



Remembering Matt Doran
Reflections from GPFS Member Rebecca Olson
September 1, 1921 - August 3, 2016

Several of his pieces are available to GPFS Members through the GPFS Lending Library!



Our GPFS Library includes some music by local composers, one such composer being Dr. Matt Doran.

Although he was born in Kentucky and spent much of his life in Los Angeles, in 1997 he moved to Vancouver, Washington and remained there until his death in 2016. He wrote many compositions while living in the Northwest. Many ensembles in the area performed his music, such as the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, the Clark College Orchestra and Choir, The Oregon Chamber Players, and even the **Rose City Flute Choir***. Matt taught flute and piano lessons at his home and had a flute club that met once a month to sight-read flute ensemble music, some of the music being his own compositions. His Vancouver Flute Club still continues today! Many of his hand-written manuscripts were type-set by his Vancouver neighbor.

The flute was Matt's favorite instrument, and he composed many works that included it

Flute and guitar, flute and cello*, flute/oboe/clarinet, woodwind quartets and quintets, and of course flute and piano, and flute alone.

You can look up “Matt Doran flute” on YouTube to listen to some of his flute works.

Our library has two of his flute alone pieces: *Motive and Five Variations*, and *Encore and Scherzo*.

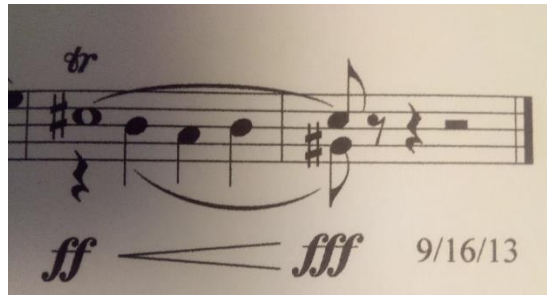
- *Motive and Five Variations* for Solo Flute was written in 2006, but not premiered until 2009. You can listen to the premiere by Centralia, Washington flutist, Franji Mayes, with this link: <https://youtu.be/k-PuBdCezMY>. It's a substantial work, about 8 minutes in length. The haunting motive was taken from his orchestral piece, *Memoirs of Marianne*, written earlier. * Marianne was Matt's daughter that passed away at the age of 46 from breast cancer. Her death significantly impacted Matt, causing him to abandon his Catholic faith.
- *Encore and Scherzo* were written in 2013. The Scherzo is very short and includes his trademark trills. Matt was very fond of trills! The last two measures have the flutist trilling while fingering other notes, creating an unusual effect. *

We also have 4 of his flute and piano works: *Piece, Four Movements*, and *Sonata #13 and #14*. *Piece for Flute and Piano* was one of Matt's last compositions, written in March of 2016. It consists of three very short movements, the flute part fitting on just one sheet of paper. It makes use of our highest B, but is a relatively simple piece that a student could master! According to Matt, *Sonata 14* should be programmed before *Sonata 13* if played on the same concert. He mentioned having heard an orchestra play Shostakovich's 6th Symphony followed by his 5th Symphony, and that it was better that way!

Our GPFS library also has some of Matt's flute ensemble works. *Variations and Scherzo for Large Flute Ensemble* was commissioned in 2010 and dedicated to the West Michigan Flute Association. There are two performances of this on YouTube, one by the Long Beach State College flute choir and the other performed in Melbourne, Australia. Here is the link to the Australian performance: <https://youtu.be/CHLquPJCTSk>

Our library includes smaller ensemble works, as well: *Four Movements for Four Flutes and Piano*, *Waltz and Variations for Four Flutes and Piano*, and *Quartet for 3 Flutes and Piano*. Matt didn't usually use key signatures, but his Waltz and Variations begins and ends with two sharps. He used a lot of 16th note passages in much of his music, as well as triplet sections. His flute ensemble music has a lot of parallel rhythms in the parts, so it's not too difficult to put together. There are also simple, lovely mournful melodies.

- You can listen to a beautiful performance of the Rose City Flute Choir playing the Doran Sextet here: <https://youtu.be/5R3KGmQxHho>



- The Jano Duo recorded Doran's *Sonatina for Flute and Cello* on their 2018 album, *Dreaming in Color*. Naomi Seidman, the flutist, is on faculty at The Pennsylvania University School of Music.



Picture Right, Pictured at Event: In 2014, there was a lifetime recognition concert for Matt Doran in Vancouver, Washington. He wrote almost 300 pieces of music, and quite a bit of it was performed while he was alive. But not all of it has been recorded! Perhaps this is a task you would like to take on! Go ahead, check out some of his music from the GPFS library or explore some of his other works. Find something that resonates with you, and record it! 😊



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