

Christian Asplund

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During 2020 I had to cancel many performances, conference presentations, and recording sessions because of the pandemic. I decided to focus on composition and performance work that was safe and possible during these times, which included writing 10 secular songs, 20 sacred songs, 2 sacred song cycles, and 20 jazz tunes (the even numbers were unintentional/coincidental). Many of these were suitable for solo performance by myself so I also worked on perfecting these as a performer. I also composed four other pieces for other performers. Moreover I have been busy sharing scores, recordings, and videos of my own music online. The pandemic also forced me to employ a great deal of diligence and creativity to move almost all of my teaching online, including a student ensemble.

Education

1998: Doctor of Musical Arts in Music Composition and Theory, University of Washington.

1993: Master of Arts in music composition, Mills College. Thesis: Tune of Seed: Indeterminacy Analysis, Reverse Orchestration and Tunes.

1988-89: Graduate studies in ethnomusicology at Graduate Center, City University of New York and composition studies in New York with Thea Musgrave and Meyer Kupferman.

1988: Bachelor of Music in Composition, Brigham Young University.

Employment Experience

2002-Present: Associate Professor, Composition and Theory, School of Music, Brigham Young University

2000-2002: Assistant Professor and Chair, Composition Department, School of Music, University of Oklahoma.

1999-2000: Visiting Professor, music theory and composition, Oregon State University.

1998-1999: Instructor, music composition and theory, Cornish College of the Arts, Seattle.

1998: Instructor, music theory and ear training, Shoreline Community College, Seattle.

1997-98: Visiting Professor, music theory, ear training, music fundamentals, group piano, and Jazz and Rock history, Bellevue Community College, Bellevue, Washington.

1993-95: Graduate Assistant, music theory and ear training, University of Washington, Seattle.

1991-92: Graduate Assistant, Dance Department, Mills College, Oakland CA, as pianist and composer.

1988-89: Research Fellow, Ethnomusicology, Graduate Center, City University of New York.

1986-88: Pianist and Composer, Department of Dance, Brigham Young University.

1983: Assistant Musical Director and Pianist, Center Stage Summer Stock Theater Company, Red Deer, Alberta, Canada.

Administrative and Professional Service

2004-Present: Associate Editor, *Perspectives of New Music*

2006-Present: Curator of Provo based performance series: Locust Salon, Avant Garage, Blue Door Salon, Avant Vespers.

2002-Present: Member of the following Brigham Young University School of Music Committees: Performance Council, Graduate Studies Council, Lecture Committee, Library Committee, Publicity Committee, Technology Committee

1996-Present: Founder and Director, Comprovis Records.

2012-2016: Board Member, Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University.

2008-2010, 2016-Now: Member, Brigham Young University College of Fine Arts and Communications: Laycock Center Committee.

1994-2005: Founder and Artistic Director, Seattle Experimental Opera

2000-2002: University of Oklahoma: Served as Chair of Composition Department. Served on Department Chairs Committee. Served on NASM Committee. Helped draft responses to NASM study. Ran visiting composers program as well as three concert series. Participated in New Faculty Development Program.

1997-1999: Founder and Director, Seattle Composers' Salon

1997-98: Bellevue Community College. Served as chair of a major curricular restructuring committee. Wrote outcomes/assessment documents for all music courses. Also developed and administered CAI labs. Also designed and implemented security policy for instruments and other music department resources.

Currently member of:

American Composers Forum (ACF)

American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP)

College Music Society (CMS)

Ensembles Directed

2018-Present: We Free Kings (a Utah-based jazz trio)

2013-Present: Funcoffin (a Utah/L.A.-based avant garde jazz quintet that has released two albums)

2004-Present: BYU Group for Experimental Music (an official BYU ensemble)

2010-2015: Lalage (a Utah-based poetry/electronic music duo that has released one album and has performed in Amsterdam, Seattle, Utah, and on live radio)

2011-2013: QNMA (an official BYU jazz combo that spun off to release one album)

2002-2007: BYU Group for New Music (official BYU ensemble)

1995-2006: String Beast (an experimental string orchestra)

1996-2005: Brainstun (a Seattle-based avant garde jazz quartet with some very renowned alumni that released two albums)

1994-2005: Seattle Experimental Opera (a highly visible and influential chamber opera company that did 12 productions during my tenure)

Awards, Honors, Grants

BYU College of Fine Arts and Communications

Most of these grants were supplemented with moneys from the BYU School of Music and the Barlow Endowment Education Fund

2017: For travel expenses for composition workshop in Amsterdam \$1500

2016: For travel and expenses for performance at International Society for Improvised Music Festival/Conference: \$1400

2016: For on-site recordings/video of viola improvisations \$2500

2014: For video documentation equipment, \$2000

2014: For performances in New York and Philadelphia, \$2300

2012: For performance in Supercoda series, \$1200

2012: For the Monk Marathon tour (Provo, Seattle, New York), \$945

2012: For a performance of Lalage at the Wayward Music Series, Seattle \$1200

2012: For a presentation/performance at the International Society for Improvised Music, Wayne, NJ, \$1460

2011: Travel funds to perform in Mayday! Mayday! Festival, Seattle, \$1200

2010: For a performance/presentation at the International Society for Improvised Music annual festival/conference, Ann Arbor, \$720

2009: For a performance of *Lalage* with guest artists at the Good Shepherd Center, Seattle, \$1000
2008: For the composition and recording of a series of singer-songwriter songs, \$2000
2007: For the recording and production of a CD of works for multiple violas, \$4100
December 2007: For attendance at Society of Composers Incorporated Annual Convention, Atlanta, \$1700

Grants/Awards/Honors from Other Sources

Best of Utah award (City Weekly) for Avant Vespers Series
2015: Laycock Center for Creative Collaboration in the Arts, for out of town performance of Puppet Opera \$4046
2013: Laycock Center for Creative Collaboration in the Arts, for release of recordings from the Laycock Master Improvisers Residencies, \$2000
2011: Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University, commission for *How to Be Spring* for tenor and chamber orchestra, \$4500
2011: New Spectrum Foundation, for production of the CD *Lalage, Live On Sonarchy*, \$250
2010: Grant from Kennedy Center, BYU
2009: Laycock Center for Creative Collaboration in the Arts, for the Laycock Master Improvisers Residencies, \$5500
2008: Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University, commission for *Time and Eternity* for Balinese Gamelan and solo instrument, \$4000
2008: Herb Alpert Foundation. As a finalist in the Alpert Awards in the Arts, I was given a stipend of \$600 to prepare materials for a final judging
2002-2011: Multiple BYU College of Fine Arts Research/Creative Work Grants
1999-2011: Annual ASCAPlus Awards, \$750 or \$850 each year.
2005: \$9500 from Genesis Foundation, London for composer fees for the opera, *Sunset with Pink Pastoral*.
2004: Barlow Endowment commission, \$6000, for the opera *Sunset with Pink Pastoral*.
2003-2004 : Listing and bio in Marquis *Who's Who in America*
2002: Barlow Endowment commission for *Elementals/Ethers* for fretless guitar and microtonal vibraphone, \$2625.
2001: Genesis Foundation Opera Competition, London - £6000 development stipend and expenses for travel to London and production of scene there, Spring 2002
2001: OU Junior Faculty Fellowship - \$6000
2001: OU School of Music faculty technology grant - \$2500
1999: Jack Straw Productions Artist Support Program grant.
1997: Artist Trust Fellowship - \$5000
1997: King County Arts Commission Grant: \$4500 to compose and produce the chamber opera: *Liquid*
1997: Jack Straw Productions Artist Assistance Program Grant

Publications

All compositions published or forthcoming by highly esteemed publisher of American experimentalists, Frog Peak Music (Lebanon, NH, www.frogpeak.org) (2002 to present).

Alones, published by Frog Peak Music, an anthology of scores by renowned American Experimental composers, that includes four Asplund compositions, 2020.

“This Is The Piece,” *Perspectives of New Music*, Volume 57, Nos. 1 & 2, 2019.

“Mysterious and Therefore Useful: Composer Indeterminacy and Christian Wolf,” *Open Space* 17/18 (October 2015): 108-129.

“Interview with Christian Asplund on His ‘Extracts from The Fall of the House of Usher,’” *Edgar Allan Poe Review* 16 (April 2015): 83-93.

“Great God To Thee,” *Hymns Today*, issue III (June 2013)

“Children Gladly Join,” *Hymns Today*, issue II (January 2013)

Christian Wolff. With co-author, Michael Hicks. 2012. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

"Christian Asplund" *Perspectives of New Music* Volume 50, Numbers 1 and 2 (Winter and Summer 2012) 125-129.

“John Zorn. *The Gift; Songs from the Hermetic Theatre* (2001). *Chimeras; Masada Guitars* (2003). *Masada Recital; Magick* (2004). *Rituals* (2005). *Astronome; Masada Rock; Moonchild*” in *American Music* Volume 26, issue 1 (April 2008).

“Improvisation, Heterophony, Politics, Composition: A Panel Discussion” with Christian Wolff, Larry Polansky, Kui Dong, And Michael Hicks in *Perspectives of New Music* Volume 45, Number 2 (Summer 2007).

“Joel Durand’s *Lichtung*” in *In The Mirror Land*, University of Washington Press (2005).

“Vision,” a piano piece, in the score anthology, *Mormoniana*, MAG Press (2004).

"Achieving the Body without Organs--Three Approaches: Bach, Cage and Messiaen" *Perspectives of New Music* Volume 35, Number 2 (Summer 1997).

"Frederic Rzewski and Spontaneous Political Music," *Perspectives of New Music* 33, nos. 1 and 2 (Winter/Summer 1995): 418-441.

Recordings: Composer

2020: *Refraction*, Alex Woods, violin; includes my One Eternal Round, on MSR Classics.

2011: *ORG*, the Complete Organ Music of Christian Asplund, played by Neil Thornock, Comprovis Records.

2003: *Sounding the Curve*, Tom Baker, guitarist on Present Sounds. Includes my “4 Organisms” for fretless guitar.

2000: Seattle Creative Orchestra, *Northwest Triptych*, on Present Sounds. Includes my Symphony #4. (www.presentsounds.com/asplund.htm)

2000: Elizabeth Falconer, *Water Colors* (a CD of solo koto music including my “Decaying Bird”) on Sparkling Beatnik Records.

Recordings: Composer and Performer

2020: *Oui Freakings: Ambient Psychedelic Funk*, on Comprovis

2019: *We Free Kings: Live at Avant Vespers*, on Comprovis.

2018: *Funcoffin ThRee*, on Comprovis.

2016: *FunCoffin II*, on Comprovis.

2015: *FunCoffin*, on Comprovis.

2014: *QNMA*, on Comprovis.

2013: *Extracts from The Fall of the House of Usher*, on Comprovis.

2013: *The Laycock Duos*, on Comprovis.

2013: *The Secretary's Handbook*, on Comprovis.

2013: *QNMA*, on Comprovis.

2011: *Lalage: Live on Sonarchy*, on Comprovis.

2009: *The Anatomy Series*, on Comprovis.

2008: *VIOLA*, on Comprovis.

2005: *constructions one*, Moment Trio, a co-release on Digitalis/Foxglove and Maritime Fist Glee Club.

2004: *Liquid*, on BYU Creative Works. An opera performed by Seattle Experimental Opera.

2004: *Mormoniana*, CD of piano music played by Grant Johannesen, on Tantara. Includes my “Vision.”

2003: *Brainstun 2*, on Present Sounds. Avant-garde jazz quartet playing all Asplund compositions.

2001: >3. Maritime Fist Gleeclub Records.

2000: *Robert Reigle, Tenor Saxophone*, on Acoustic Levitation, includes composition “Breathspace,” as well as my performance on most of the cuts.

1997: *The Archivist*. A full-length CD of this opera recorded by Seattle Experimental Opera on Un-Labeled Records.

1997: *Wigwam Bendix*, Franchise Records.

1996: *Brainstun*, on Comprovisé.

Recordings As Performer

1999: Robert Reigle, *The Marriage of Heaven and Earth*, Acoustic Levitation.

1998: Eyvind Kang, *Theater of Mineral Nades* on John Zorn’s Tzadik label.

DVDs

Floralesque, on Comprovisé.

Commissions

- 2019 Lan Weiwei
- 2018 dancEnsemble
- 2018 Michelle Kesler
- 2017 Hexnut (Amsterdam)
- 2015 Armand Ambrosini, University of Oklahoma, for *The Spectral Hand*
- 2015 Alex Woods, violinist, for *One Eternal Round*
- 2015 Duo Avanzando for *Strategies of the Ancients*
- 2014 Jesse Quebbeman-Turley for *Motets*
- 2014 Jennifer Babidge and BYU Chamber Orchestra for a new song cycle
- 2014 Cellist, Michelle Kesler for *Suite*
- 2011 BYU Chamber Orchestra, for *How to Be Spring*
- 2011 Ricardo Souza for *Circuit*

- 2010 Del Mar College, for *Nocturnes for Wind Ensemble*
- 2009 Utah Trombone Authority for 2,4,8
- 2007 Utah Trombone Authority for *Healing Streams Abound*
- 2007 Istanbul Technical University for *Passage/Istanbul*
- 2007 Commission from Provo High School for *Space Panther* for concert band.
- 2006 Commissions from Matthew Sperry Memorial Festival for 3 compositions
- 2004 *Sunset with Pink Pastoral*, commission for completion and revision of Genesis-commissioned opera (Barlow Endowment and Genesis Foundation)
- 2004 *Rain*, for the Downtown Ensemble, New York
- 2004 *Ruach*, for Christina Jennings
- 2002 Barlow Endowment commission.
- 2001 *Sunset with Pink Pastoral* (original version), a chamber opera for The Genesis Prizes, Alameida Theater, London
- 2001 Symphony #5 for University of Oklahoma Wind Symphony.
- 2000 *Liquid*, a chamber opera, for Seattle Experimental Opera
- 2000 "Salad" for flute octet, commissioned by Flute Salad
- 1999 "Being Three" for choreographer John Dixon. Premiered at Composer/Choreographer festival, Seattle.
- 1998 Symphony #4 for the Seattle Creative Orchestra
- 1998 "Decaying Bird" for koto commissioned by renowned virtuoso, Elizabeth Falconner, for her solo CD on Sparkling Beatnik Records.
- 1998 *Floralesque*, a chamber opera, for Seattle Experimental Opera.
- 1997 "Collection" for brass quartet + guitar, commissioned by the Young Composers Collective.
- 1997 Psalm 41 for Esoterics, a Seattle-based A Cappella mixed choir specializing in 20th-century music. After competitive open-call screening process, selected to compose a piece for the choir's April 19, 1997 concert.
- 1997 Northwest New Works festival at On the Boards: *The Secretary's Handbook*. Text by Vanessa DeWolf and choreography by Mary Lane.
- 1997 A Theater Under the Influence: music for *The Roaring Girl* (an Elizabethan play).
- 1996 Seattle Experimental Opera/Spoot Productions: *The Archivist*..
- 1996 Marilyn Crispell/Francois Houle Duo: "Crispois," for their CD on Toucan.
- 1996 Young Composers Collective: "Concerto Grosso" premiered at Seattle's annual Bumbershoot Festival. Also performed by Seattle Creative Orchestra 6/27/97.

Other Compositions

- 1974-Present Opera, Song cycles, chamber music, jazz compositions, improvisation structures, a 24-hour piece, analog electronic and computer music including a prize-winning piece for computer-generated tape and voice.

Conference Presentations

- 2019 International Society for Improvised Music

- 2018 Mormon Arts Festival
- 2018 Teaching Mormon Arts Symposium
- 2018 React Rally (Salt Lake City)
- 2016 International Society for Improvised Music
- 2012 Performance with Ricksplund at International Society for Improvised Music annual conference/festival
- 2010 Performance with ART Trio at International Society for Improvised Music annual conference/festival
- 2006 *Healing Streams Abound* at College Music Society annual meeting, San Antonio.
- 2006 “Christian Wolff and Composer Indeterminacy Analysis,” presented at Christian Wolff Symposium, BYU.
- 2000 “Groove Theory: Through the Grooves of James Brown,” presented at Society for Music Theory annual meeting, Toronto.

Festival Performances

- 2014 Performance with Ricksplund at New York City Improvised Music Festival
- 2012 International Society of Improvised Music Conference/Festival, Wayne, NJ
- 2011 Love Feast, Norman Oklahoma
- 2011 Mayday Mayday! festival, Seattle
- 2010 International Society of Improvised Music Conference/Festival, Ann Arbor
- 2009 Boise Creative and Improvised Music Festival
- 2009 Seattle Is That Jazz? Festival
- 2007 Deseret Chamber Music Festival
- 2006 Matthew Sperry Memorial Festival as curator and composer-performer
- 2005 International Primrose Viola Competition and Festival of the American Viola Society
- 2003 Seattle Festival of Improvised Music
- 2000 Da Vinci Days, Corvallis, OR
- 1998 Earshot jazz festival with Andrew Drury.
- 1997 Earshot jazz festival with Eyvind Kang.
- 1997 Bumbershoot Festival with out jazz quartet, Brainstun.
- 1997 ArtsEdge: "I Will Write Ten Poems About What Happened To Me In Prison" with Seattle Experimental Opera.
- 1996 Seattle Earshot Jazz Festival, October 1996, with Matthew Sperry Quartet.
- 1996 Vancouver Du Maurier Jazz Festival with Francois Houle's 7° of Light.

- 1995 Vancouver Du Maurier Jazz Festival with Francois Houle/Ken Morrison Quartet.
- 1995 "Concerto Grosso" performed at Seattle Bumbershoot Festival by Young Composers' Collective.
- 1994 Seattle Festival of Improvised Music with The Academes and Aitsi.

Broadcasts

Numerous live appearances on radio stations including Acik Radyo (Istanbul), KING-FM (Live By George), KUOW (Weekday), KEXP (including rotations and many appearances on Sonarchy), KBCS, KAOS, KBYU. National and international airplay of recordings including several broadcasts on Radio Suisse.