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The Joys and Tribulations of Dual Careers in Art and Music

CAROL WORTHEY



Carol Worthey

What creates a child prodigy? A gift and a desire to give, both impulses equally intense. A gift is not a gift until it is given to others. Art is the sharing of dreams.

My early hunger to express myself was born prematurely in a cradle of light and shadow, pain and joy. Composing and painting became ways to soar above the wreckage

that was strewn across my childhood. They were promises to me that darkness would not prevail, that somehow the elevated sense of aliveness I felt when I listened to beautiful music would transform the mundane into the momentous, give meaning to misery, and perhaps grace life with an unaccustomed sense of majesty.

We hear with our ears, we see with our eyes, we feel with our hearts, and we compare with our minds, but we imagine and create out of some essential truth of ourselves that stretches beyond the physical universe. We are spiritual beings, and each one of us is unique. The word "universe" means "a created world, turning about a central point, from which things extend outward." Each of us is a galaxy of thoughts, events, conclusions, confusions, and revelations. At the center, our singular nature is beautiful but lonely, and so we cry out to reach others, to share what vision we have that is special, to be understood, to shout from the mountaintop. And so art is born.

If a gift is not a gift until it is given to others, what do you do if your gift comes in two packages, both labeled "Choose me!"? Which gift will most satisfy your craving to create? Which do you consider the supreme art? Which is the easiest for you to do? What legacy will outlive your body? If art is the signature of the individual, how should one sign one's name?

I was only seven when I was forced to face these questions and make a decision. Today, I choose not to choose between composing and painting. I am happier for that freedom.

This is the story of how and why I decided to become both painter and composer, to live the daring adventure of a freelance professional on the cutting edge between oblivion and destiny, divvying up my days and nights between two jealous Muses, one forgiving dog, and a very supportive husband—not in that order. Let me share with you observations about the interplay between sound and sight, painting and music, analytical thought and pure emotion. Even before Mussorgsky promenaded us through Pictures at an Exhibition, music and painting have intersected in an Intriguing Counterpoint, each art form with its own rhythm, color, form, and experiential rapture, yet both linked by the need to transform Life into Art. Anecdotes tell the story best.

On the day I was born the up-and-coming, handsome, supremely charismatic Leonard Bernstein (who had roomed with my dad, Bernie Symonds, at Harvard) was in my humble tenement home in Worcester, Massachusetts, and did us the kindness of cooking hamburgers for the family. These he shaped into stars, declaring, "This little girl's gonna be a star!" An auspicious beginning. Two weeks later Dad went to war.

Three years later we celebrated Dad's safe return by taking a trip to Tanglewood, the Berkshire Music Festival, to see Lenny, who was now studying under Serge Koussevitzky. I was granted special permission to sit in the front row at rehearsals of the Boston Symphony and to sit inside the Shed during concerts. This was unheard of in those days. Three-year-olds were not allowed into rehearsals, let alone in the front row within hearing distance of maestro and concertmaster! Children's concerts were just beginning to be a novelty.

There I sat, glued to my seat, transported on wings of sound. The trees were dancing in time to the music! I was engulfed by oceanic waves of harmony. The rehearsal lasted for several hours—I forgot about going to the

bathroom. Koussevitzky was advising Lenny in gentle words I did not understand, but the difference in aliveness and intensity when the orchestra replayed the passage was striking.

At break, about twenty performers surrounded me at the festival bookstore, some patting my head or nodding smilingly. They assumed (since I was so quiet and immersed in the music for hours) that I must be a child prodigy. I heard a few mutter, "The Wunderkind!" This sounded right. I made up my mind they must know what they meant. I returned from Tanglewood and began composing, at least taking brave stabs at it. The next year the Berkshire Board of Directors voted to allow children to attend concerts, not inside the Shed but with their parents on the green, where kids could be kids but still enjoy the music. I would like to think I contributed something to that.

But how was I to convert my internal holograms of sound into notes on paper? Around age four I attempted my first notation—a thirty-second opera, "Dickey Bundle and the Pixies," in which a giant is persuaded to return a stolen scarf (spelled "skraf"). It was not exactly Mozart, but at least it was a valiant effort to begin.

Another crossroads occurred when I was five: I had been drawing like a skilled teenager by the time I was about four, and so my parents took me to the Rhode Island School of Design, the world-famous art conservatory in Providence. My manual skills, design, and color sense were tested by professors, and—while this is not done today—I was entered into adult classes at RISD. The aroma of paint and clay that filled my nostrils when I raced up three flights of stairs to the musty art rooms was better than chocolate! For seven years, until the age of twelve, I studied anatomy, color theory, design principles, oil painting, watercolor, sculpture, landscape, still-life drawing, and art history every weekend. Here is a portrait of me when I was six, at my easel in oil class, artist unknown (see figure 2).

The joy of painting, drawing, composing, and playing the piano was a beacon surrounded by darkness. All this was about to change. I was seven and had been a student for two preliminary years at RISD. After studying anatomy, I was allowed into Life Class with the adult students. (Life Class is where one learns to draw from living models.) At this particular Saturday class a male nude and a female nude posed on long green tables. I had never seen a naked man or woman, but I decided with surprising maturity to practice my drawing skills and not act shy, overly fascinated, or repulsed—after all, I reasoned, I was there to learn and that was the shape God had given grown men and women. My mother did not share my



Fig. 2. Carol Worthey at age six

casual studiousness and issued me an ultimatum: "You have to choose between music and art!" Unfortunately, I agreed. I felt as if I had been asked to choose which arm to chop off!

Drawing and painting were easier for me; composing and writing down the notes, harder. Music moved me to ecstasy and tears. Sometimes a painting would do the same, but only the greatest masterpieces. I realized that learning how to compose for full orchestra would take time and dedication. I chose music. And so began years of endeavor. At first, however, for some unaccountable reason I did not realize that I was a composer—I had not granted myself that title. (There is a point where one takes on not only an activity but also the sense of self to call oneself whatever-it-is.) One event was to change all that.

When I was ten, concert pianist Vivian Rivkin heard me improvise a motif on my grandmother's piano and asked me to write it down since she wanted to play it. Two weeks later I was struggling with the notation of what became *Etude Fantastique* (the longer the title, the younger the composer), when Ms. Rivkin called from New York: How was I doing on the composition? It was difficult, I admitted. She replied, "Well, you'd better hurry up! I'm performing it in Carnegie Hall in two weeks!" I dropped the phone. Carnegie Hall! Two weeks later I was on a train to Manhattan with an electric-blue satin dress purchased for the concert. Rivkin played my piece twice as fast as I had envisioned it, as it was too easy for her rapid fingers,

but I was thrilled. On the train ride back to Providence the clickety-clack of the wheels seemed to echo “I’m a Composer! I’m a Composer!”

Let us examine what the word “composer” means in its utmost simplicity. Composer means one who places things with other things. “Com” means “with,” and “pose” means “to put.” To “be composed” has the secondary meaning of being tranquil. If the elements of the music are considered as a whole, one is truly composing, placing melodies, variations, contrapuntal and harmonic elements, rhythms, and instrumental textures and colors one after the other in a conscious and meaningful way.

Fast-forward to 1999: husband Ray and I were in Chicago for the Toastmasters International Convention. Quirky, colorful cow statues decorated the city. I was regaling the “Moonet” statue (a cow painted in the style of Monet) in front of the Chicago Art Institute when the passion to paint one of these cows overtook my senses. “If this ever comes to Los Angeles, I want to paint one! Only it should not be a cow—it should be angels!” A year later I found an old muddy local paper in our garden. I was about to throw it away when I magically opened it to the page describing the project “A Community of Angels.” There was only one day left before the entry deadline! Did I grab paper and colored pencils to design what I would paint on the angel? No, I ran to the piano and created a song praising the power of music. The words came quickly; I heard piano, flute, French horn, cello, harp, and a children’s chorus. While I was composing, I also envisioned the statue in front of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion near the spray of the fountain, so I added “rainbow-colored waterfalls” to the lyrics.

As soon as I completed the song I committed to paper the design I had imagined while composing. The statue would be educational. On the front I would paint the instruments: the cello would form the torso, with a treble clef forming the heart. The back wings would feature pastel feathers, each emblazoned with the name of a great composer of the past, all eras and genres represented. Women composers would be on feathers that formed hearts. I would paint the notes and lyrics to encourage people to learn to read music. A problem emerged. My concept demanded that the music would sound from the statue, but wouldn’t that be obnoxious if the music played continuously? A special base would have to be created for music equipment that could be turned on and off. I filled out the application in a fever and raced it to the committee on the final day. A week later my entry was approved, but I still needed a sponsor for the generic statue. At the last hour Mu Phi Epsilon San Fernando Chapter came to my rescue as sponsor, the CEO of MP3.com added the



Fig. 3. Angel of Music, copyright © 2000 Carol Worthey

music equipment, and Ray designed a special base that would play the music at the press of a button. For weeks I was in heaven (my garage) painting the angel with special paints that could withstand the spray from the fountain. Three months later *Angel of Music* was unveiled at the Los Angeles Music Center (figure 3). What a revelation: I could do both art forms, either interactively or separately. No longer did I have to choose!

PATTERN AND RHYTHM

Life is rhythm, rhythm has patterns. In musical meter, pattern is created when one pulse sounds with more force than other pulses. Bits of silence separate the patterns and form the background. Visual patterns are separated and defined by space. Space is their backdrop. A visual pattern is not really a pattern until the third repetition (because you cannot tell in which direction the pattern is going until you place the third one up, down, or to the side). Patterns can change (change produces a sense of time, and music exists in time). Over large spaces or long durations, patterns work best if they vary. With variation, the spectator or listener remains interested. Too much repetition is anathema, hypnotic, and machinelike, and most individuals rebel against sameness. Conversely, too much change or too much rapidity of change is confusing, disturbing. Paintings and drawings can be literal replicas of the physical universe or mood interpretations and portraits of feeling. Music can be literal to some degree if the intention is to convey specific images or events, but music floats in the air and cannot be contained within bounds, except that sound dissipates. Visual art has lines and color, light and shade, flatness or dimension. Music has color, texture, and interweaving of lines, but musical color is different from visual color and is an amalgam of complex elements. Music contains phrases and meanings that mirror words, but these musical “meanings” express

the inexpressible in much the same way that great poetry falls between the cracks of words.

DESIGN AND FORM

One principle I learned at RISD that has infused both my music and my painting with similarities of structure, motion, coloration is, if the design of a painting “holds up” (makes design sense, has balance and motion in a stable combination), then the painting has the basic element that gives it coherence as a work of art. When I design a painting, I always consider the direction I want the viewer’s eye to follow. I use a red filter to view my work after painting most of it. If the design holds up, the red will erase the color element and tell me if I have achieved a sense of depth and shadow or not. In the same way, when I compose, I put myself in my listener’s “ears.” Does the evolution from one passage to another keep the listener’s attention, does it make sense, and does it arrive somewhere or purposely float like an enticing question?

Like the uniqueness of each being, each composition evolves in its own way out of the seeds of the initial inspiration. Nevertheless, conscious use of a form that alternates themes (such as sonata form, ABA, or rondo) or a form that demands contrapuntal skills (such as fugue or passacaglia) can give structural “integrity” to a work if that is what the work demands. Nothing is more deadly than trying to insert a theme into a box that does not fit. While many standard forms have fallen out of use in this day and age of random stimuli and sensory overload, I believe these devices—if chosen for emotive reasons—lend design power and resonance to music in just the same way that good design favors a successful painting. Figure 4, *Summer Breeze*, is a watercolor that illustrates how design gives coherence to the various elements of a painting.

COLOR: MUSICAL AND VISUAL

My discussion of form does not mean that intellect comes before feeling. It is true that if the design works, the other elements will fall into place, usually. But nothing sparks emotion faster than color. And in music, no matter how bottom-line rhythm and pulse are, melody is king. Musical color is a complex amalgam, more than just the different timbres of the instruments, and it fuses many perceptions: thick or thin texture (how many lines are playing), the mysterious qualities of various keys and harmonies as they blend or contrast, even the direction of the melodic line can add coloration. The higher notes of the piano suggest pastel shades, the middle



Fig. 4. *Summer Breeze*, copyright © 1999 Carol Worthey

notes resonate like fully saturated hues, and the lower notes resemble darker colors mixed with varying degrees of black or shade. For example, the A above middle C sounds “rose” to me; higher, it is pale pink; lower, it is cranberry. (Kinesthesia varies with individuals—mine is more connected to harmonic centers than individual pitches.) This musical sense of light and shade imbues the up and down of sounds with all sorts of subtle variations. Much of this is understood by listeners instinctively, but the analogies that connect music and visual art can be subtle and mysterious. Musical lines as they rise suggest the sky, flying, yearning, reaching, evaporating. Lines moving downward suggest earthiness, discouragement, sighing, diabolical or angry moods. Circular melodies such as “Windmills of Your Mind” and “Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair” have an internal motion that suggests circles, closure, returning, the contrast of the present moment with memories. Songs that feature melodic loops (that return to the same notes in small circles) such as “Amazing Grace” and “Ode to Joy” have special emotional power—such tunes are archetypal.

Color is life, sensuality, passion, or softness! Form, design, and line flow are more intellectual. The two married together can make a work of art, but the mood and feeling are the real entry points into the painting or the composition. Composers of the past knew that certain melodic building blocks (intervals) could create highly

specific emotional responses in listeners. Many of the Sound Principles (no pun intended) that I use when composing are discoveries I have made while composing—they were never taught to me. When you have discovered which emotions are codified within which intervals, it becomes second nature to create themes that embody what you want to convey. It is as if music has its own spectrum of feelings, strong or delicate, uplifting or downtrodden, similar to the color wheel but difficult to define. Surrounding the specific narrative of the melody is the “environmental” influence of harmonic colors and textures.

INNOVATION AND THE CREATIVE IMPULSE

I find the contemporary obsession with “innovation” and “being different” to be a moot point and a barrier to creativity (except in the hands of rare and great innovators who do push the envelope of art further into new domains). After all, if art is the individual expression of a unique being, working to communicate with others on the human condition, then each work of art is unique, new, never before known.

IS CREATION INSTANTANEOUS OR BIT BY BIT?

Every now and then an epiphany: I see before me an entire painting in a flash, every aspect of it down to the final brushstrokes, and then the challenge becomes to capture that vision. Figure 5 is an example of a painting where I was able to execute my instantaneous “flash.” It is called *From the Ashes, Rebirth*, and it uses the stable shape of a triangle to convey that ideas such as wisdom and compassion can survive the fires of oppression. Rising from the flames is the phoenix, icon of hope and renewal.

The Armenian, Hebrew, and English titles represent concepts that have survival value. When books are burned, people and civilization are at risk. I have therefore used fully saturated, brilliant colors and thick brushstrokes. I have incorporated a sense of forward motion as if the endangered stacks of books, encased within the stable form of the triangle, are still in violent motion, protesting against the outrage. Wisdom at the top is depicted as an open book—it is my hope that it remains so throughout the struggles of history. This painting is more symbolic than my usual artwork in order to convey Freedom of Thought and Right to Life, two of the thirty rights from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ratified by the United Nations in 1948. *From the Ashes, Rebirth* is currently on its way to cities around the planet (Florence, Egypt, London, San Francisco, Washington,

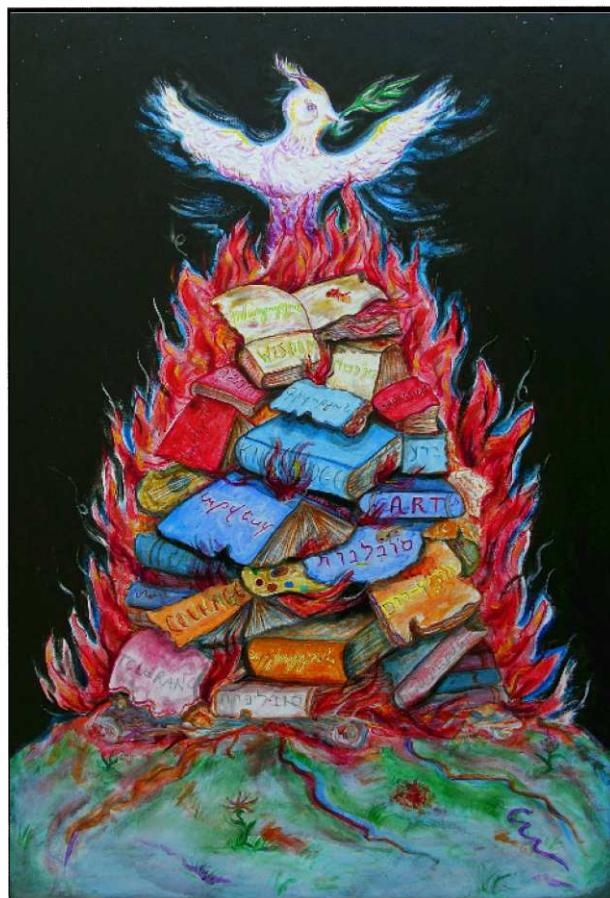


Fig. 5. *From the Ashes, Rebirth*, copyright © 2006 Carol Worthey

DC, Boston, Manhattan) as part of the exhibit *Artists for Human Rights*.

Can I envision a completed piece of music in one moment of inspiration the way I can in visual art? Yes and no. By yes, I mean that when I am creating music in a rush heat and it is flowing fast and furious and moving into new domains and yet sounds “inevitable,” it seems that within the first seeds of the initial theme I anticipated the entire work. It just flows. Do I hear it all at the same split second? No.

COMPOSING: THE PROCESS

I love to open my music up the way a kaleidoscope changes, each second unique unto itself but somehow leading into the next, a balance of expectation and surprise. This is where Destiny and Choice meet! A composer is one who can make decisions. I like to compare the art of composing to Alice in Wonderland walking down a long corridor with doors leading to unknown places. Sometimes you open up a door that leads to the wrong garden and “Off with your head”! I have been known to discard five

Fl. Vla. Hp.

41

45

Flute / Viola / Harp

An Iridescent Splash in Liquid Time

C. Worley

Fl. Vla. Hp.

48 B

52

56

Flute / Viola / Harp

An Iridescent Splash in Liquid Time

C. Worley

Ex. 1. *An Iridescent Splash in Liquid Time*, pages 4–5, copyright © 2004 Carol Worley

minutes of seemingly good music because it followed the wrong path. If only life had this kind of hindsight! No instant replay there.

It may seem at times that I am in a dry spell, but I am always composing, like an underground stream. All I have to do is dip my fishing pole into the stream. Something in life will trigger the music: I hear it unfold as a full fabric of sound, melody, countermelodies, harmonies, instrumentation, even words if it is a song. I let it flow as far as it will go (occasionally it rolls out to the end) until there is a stopping point. Then I look back at what the purely creative moment has given me and isolate discernible, characteristic elements that give the music its character, a particular sonority or motif. I use this power of analysis and my know-how (“craft”) to lengthen and develop the musical themes, bearing in mind that contrast will be needed sometimes to keep the attention of the listener involved as the piece rolls forward like a tapestry unwound from its loom.

I may see colors and shapes (waterfalls, sunsets, dancing figures) or feel weather as I compose, but as far as colors “heard/seen” while I compose, these are never quite the same as the reds, blues, greens, and other colors that exist on this planet. The painting *Musical Mermaid*, on the cover of this issue, is my companion piece for a musical work, *An Iridescent Splash in Liquid Time*, for flute, viola,

and harp, world premiered in 2005 by the Debussy Trio (example 1). The piece uses “iridescence” (the shimmering of colors, as in a peacock feather or mother of pearl) as its keynote. When I wrote this work, I had been ill for awhile and was discouraged. Composing it, I felt as if I were leaping into a glowing, healthy future—the work is healing. I am well!

The loving radiance of music is a healing force! *Elegy* for cello and piano, world premiered at St. Martin-in-the-Fields by cellist Joyce Geeting and pianist Robert Sage, is a musical enactment of September 11 from sunrise of that day to the following sunrise. (I was almost there on that day.) *Elegy* was written not only as a tribute to those lost but as a healing work for those left behind. The cover, a geometric sunrise, suggests the musical sunrises that give a circular narrative to the piece (figure 6 and example 2). I love to use circles both in my music and in my painting.

All of my score covers have my artworks on them. This was my husband’s idea. (I am fortunate to have an in-house computer genius who designs and constantly updates my Web site, <http://www.carolworley.com>.) I have written a few programmatic works but have infused them with the nameless power of abstract music. Too much specific imagery takes away the listener’s freedom to imagine.

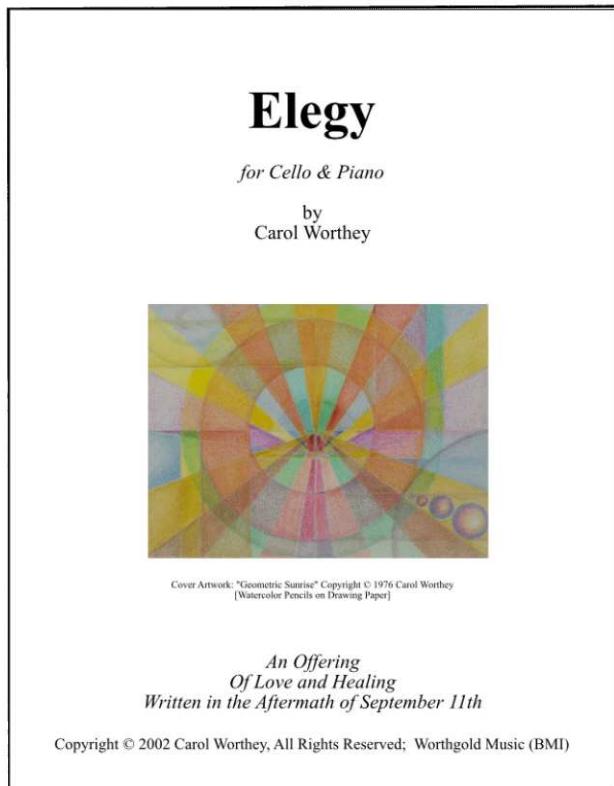


Fig. 6. *Elegy*; cover artwork, *Geometric Sunrise*, copyright © 1976 Carol Worthey; music, *Elegy*, copyright © 2002 Carol Worthey

Do I listen to music when I paint? Not usually. I prefer to be surrounded by the sounds of nature in case a musical stirring begins.

ILLUSIONS AND PERCEPTION

One of the ironic differences between music and visual art is that there are more optical illusions than sound illusions. Acousticians, exploring how sound works and noticing that a person can isolate the sound of one voice in the midst of a restaurant's din, are amazed at the ability people have to separate out sound sources and distance through sound. In fact, sound is a more accurate method of determining the rate of approach of a vehicle than is sight. However, certain sound illusions do exist, and they can be used or avoided by a composer at will. I have isolated for myself what these are, but that is a subject for another paper.

Sound connects, waves emanate, vibrations shake us from the outside in, or pulse within our very veins. Radio is the medium that expresses universality. The music of the spheres is no longer seen by scientists as an anachronistic fallacy. All of life vibrates.

Sight separates into patterns, edges, discrete places,

Ex. 2. *Elegy*, page 19, copyright © 2002 Carol Worthey

distances, and, yes, sight dominates in today's linear world, where the modern citizen often feels like a cipher in a sea of uniformity. When sight and sound join hands, feeling and intellect meld. That more than anything else is why I paint and compose.

Music is a hard taskmaster, demanding years of discipline to master the art of orchestration and notation. If one wants to achieve what the great composers of the past were able to do, one struggles to learn conducting, score reading and effortless "in-real-time" composing. What do I mean by "in-real-time" composing? Hearing the entire fabric of orchestral or vocal sounds at one and the same time, instantaneously, as the music is happening. Usually, I run to the piano or grab some kind of paper to capture what I have heard in a personal shorthand I have developed over the years. But if I am composing in the shower or in the car or, as sometimes happens, in my sleep, I have trained myself to recall all or most of it. (If I cannot recall it, I assume it is not worth agonizing over. If it is good, it will surface later.) Currently, I am having fun picturing in my mind what the score page looks like at the moment I hear any music. This visualization adds another dimension to the listening experience and helps me notate my own music more quickly.

Composers who begin with one part of the music (a tune or riff) and then "layer in" ideas one by one on electronic devices are missing the full experience, as far as I am concerned. Scrambling to meet deadlines or bur-

dened by lack of ear training, they are painting in flat dimensions. Hearing it all created from one instant to the next is thrilling, but it takes a lot of ear training and fearlessness to ride the wave! The secret is to listen to your own music and allow it to flow.

What has happened to the art of listening today? Music making in the home was common not that long ago. Now, families hardly converse at dinner, glued as they are to the TV, arguing about who gets to hold the remote. When society forfeits its participation in the arts, that society has been bought by the gods of materialism, greed, complacency, and ignorance. And so it is. We have become a supremely Visual Society. Have we jaded moderns endangered ourselves by losing our caveman sense of approaching danger?

Although I am a painter (and adore the activity of designing and executing powerful or gentle works of art), I am saddened that the eye has ruled not only the ear but also (it seems) the heart. The heart listens. Have we forgotten how to listen? I see children attending concerts who are so used to being parked in front of the “conscienceless babysitter,” known as the TV, that they simply do not understand that living people are playing music in front of them, that it is happening now, not handed to them on a platter predigested. Live music is hurting for lack of live people listening. But that is why the music of today must involve the listener in a dialogue—I call it *active listening*. If you let your mind wander from a piece of music, you have missed the evolution of the piece. Escape from your bills, your worries, your woes and enter the experience. Dare to be an active listener.

THE BENEFITS OF TECHNICAL SKILL

A paradox of art is that it is necessary to cultivate technical skill in order to get beyond it. Then one does not have to think about it—the technique is there instinctively along with the emotional environment you want to convey. Have you experienced a concert where the performer’s expertise was so effortless that you paid no attention to difficulties and could concentrate on the emotional impact of the music itself? That is what I mean.

THROUGH MUSIC WE CONQUER THE RAVAGES OF TIME

Memories defy death and immortalize life. Music seems to place in the realm of time bits and pieces of our passing moments and feelings. It is the language of time and the spinning of recollection and the guessing of future happenings event by event—where chance and inevita-

bility meet head on. Music is a universe unto itself that dissipates the loneliness of individuals and dissolves barriers, creating community. Like the invisible membranes that separate parallel universes (current physicists tell us), music follows laws both physical and mystical—like string theory, music is woven of enveloping sound, waves, and vibration. As time involves motion and change, the rhythms and pulses surround us. Ironically, the soothing energies of sound come directly out of force and what one might call conflict, from wind pushed through tight channels or from the striking of objects that shake. Paintings (to their strength and to their detriment) do not float in the air as sound does—paintings can be carried, nailed to walls, they stay put, however much their lines and forms imply movement.

Perhaps that is a practical reason why I paint. Selling music can be daunting. Music floats in the air, a beautiful mockery of our spiritual invisibility as beings. Paintings have mass and can be touched, moved, framed, and mounted on walls. They are a lot easier to buy. Fortunately, the greatest paintings seem to escape out of the boundaries of their frames, suddenly implying music, dance, or the passage of time and memory.

Music is expressed in time, but, more important, it is about time. The greatest compositions transcend time and become timeless. This is true of visual art, but paintings are more physical. By actual survey, the average viewer takes in a painting in the first five to fifteen seconds. Listening takes time, patience, a willingness to change.

PRACTICALITIES

1. Only undertake dual careers if creating in both areas is as essential as breathing! Doing so is not for the faint of heart.
2. Organize separate workspaces, each with its own file system, reference books, materials, tools. Do not jam the workspaces into each other.
3. Find the best tools—ones that feel comfortable. For my music notation system I use Mark of the Unicorn’s Mozaic. It is user-friendly and prints beautifully. For painting, explore which brush-tip shapes you prefer; use brush-cleaning soap. I find Linux-type desktops to be very useful, especially since they avoid viruses.
4. Examine when you tend to create with vigor. Are you a morning or a night person? Generally, writers are morning people—many successful writers get up at dawn, write until noon, then quit and do chores, do research, or relax. I find that painters are day people. Isn’t the sunlight crucial to the best sense

of color and design? Most composers tend to work at night (of course, with every rule of thumb, there are exceptions). If you are a writer, a painter, and a composer, you will need to discipline yourself to get rest, or your body will discipline you.

5. Get a good night's sleep. I am still working on that one. I find creativity so enlivening that I am energized with multiple "second winds" and often work all night.
6. Get some space, walk, do something totally for fun! Withdraw from the work if it is dragging and getting overly complex. You will return refreshed.
7. The best works are easy to create; complexity and difficulty of execution are not emblems of greatness but signs that something went off the rails. (These observations work for me; you may disagree.)
8. Promote, promote, promote! Several days a week or part-time each day. Personal one-on-one is often best, but today we have a huge advantage in the potential worldwide audience on the Internet. Keep your Rolodex and Web addresses up-to-date. Use your own name for your Web site. Link wisely, and get others to link to you.
9. Surround yourself with competent, trustworthy associates. Do not do as I did. After my dad died at age forty-nine in the last week of my senior year, I dropped most of my performer contacts for some years. Composers need performers, conductors, tuners, patrons, recording engineers, organizations that commission or train. Painters need framers, photographers, printers, gallery owners, curators, art store helpers.
10. Search out the great teachers and treasure them. Great composers are not always good teachers, but they are usually phenomenal people because of the discipline it takes to learn the craft. I have been very fortunate to have great teachers. If they are famous, so much the better. Keep a record of all your mentors and keep in touch with them. A few letters I wrote years ago to Vincent Persichetti are in the Persichetti Collection of the New York Public Library.
11. The best teacher of composition is doing it. Observe for yourself what musical choices you prefer. Books or astute teachers are helpful if you are in a rut, repeating yourself, or using formulas. Ear training is the most essential skill to develop and practice: melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic, in that order. Play along with CDs or radio, improvising or following themes and harmonies, allowing yourself freedom from self-criticism. Sometimes the best ideas begin

with a slip of the finger; nothing is a mistake if it is surrounded by the right context. If you really want to learn how to compose, study arranging. Learn the tricks of the trade: how to create "fills" (melodic tidbits that intersperse the theme), effective bass lines, and a sense of dramatic "build." Get everything played so you can hear what works and what does not. This know-how applies to any style. If you are a visual artist, learning how to draw teaches you accuracy of observation and how to control gestures. Explore which medium or genre you prefer. Study the techniques of the great masters without worrying if you will lose your own style.

12. Decide which *goals* you want to achieve. Write them down and pare them down into obtainable projects with estimated target dates. Then work on the plans that will put them into actuality. Keep a written record of goals, but keep them private, except for your most trusted advisors, and do not promote your projects until they are finished!
13. Attend events, concerts (go backstage if you liked the performance), and gallery or museum openings. Be personable. Do not speak only about yourself; it turns people off. Ask and listen for what others are thinking and feeling. It is not only good manners, it is good business. More important, it helps to create friendships, and friendships are vital no matter what you do.
14. Have expressive, readable business cards that people instantly want to hold; have separate cards for each enterprise.
15. Create a one-page bio of yourself for each profession. Create program notes and advice for performers. Have them ready to print out when someone wants to perform your works.
16. Having a recognizable personal style makes it easier to market one's creations. Admittedly, I violate that because I love doing a variety of musical and pictorial styles and moods. Perhaps that is my personal signature. I feel that there is something indelibly "me" that marks whatever I do, and I do not worry about holding to one style. If I had to isolate one thing common to all my visual works, it would be a curvilinear line. In music, it is a certain radiance.
17. Join worthwhile groups. They are sources of networking and assistance, advice, training, promotion, potential commissions, grants—and friends! IAWM is such a group.
18. Know your strengths and be aware of your weaknesses. If you need assistance in some area, find someone trustworthy and knowledgeable. Be will-

ing to take positive advice from an experienced colleague without being defensive. After all, no one has "the full score," not even a conductor.

19. Collect stories of famous artists and celebrities who were told they would never make it. The executive who evaluated Fred Astaire's screen test ("Can sing. Dances a little.") did not last long on the company roster.

20. Marketing techniques and distribution channels differ in different fields; however, certain basic marketing principles (such as determining who your potential buyers are and what they need and want) work for any field. Doing surveys on your correct "public" is a smart way to find out how to "position" yourself.

21. Go to the top. Do not try to persuade the intermediaries. Secretaries usually try to prevent their bosses from getting your call. This topic could be an article unto itself.

22. Find out the current standards of your field. Do artists today generally use slides, JPEGs, or books to promote their art? Which notation or recording program is most used by composers, arrangers, and copyists?

23. Establish your unique individuality! What makes you different? What will the viewer or listener, the agent or buyer remember about you?

TO ALL ARTISTS

You are giving the breath of life to what makes civilizations last longer than their ruins. You are setting patterns, good or bad, for the future, creating new possibilities, reinstating lost treasures, sometimes tasting immortality, reminding us we are basically made of love. And always, whether you know it or not, you are conquering the ravages of time, all the while expressing the ironic beauty of the Human Condition! Please have fun doing it!



The International Alliance for Women in Music is a global network of women and men working to increase and enhance musical activities and opportunities and promote all aspects of the music of women.

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