

Post-Project Evaluation

With the grant funds given, I presented three concerts for harp and oboe inspired by Rilke's set of poems, the *Sonnets to Orpheus*. The concert included a world premiere by Douglas Fisk, which the Urbana Arts Grant generously funded. The concerts were held at Clark-Lindsey Retirement Village, the Urbana Free Library, and the University of Illinois Rare Book and Manuscript Library, which also houses the Gerhard Mayer Collection of Rainer Maria Rilke.

To provide context for the poems, we projected illustrations related to the text from the Gerhard Mayer Collection and described the history surrounding Rilke's writing of the *Sonnets*. Douglas Fisk's work, which also included mezzo-soprano, was a highlight, and we received a lot of positive feedback from audience members about it. Initially my proposal was to split the grant funds between the commission fee and the oboist's travel, but I ended up devoting all of the grant funds to the composer's commission and paid travel expenses out of personal funds.

Fisk's background is in post-minimalist composition, and his piece, *Sonnets and Interludes*, was a beautiful contrast to the modernist works already written for harp and oboe. The work alternates harp/oboe/mezzo movements with harp/oboe movements that can be played separately from the whole song cycle. Because of that, the oboist and I have already had the opportunity to play the oboe/harp movements again in New York, where we presented a concert without a vocalist. That said, the movements with voice are gorgeous and well-constructed, and the whole work will be a chamber piece that many people will enjoy playing.

I spent 90 hours planning the project: communicating through emails, visiting concert sites, practicing and rehearsing the music, visiting the Gerhard Mayer Collection, collecting image scans, translations, and history surrounding the text, and organizing the program of the concerts. There were approximately thirty people at the Clark-Lindsey concert, twenty people at the Urbana Free Library, and twenty people at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library concert for a total of seventy people attending the concerts.

Because the venues have promotional departments, the printing of materials and digital advertising (email blasts, Facebook and Twitter posts, etc.) was largely done through their means. In addition, though, I advertised through email, Facebook, and posting flyers around town. Because of the infrastructure already in place at the venues, many aspects of the concerts - space, chairs, projectors, screens, etc. - were very generously taken care of by them. The fact that the spaces all have event series also helped generate an audience outside of my own circle. After the concerts, I received an email from Paula Martin after the Clark-Lindsey concert saying that she heard from "so many residents that the concert you presented was wonderful!" Carol Inskeep at Urbana Free Library was also very appreciative after our concert at the Urbana Free Library, and at all three venues audience members came up afterwards to ask questions and give their response to the music, text, and illustrations presented. It felt like a success!

Project Documentation

- 1) Clark-Lindsey1.pdf: Photo of concert at Clark-Lindsey
- 2) Clark-Lindsey2.pdf: Photo after the concert at Clark-Lindsey
- 3) UFL picture.jpg: Photo after the concert at Urbana Free Library
- 4) Sonnets and Interludes ScoreR.pdf: Commissioned Score by Douglas Fisk
- 5) UFL poster.pdf: Flyer for the Urbana Free Library Concert
- 6) Clark-Lindsey poster.pdf: Flyer for the Clark-Lindsey Concert

Fiscal Report

Expenses

Composer Commission: \$2000