

# Teaching & Learning

*Music is the divine way to tell beautiful, poetic things to the heart. Pablo Casals*

## NFA Summer Series 2020, Orchestral Excerpt Masterclass with Elizabeth Rowe hosted by Martha C. Long

Written by GPFS member [Sandy Duffy Norman](#)



I would like to preface this report with my earliest encounters with [Elizabeth Rowe](#) and her artistry as a flutist. She is from Eugene, Oregon and I live and teach in Salem. When I was a young flute teacher attending my students district performances, I heard ninth grade Elizabeth Rowe play the Chaminade Concertino along with the other performers to be adjudicated that day. That impressive performance opened my mind to the musical and virtuosic possibilities that could be achieved by such a

talent, even at the age of 14 or 15. A couple of years later, the first time I had students in the OSAA state solo competition, Elizabeth performed Frank Martin's Ballade, memorized of course, winning first place that year (and also the year before, unbeknownst to me). My respect for her command of the stage and her commitment to performing the music began and made an indelible impact on my expectations as a teacher. Since then I have kept track of her progress through USC with her teacher Jim Walker and her subsequent orchestral career. When I learned that the amazing Oregon Symphony principal flutist, Martha C. Long, was a student of Elizabeth Rowe, I felt a gratification and somehow connected to this high powered flute culture we have in Oregon.

This masterclass was everything I knew it would be and it was a true pleasure to view these fabulous performances through the ears of Boston Symphony principal flutist, Elizabeth Rowe.

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[A full overview of this masterclass can be requested through newsletter@gpfs.org](mailto:newsletter@gpfs.org)

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### Final Round Repertoire:

- Ludwig van Beethoven, Third Symphony in Eb Major Op 55, IV. Allegro molto, bars 171-200
- Maurice Ravel, Bolero, Tempo di Bolero moderato assai, bar 1 to [1]
- Richard Strauss, Salome Op 54, Ziemlich langsam, 2 before [D] to 4 after[H]
- Serge Prokofiev, Peter and the Wolf, Allegro, 5 before [2] 5 after [5]

### Masterclass Moderator/Coordinator:

[Martha C. Long](#) is the principal flutist of the [Oregon Symphony](#) and the coordinator for the Orchestral Audition Competition and Masterclass. Bachelor of Music, Colburn School with Jim Walker; GD, New England Conservatory with Elizabeth Rowe.

## Highlights from the National Flute Association Summer Series Session, “Commissioning 101”

Written by GPFS member [Adrian Dee](#)

The NFA did a fabulous job this year of converting the annual convention to an entirely online experience. There were many pre-recorded performances which simply blew me away, as well as many live panels and conversations which were very educational and inspiring.

- **Selecting a Composer:** The first big decision when commissioning a new piece is selecting your composer. Whether you select someone you know or someone you don't know, but whose music you are familiar with, start by building a relationship. Start with a conversation about what you envision. Depending on whether or not you already have a relationship with this person, be sure to include in your conversation things other than music – life events, hobbies, travel, whatever. The better the composer knows you and understands you, the more likely you will get more of what you want in the final composition. Remember to encourage the composer's own voice; try not to ask for something they have already written.
- **Agreement Formalities:** For your agreement, put everything in writing. If not a formal document, then at least a simple letter or email stating the nuts and bolts of the agreement. For example: the fee, the payment schedule, the length and instrumentation of the work, any funding arrangement, whether other costs will be included, delivery date of the first draft and final score, any premier performance arrangements, any publishing arrangements, and the manner in which you and the composer will communicate.

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*Commissioning a new piece of music is more than just paying someone to do something. It is conversation, interaction, and sharing of ideas in the interest of generating a new work of art.*

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- **Fees:** Negotiating a commission fee can be different for each project. A more experienced and known composer will command a higher fee than someone just embarking on their career. A longer piece, or larger ensemble takes more work and will require a higher fee. For some guidance, take a look at [New Music USA's page](#) on commissioning fees. Make an agreement on whether the fee will

be paid all up front, or half at time of agreement and half when the final score is delivered, or whatever other arrangement you both decide upon. Discuss if there will be other costs, such as copying and postage, travel to the premier, technical equipment required for performance, and which if any of these costs will be included in what you will be paying. Be clear about any funding opportunities you will be pursuing – a commissioning club? Grants? For resources, look into Chamber Music America, the NFA, ASCAP and BMI, New Music USA, and any local organizations that support new music. Will you be arranging a premier of the new work? How will costs for that performance be covered? Will you be premiering the piece? Will you have exclusive performance rights for any period of time? What about publishing the piece – is the composer already affiliated with a publisher? Will there be any publishing costs?

- **The First Draft:** Be aware that when the first draft of the work is presented, this can be a fragile moment for the composer. Choose your words carefully and invite rather than tell. Do not make a judgement about whether the work is “good” or not; be open to trying new things. Offer solutions rather than critique. If you think something is unplayable, offer what you think might work better for a wider range of performers. If you’re not sure what the composer wants in a certain passage, simply say “I’m not sure what you are wanting here.” Offer to play what you think it is, and ask for feedback. Remember as the performer, you are an interpreter. Remember to enjoy the hard stuff.

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