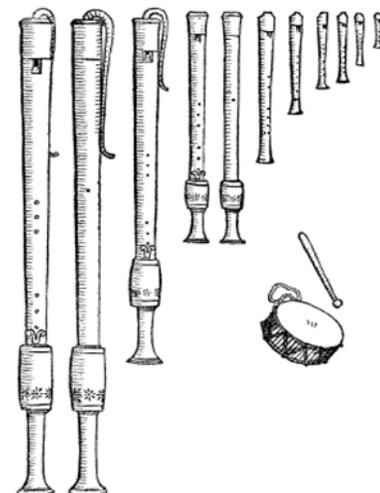


SEATTLE RECORDER SOCIETY

Recorder Notes

March 2021
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www.seattle-recorder.org



From the Music Director (Vicki Boeckman)



Greetings everyone! I hope this finds you all warm, safe, and well. I am thankful to be living here and not in Texas, but the unparalleled quiet and stunning beauty of the blanketing snow was a heavenly change for a few days, was it not? Spring is just around the corner, little buds are emerging, and the days are getting noticeably longer and lighter, which brings us ever closer to being able to play outdoors again. There has been much discussion about whether we will continue to offer virtual classes even after the pandemic is behind us. I imagine that the virtual world as we have

come to know it is likely here to stay **in addition to** being back in person. Now that we are familiar with this technology, we will continue to use it to our advantage. Many are finding joy and fulfillment in being able to connect when they otherwise could not, so while there are no finalized plans, I just want to acknowledge that we (SRS/MBRS) will be discussing all of this in the months to come. Which brings me to this next bit: since this virtual world is likely here to stay in some percentage or other, I can highly recommend investing in a pair of good headphones or external speakers. Neither need to be a huge investment but will make your listening experience much more enjoyable than through the computer's internal speaker. There are many good headphones on the market (and probably as many opinions as there are brands), but I go for comfort as well as quality. Mine are Beyerdynamic DT 990 pro.

Please keep reading to see what we have planned for our March 5 playing session in addition to other exciting events scheduled in the PNW and elsewhere. In preparation for the ARS Play the Recorder Month piece on March 20, I will be leading a "woodshedding" (practice) session on March 6 at 1:00 pm PST, and the San Francisco Early Music Society (SFEMS) and Amherst continue to add weekend classes to their virtual calendar. Additionally, the ARS is offering a series of **free** (!) beginning recorder classes to non-members, so if you know someone who wants to take the plunge, please point them in that direction.

For our March 5 playing session, Miyo will be leading the large group and Vicki will be leading the Breakout room Gang with "Canons and imitations across the nations", including works by Machaut, Dufay, Purcell, and the famous Anonymous.

SRS Meeting

Friday,
March 5, 2021
@ 7:00 pm

Large Group Session with Miyo Aoki

Masques Required: Adson,
Brade, Casulana, Ruffo

Breakout Room with Vicki Boeckman

Canons and imitations across
the nations: Machaut, Dufay,
Anonymous, Purcell

Future Online Meetings

April 2
May 7 (Members' Night)

Save the dates for the virtual Port Townsend Early Music Workshop!!

July 6 – August 1

Newsletter Deadline
for the April Issue:

Wednesday
March 17

From the Music Director—continued



Miyo will warm us up all together with a simple dance by Valentin Haussmann, and then those wishing to attend the slower-paced Breakout Room with Vicki will split off. In the main room, Miyo will lead the group on a journey through several geographical regions, beginning in England with a masquing ayre by John Adson and then following English composer William Brade to Germany, where he spent a large part of his career. From there, we will head south to Italy where we will enjoy a madrigal by Maddalena Casulana, the first woman to have her compositions printed, and an instrumental piece by Vincenzo Ruffo.

Look for an email with the subject LINK to SRS MBRS March meeting on Monday March 1. PDFs of the music will be attached for the large group and the Breakout Room Gang, and as always, please do not hesitate to contact either Miyo (miyoaoki@gmail.com) or me (vickiboeckman@comcast.net) with questions or concerns.

Play the Recorder Month

Please join Vicki Boeckman on **March 6, 2021 at 1:00 pm PST** for woodshedding “Transparent Letters Across the Sky”, a 4-part recorder composition commissioned by ARS for the annual “Play the Recorder Month” (PtRM) in March. Vicki will provide guidance on the structure of the piece and techniques to help you prepare for the [event on March 20, 2021](#) which will be an online, en masse orchestra “performance” directed by composer Melika M. Fitzhugh and her ensemble.

Here is how to participate in the woodshedding session on March 6

First check the correct time for your time zone: 1:00 pm PST

Download the piece from the ARS website, using [this link](#).

Click on this [Zoom link](#).

If asked, enter the password: **PTRM2021**

About “Transparent Letters Across the Sky”

“Transparent Letters Across the Sky,” written by Boston-based composer Melika M. Fitzhugh, is a joyful, spirited composition inspired by the Pablo Neruda poem quoted here:

*“What happens to swallows
who are late for school?
Is it true that they scatter
transparent letters across the sky?”*

~ Pablo Neruda, Book of Questions (1973)

Fitzhugh, a graduate of Harvard-Radcliffe (A.B. in Music Theory and Composition), and the Longy School of Bard College (M.M. in Composition) is an award-winning composer, teacher, and director, whose works have been commissioned and performed in the U.S. and internationally.

[Learn about other PtRM events among West Coast recorder societies here.](#)

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Members' Night on May 7

It is not too early to start thinking about what you would like to contribute to this year's Members' Night, and... Yup, you guessed it... it will be VIRTUAL! Now that many of you have already done it once it won't be nearly as scary. We will ask you to submit a short video of up to 5 minutes (we will provide help and instructions for doing so by a certain deadline in April TBA). The videos will be posted on our private YouTube channel for viewing on the evening of May 7. Anything goes! More on this will be forthcoming, but there is no time like the present to get cracking!

February Meeting—Kathleen Arends

Seattle and Moss Bay Recorder Societies met on Zoom at 7:00 p.m. to play music together on Friday evening, February 5, 2021. Our music directors, Vicki Boeckman and Miyo Aoki, welcomed Jennifer Carpenter from Colorado Springs to direct the evening. Jennifer led us through a collection of music she calls "Fantastic Spirits," involving various imaginative treatments of spirits from the Renaissance through the 19th century. Her "guest appearance" was sponsored by a special chapter grant from the American Recorder Society. Thank you, ARS!

We began with three madrigals from Thomas Weelkes' publication "Fantastic Spirits." The first two are whimsical airs, simpler than his madrigals usually are; the third beautifully displays his mastery of counterpoint, word painting, and chromaticism.

The first was "Come, Let's Begin," with a poetic text including fairies and a little word-painting for the word "echo." Its short, repetitive phrases gave a capricious effect, and the melody was in the top voice. Its simple form was ABB, repeated for a second verse. We played it with a half-note beat.

Jennifer suggested that the second air, "The Ape, the Monkey and Baboon" might caricature modern life. The oddly solemn music contrasts with the vivid title. Jennifer reminded us that text should guide our articulation and phrasing, to keep us from a "marching" effect; she suggested marking them with a pencil. Our beat was again the half note, and the form was again two ABB verses.

After the two airs, we relished the passionate music of "Aye Me, Alas," finally experiencing the luscious sound Weelkes was capable of. It featured a falling figure associated with sighs of despair, along with chromaticism and word painting. "If her monkey die, she will sit and cry," it laments. Again the half note was the beat, and the tempo was so slow that the metronome clicks in the recording were very helpful.

Then we went on to impish, dancing fairies from Purcell's semi-opera *The Fairy-Queen*. The work is closely associated with Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but does not actually set Shakespeare's words. We enjoyed two dances from Act III, in which Titania has fallen in love with the ass-headed Bottom and the pair are being entertained.

The "Dance for the Fairies" I found delightfully tweedly. We went through a little slowly at first, for the benefit of our fingers, but then played at a more sprightly fairy tempo. The half note was still our beat, and the bass part was fun.

Then we had the "Dance for the Green Men," rather in the style of a French Overture. Jennifer advised us to think of the sixteenth-note runs as just a way of getting to the top of the figure; play that top note at the proper time, and you're good! The rhythms in the second half included dots, which we used as little spaces to keep our rendition light.

Then we turned to sacred spirits, specifically the Holy Ghost. Thomas Tallis lived through the reign of Henry VIII through Elizabeth I, and managed to remain a Roman Catholic. His plaintive setting of "O Lord Give thy Holy Spirit" was originally composed for Whitsun (Pentecost), which commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit onto the followers of Christ.

In this splendid piece of Renaissance polyphony, the text is, as usual, our best guide to phrasing and articulation. Not only commas and periods, but even the consonants should be considered in order to bring out each line.

Jennifer brought us visual artworks by spiritualists as well, including a "spirit drawing" by Georgiana Houghton (1814—1884). Ms. Houghton declared that her hand was guided in drawing by various departed spirits.

February Meeting—continued

We turned to a spiritual by Irish organist John Clarke: “If sadly thinking and spirits sinking,” in Jennifer’s own arrangement. Its text, by J.P. Curran, is called “Let Us Be Merry Before We Go” and is crammed full of internal rhyme. It is a happy piece, with a distinct and abundant melodic motif I found very appealing, and our first quarter-note beat of the night! Jennifer noted its very close similarity to a drinking song; “Oh, THAT kind of spirits,” I thought. We treated it as we did most of the evening’s works: played through twice, with the second time a bit faster.

Our final number was an American spiritual, “Wayfaring Stranger,” in a very interesting and beautiful arrangement Jennifer created. The melody moved along much more quickly than I usually hear this song, yet remained plaintive with “blue” notes and other striking harmonies. Some of these were glissandi which Jennifer, having a background in clarinet, performed in the recording accompanying us. She invited us to do the same; “Go for the glisses!” advised Vicki in the chat.

And with this metaphor for the soul’s journey through life, we reached the end of our spiritual excursion. Thank you, Jennifer, for collecting and preparing these fascinating pieces for our pleasure!

Sweet Memories of Betty Swift—Vicki Boeckman and others

Our beloved friend Betty left this earth on January 29 after a brief battle with cancer. I invited folks to share memories and will start with my own.

This is an email to me from Betty on Jan 27:

I must tell you that I have probably fifty CDs here that I play, many of them of performances by people I know and love, like you. Some have acoustics that are complex and others quite linear and thin, so I take myself down the West Coast to churches we've known and played in and listen to them in the appropriate building for the sound. For instance, the church in Carmel Valley has the richest sound and the Third Avenue church on Queen Anne the thinnest. So I settle in, locate myself in the church, and situate myself with friends and performers and listen to my CDs as if I were going back through all my years. What a treasure it is to be able to do----and I'm with you and Clea, Tish and Frances, in spite of covid.

Cheers to you all,

Betty

I adored Betty. I am not sure exactly when we met the first time, but she seemed to be in just about every local ensemble I offered and attended any workshop I taught. Not long after I moved to Seattle, a dear colleague Eileen Hadidian (also now passed) and I offered a weekend workshop just outside of Portland. On the Sunday we agreed to start a bit later to give anyone wanting to attend church services the opportunity to do so. When we gathered, Betty came dashing in with eyes shining informing us that she just returned from hiking on Mt Hood, exclaiming that she had to go, being so close! Lessons with Betty were as much me learning from her as the other way around—we often shared life's experiences and insights as well as playing music. I feel blessed to have been on the list of folks she contacted to say goodbye, that the end was near. Miyo and I jumped at the opportunity to see her one last time in her adorable houseboat and played for her on her deck for a couple of hours. Her daughters Hally and Barbara were there with their husbands and it was a lovely—albeit chilly—afternoon. For that I am very thankful. According to the Mayan Calendar every day has a power and a meaning. The day she chose to leave was January 29: White Resonant Worldbringer, guided by Endlessness.

An email from **Frances Blaker** to me and Cléa Galhano

I am in awe of Betty for taking matters into her own hands and stepping forward into the unknown. White Resonant Worldbringer, guided by endlessness could not be more appropriate. I will miss Betty. Today, the day after her passing, while Tish and I were sitting on a bluff overlooking the ocean (after a hike), surrounded by old trees, we saw a raven come soaring past, over the white sands below, flying just above us. We thought how it would be, newly released from one's body, to soar and glide through the air, and we enjoyed the idea that it was Betty visiting us. The raven soared here and there and then landed in the tree among whose roots we were sitting. How could that not be Betty, passing by for a visit?

Love, Frances

From **Nancy Lewis**

Betty was great birder. I have so many fond memories of being with her stalking elusive birds. I was with her several times at Elderhostels held at Lake Malheur, OR, a haven on the bird migration route, and up and down the Oregon coasts in connection with visits to Hidden Valley. There was a roadside stop in the central coast area that harbored the extremely shy Wren Tit. Betty and I spent as much time as we could spare stalking this little fellow. Never saw him, but could follow him by his song.

From **Vivien Bosley**

One of my first encounters with Betty was when she very selflessly volunteered to leave a workshop early in order to drive me to the airport (it was my birthday, and I just HAD to get back for a celebration). Over a

More Memories of Betty Swift

period of various workshops, I admired her when she showed me pictures of the plants she was keeping track of somewhere in the Cascades; I envied her account of a midsummer in northern Iceland, and I was grateful when she gently nudged me back into sync when I got lost in Spanish rhythms. I didn't know anything of her illustrious background, but I discovered from ground zero what a very remarkable person she was. I remember her with fondness and cherish her memory, and am grateful to the Society for bringing us together.

Email to Betty from **Mary Prout**

...It was wonderful to have you along for the adventure of driving to St. Andrews, on the wrong side of the road, in a car with a stick shift, after a sleepless night on an airplane. And very brave of you! Do you remember getting lost, and trying to turn around in a farm yard somewhere in Fife? I didn't know how to put the car in reverse, and we were inching closer and closer to the farmer's fence. If you hadn't remembered an unusual way of pushing or pulling or squeezing the gear shift from a former car of yours, (maybe a Saab?), we would still be there! I will be telling that story for the rest of my life.

I also remember one afternoon you and Kathy LaForge and I went for a walk along the coast during a break in the workshop. I felt like getting some exercise, and thought this would probably just be an easy stroll, but that being outside would be nice in any case. You two walked me into the ground! It started raining, and you were the one who said "Oh, let's keep going!" The sun came out, and we kept walking and walking, down and up cliffs, across rocky beaches, through fences, across fields. I was exhausted. It was a wonderful afternoon.

You were also an inspiration to me as we prepared for our then upcoming trip to Nepal and Everest base camp. You gave me advice on staying healthy (got sick anyway, but not a disaster), and acclimating. Was it Meru or Makalu you climbed, or visited? We saw a glimpse of one of them from Gokyo Ri, on the return loop from the Everest area. I thought of you then. The Everest area is relatively developed for westerners, but still very challenging for most of us. What challenges you must have faced in that more remote area. (We have since returned to the Himalaya for a trip to see Kanchenjunga from Goecha-la in Sikkim. It was probably our last such exotic adventure, but I can see how those mountains can get under your skin)

(I only knew Betty from that one week in Scotland, and am very sorry we didn't have more time together. I will certainly never forget her!)

From **Virginia Felton**

Betty and I sat at her dining room table on her houseboat as dappled light danced on Portage Bay and filtered through the windows around us. We conversed comfortably about current events, books we were reading, family and friends. We had been doing this across the arc of more than 40 years. The mood was light and easy, but part of me paid closer attention than usual. "Remember this, treasure this," a quiet voice repeated inside me. I knew it was, most likely, our last conversation. She left us a few weeks later.

Betty was my first real friend in Seattle. I had moved here in 1978 from upstate New York, and we met as we both volunteered for Allied Arts of Seattle. In spite of a 20-year age difference, we grew close and shared many experiences. We hiked and skied together, travelled to Mexico and Canada, shared music and concerts, sorrows and dreams. We got to know each other's families and shared each other's joys and losses. She enriched my life, constantly offering her warmth and her unique brand of insight and optimism.

As I look back on our friendship, I have many treasured memories. Here is one: The long twilight of an evening on the waters of the Canadian San Juan Islands settled around us. The water was glassy and sinuous, and our rowboat glided almost soundlessly as Betty worked the oars, her long fingers on the handles, her strong arms skillfully steering. We talked little as we took in the stillness and beauty that surrounded us, the occasional seabird or seal. The light faded slowly, nearly imperceptibly. As darkness advanced, gradually the bioluminescence activated by the oars danced on either side of the boat. It was magical and beautiful, like so much of her life.

Betty Swift's "Official" Obituary

Elizabeth "Betty" Working Swift

3 April 1930 – 29 January 2021

Elizabeth "Betty" Swift passed away peacefully with her family around her on January 29 in Seattle, Washington after a brief illness. She was 90 years old.

Betty was born Helen Elizabeth Working on April 3, 1930 in Palo Alto, California to Holbrook and Helen (Rider) Working. She grew up near Stanford University, where her father was a professor of agricultural economics and her mother was active in civic and university life. The family, including beloved siblings, hiked and vacationed in the Sierra Mountains and the California coast, starting a life-long devotion to the outdoors, conservation and environmental issues.

She met Ward H. Swift (1929-1981) while on a ski trip in the Sierra. They married in 1950 at Stanford, where she was a student, and they honeymooned in Alaska. She transferred to UC Berkeley and received a BA in Art in 1951. The couple moved to Richland, Washington, where Ward started a career in chemical engineering. They had four children, born between 1952 and 1964: Barbara, Peter, Theodore, and Hally. While a full-time mom, Betty continued to teach and be involved with art and politics. She was active in the Audubon Society and League of Women Voters, volunteered on archaeological digs on the Columbia River, was a lover of avant-garde theatre, music and the arts, sailed the San Juan and Canadian Gulf Islands, hiked and skied. Betty's diverse interests filled the home with ideas and materials from many cultures, creating an environment of exploration.

An adventurer whether hiking on a trail, kayaking, experimenting with art, or cooking new recipes to share, she was always ready for a new experience or to deepen an interest. With a rigorous and infectious curiosity, her interests were broad and emblematic of her approach to the world. In 1975 Betty moved to Seattle, where she received a BFA in 1977 and MFA in Metal Design from the University of Washington in 1980. She worked in graphical production for Pacific Search Press, and later for the City of Seattle as a technical illustrator. She traveled the world, from Nepal to Alaska and West Africa to Indonesia and Antarctica. She visited every continent except Australia. Though she planned to leave Europe for when she was in a wheelchair, she explored parts of Europe on several trips. Closer to home, she lead Mountaineers Club trips and volunteered for rare plant monitoring and seed collecting across Washington State, and collected "citizen science" water quality measurements in Portage Bay.

One of Betty's great loves was playing the recorder in the Seattle Recorder Society where she was described as a treasured member and a constant beam of light for the recorder music community not only in Seattle, but around the country as well. She would eagerly sign up for any ensemble, workshop, or musical activity that could feed her insatiable enthusiasm for learning and fuel her advancement on the recorder. Always willing to travel however far to participate in workshops around the country and in Europe, always welcoming of new experiences and meeting other players. She never shied away from the difficult, loved the challenges of embarking upon contemporary pieces as well as



Betty Swift's Obituary—continued

older works, and especially loved diving into the history and theory behind the scenes. The words that come to mind are- curious, humble, gracious, attentive, and enthusiastic.

Betty was a fabulous friend. She loved people and engaging with strangers or good friends. She was an outgoing and collaborative neighbor, spending the last 25 years living on a houseboat on Portage Bay, close to the water she so loved. Listening was one of her qualities that made her friends feel important, comfortable, and validated. Although Betty was knowledgeable in many areas paired with many talents and interests, she was humble and the last one to toot her horn. Her eyes always sparkled with enthusiasm, life, learning, and sharing whenever she was with her friends. Her friends are richer in spirit knowing Betty and she will be missed but never forgotten.

Betty was a loving presence in the lives of the next generation. She related to children so well, and could do something with nothing, teaching how to make one's own entertainment and exploration. She would pick up a few pine needles, gave them names, and enact a story for her young granddaughters.

Betty offered all a guide for how to tread the path of life, deal with its challenges, fight back when needed, and keep one's head held high throughout, and all who knew her feel deeply grateful for the benefit of her spirit. Her impact has been great, with close or distant friends and relatives. Shared values, experiences, and thoughts travel across the dimensions of family to emerge unexpectedly but with import.

Consistent with her commitment to the larger world, Betty would want donations made to organizations that she cared about. Given her life, the list could be long, but the family suggests that these represent her interests: Seattle Recorder Society (Music), Rare Care c/o University of Washington, and the Islands Trust Conservancy (Conservation and nature), and Emily's List (Women's rights and activism). In the spirit of Betty and her love of people, a celebration will occur when gathering can occur.

Betty is survived by her brother John Working, sister Barbara Milligan, daughters Barbara Swift and Hally Swift, sons-in-law Donald Ewing and Eric Strandberg, all of Seattle, son Ted Swift and daughter-in-law Anne Hillman and granddaughters Eleanor and Grace Swift, all of Davis, California. Her husband Ward and son Peter preceded her in death.

http://www.seattle-recorder.org/About_Us.html

<https://botanicgardens.uw.edu/science-conservation/rarecare/donate/>

<http://www.islandstrustconservancy.ca/donate/please-help-our-campaigns/>

<https://www.emilyslist.org/donate>