Arnold Schoenberg Institute, the Philadelphia School of the Arts, the Cincinnati Conservatory, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony, and the Colorado Symphony. Larsen’s many commissions and recordings are a testament to her fruitful collaborations with a long list of world-renowned artists, including The King’s Singers, Benita Valente, and Frederica von Stade, among others. Her works are widely recorded on such labels as Angel/EMI, Nonesuch, Decca, and Koch International.

As a past holder of the 2003–2004 Harissios Papamarkou Chair in Education at the Library of Congress and a recipient of the Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a Peabody award, Libby Larsen is a vigorous, articulate champion of the music and musicians of our time. In 1973, she co-founded (with Stephen Paulus) the Minnesota Composers Forum (now the American Composers Forum), which has been an invaluable advocate for composers in a difficult, transitional time for American arts. Consistently sought after as a leader in the generation of millennium thinkers, her music and ideas have refreshed the concert music tradition and the composer’s role in it.

- **Born:** December 24, 1950; Wilmington, Delaware
- **Compositions:** 11 operas, 28 works for symphony orchestra, 13 works for concert band, 105 works for chorus, 57 works for solo voice, 107 instrumental works, 2 dance pieces
- **Husband:** James Reece
- **Children:** 1 daughter, Wynne

##### *Dreames and Imaginations* (2000) – Libby Larsen (b. 1950)

*Dreames and Imaginations* was commissioned by the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra to honor Judy Nachison, their beloved Director of Education. Judy served the orchestra in this capacity as a dreamer with great imaginations, so the title and text are fitting. The piece was premiered on April 7, 2000, at the State Theatre, New Brunswick with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Michael Adelson, conductor.

Larsen’s piece is a fantasy for full orchestra on the lute song “Dreames and Imaginations” by Robert Jones found in *The Second Booke of Songs and Ayres 1601*.

##### Dreames and Imaginations

Are all the recreations  
Absence can gaine me,  
Dreames when I wake confound me,  
Thoughts for her sake doth wound me,  
Least she disdain me,  
Then sinking let me lie,  
Or thinking let me die,  
Since loue hath slaine me.

Dreames are but coward and doe,  
Much good they dare not stand too,  
Asham’d of the morrow,  
Thoughts like a child that winketh,  
Hee’s not beguild that thinketh,  
Hath peir’st me thorow,  
Both filling me with blisses,  
Both killing me with kisses,  
dying in sorrow.

Dreames with their false pretences,  
And thoughts confounds my senses,  
In the conclusion,  
Which like a glasse did shew mee,  
What came to passe and threw mee,  
Into confusion,  
Shee made mee leaue all other,  
Yet she had got another,  
This was abusion.

Robert Jones was an English composer active in the early 17th century and known for his lute songs and madrigals. Although he was chided for the lute writing and unimaginative harmonies in some of his works, as well as for his less adventurous style in general, he was most known for his melodic talent.

**Instrumentation** – 2 flutes (2nd doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion 1 (vibraphone), percussion 2 (marimba, suspended cymbal, snare drum, orchestral bells, brass windchimes, medium triangle, high hat cymbal, tam-tam), harp, strings

##### Artifacts –

- [Video About Libby Larsen](#)
- [Libby Larsen’s official website](#)
- [Recent photo of Libby Larsen](#)



1. [Larsen: Deep Summer Music; Solo Symphony; Marimba Concerto After Hampton](#)

2. [Libby Larsen: Composing an American Life \(Music in American Life\)](#)

3. [Libby Larsen: Circle of Friends](#)