

How to create the **gift of music**, specially composed



The idea

Your loved one can be immortalized through music, thanks to a partnership between the Lewisville Lake Symphony and the internationally acclaimed College of Music at the University of North Texas.

The “Love and Immortality Project” allows anyone to commission a musical composition specially created by a UNT graduate student. The project makes gift-giving easy, providing the commissioner with a composer, performers and all of the information they need to navigate the sometimes complicated process of commissioning music.

Four UNT graduate students — Jay Alan Walls, Ben Johansen, Jiří Levíček, and Eli Fieldsteel were selected in a juried composition to serve as composers for the project. Samples of their music can be heard via links on the Symphony website. Each of the composers already has an accomplished a body of work that has been performed in the US and in one case, internationally.

Costs of the commissioned pieces will vary according to the length of the piece and the number of musicians required for performance. A work for four or fewer instruments lasting about five minutes could cost \$5,000 — including the composer’s fee, a recorded copy of the composition and the performing musicians in a world premiere under the auspices of the Symphony. The time needed to create a new work varies according to the size of the piece. Small-scale works might take a few months to compose, whereas an elaborate work might require 18 to 24 months of work.



Lewisville Lake Symphony

Adron Ming, Music Director/Conductor

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
COLLEGE OF MUSIC

Immortality sometimes happens

Over the centuries, people have given music as a gift. The giver may not be remembered by history but the recipient has a shot at immortality. For example, a former Russian ambassador, Count Kaiserling, commissioned the Goldberg Variations from a local composer, Johann Sebastian Bach. The composer burnished his reputation and Johann Goldberg, in a way, became immortal. The outcome would probably satisfy the Count.

For most people, a gift of music involves a lot of unknowns. What is a fair cost? How to find a really talented composer? How to navigate the whole process? Who has what rights to the composition?

The Lewisville Lake Symphony's Love and Immortality Project provides a well structured path for giving the ultimate romantic gift or to honor someone remembered each day.

Responsibilities

Both the composer and the commissioner have responsibilities. The composer must produce a worthy composition. The commissioner must clearly define their wishes and then trust the composer.

The Love and Immortality Project offers four winning composers. Each has his own 'voice.' The commissioner should listen to the samples of their music and very carefully decide which resonates with their own musical tastes.

The commissioner must tell the composer in some detail what is important. Perhaps it is a portrait of the personality of the person to receive the gift, or be remembered. Perhaps the place or circumstances of their first meeting. Perhaps a day they always celebrate.

Once the composer has gathered the necessary insights, the commissioner must step back and trust the composer.

The commissioner should not request a piece 'in the style of Chopin' - just as Chopin would not have been expected to write a piece in the style of Bach. A piece using a theme of Chopin would work. The result will be in the selected composer's 'voice' and likely sound very different from Chopin.

Given the talent of the group of winning composers the commissioned work will likely be a wonderful gift. However, on a sobering note, sponsors of art have to live with the results of their generosity. Frank Lloyd Wright famously told a client to go plant ivy if he didn't like the façade of the commissioned house. As some salve, the design remains much admired by architectural critics.

Costs

All things are possible – for a price. A work for four or fewer instruments lasting about five minutes costs \$5,000. That includes the composer's fee, a recorded copy of the composition and, with caveats noted below, the performing musicians.

Longer compositions and those for larger sets of musicians carry progressively higher price tags. The Symphony will be happy to provide prices after a discussion of the commissioner's intentions.

Copying

'Copying,' the process of creating individual versions of the score for each musician, is built into the basic price noted above. If the commissioned piece is longer or involves a more complex group of instruments, 'copying' becomes more of an issue and has to be added into the cost structure.

Instrumentation

A commissioned piece to be performed in the International Chamber Series should be for four or fewer musicians, and the combination should preferably be one for which there is already an appealing repertoire. The same musicians can thus be used for the full concert program and their performance fees will be part of the Symphony's regular expenses.

Symphonic compositions

The same consideration applies to a larger piece to be played by orchestra in our Symphony Series. Our Symphony musicians are all professionals and are paid fairly for rehearsal and performance time under a contract with the American Federation of Musicians.

Musicians used for only the commissioned piece will run up costs for the commissioner because they must be paid as though they were performing for the full concert.

A broadly used combination of instruments also increases the prospect that the piece might be accepted into the general American repertoire.

Taxes

Commissions are normally tax deductible if arranged through a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation such as the Lewisville Lake Symphony. Check with your tax consultant.

Ownership

Composers retain the rights to their own work under the copyright laws, and thus the legal ownership of the piece remains with the composer. However, the commissioner is acknowledged in many ways - on the first page of the musical score, on any official recording, in the performance program and often in other written materials.

It is customary for the commissioner to be given a presentation copy of the completed score, almost always specially inscribed by the composer. For compositions commissioned as part of the Love and Immortality Project, an archive recording will also be provided.

Time

A smaller scale work, for example a set of songs for piano and voice, might be written in a few months. An elaborate work might need 18–24 months from the signing of an agreement until the work is ready for performance. Composition is a cumbersome process. One much sought after composer noted that her recent 20 minute piece involved 156,000 notes that had to be chosen and put in the right sequence. Another time factor to consider is how soon the selected composer is available to begin work on your project.

Recordings

The Symphony will provide an ‘archival’ recording of the composition. It may be copied and given limited distribution to the recipient of the gift, friends and acquaintances.

Symphony Series

A recording of a performance by the Lewisville Lake Symphony can only be sold commercially or widely distributed under the terms of the contract between the Symphony and the American Federation of Musicians. This requires revenues but not expenses to be shared with the players. Usually, broad distribution incurs heavy costs and the Symphony has never found a circumstance where it could viably sell performance recordings. The same would probably be true of subsequent performances by other professional orchestras.

Chamber Series

Our Chamber Series is performed by graduate students or faculty of the College of Music at UNT. Commercial distribution is thus simpler although subject to the copyright laws noted above.

Recordings independent of the Symphony

Commercial recordings are a matter for the commissioner and the composer to establish.

Agreements

All three parties, the Symphony, as the 'marriage broker,' the commissioner and the composer, will sign a simple three-way Letter of Agreement (LOA). The commissioner and the composer then enter into a contract before work starts. Some parts are standard, some negotiable.

World Premiere

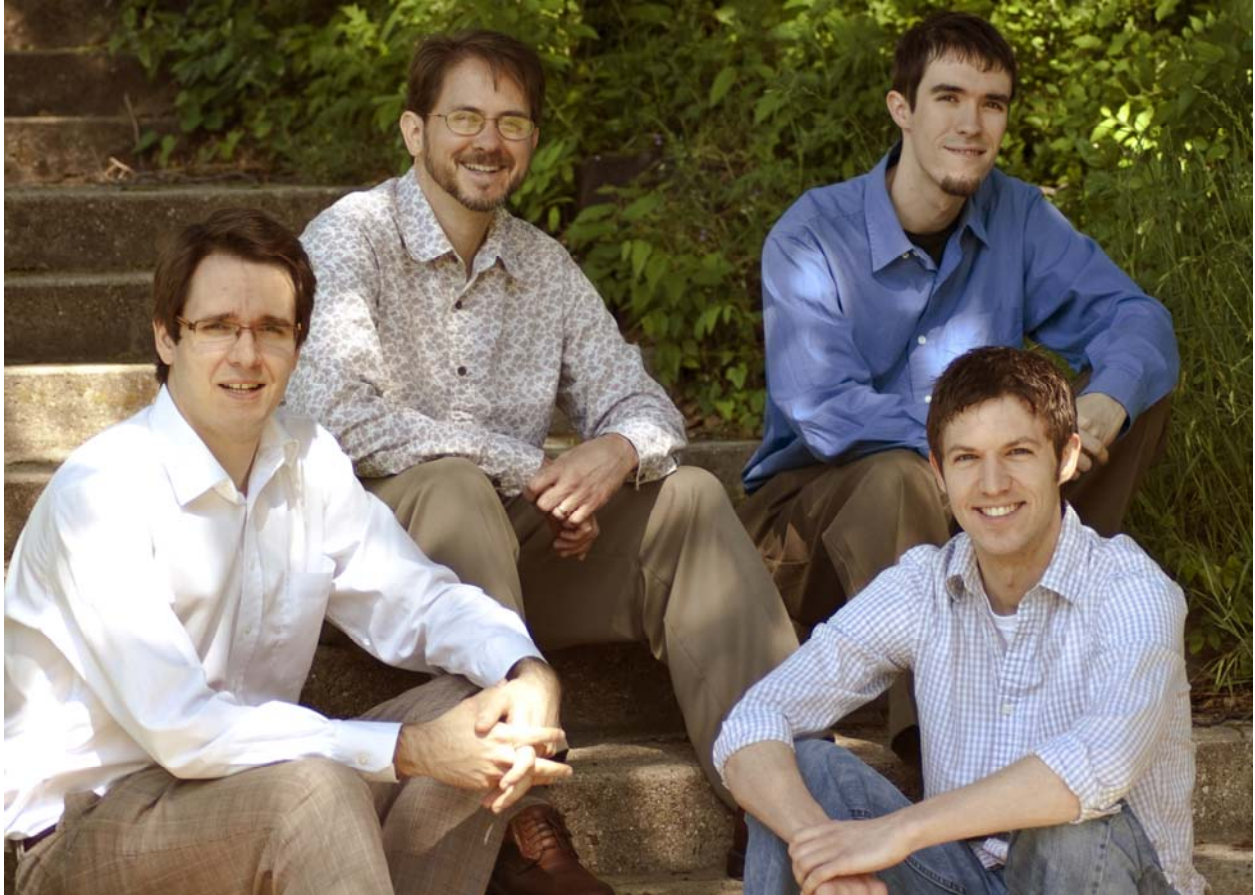
The Symphony wants to provide its audiences with exciting new 21st Century works that counterpoint the more traditional parts of its repertory. Also, pragmatically, while providing a tax free setting for the gift, part of the price includes a donation to the Symphony that helps its community outreach.

Letter of Agreement specifies that the World Premiere of the composition will be at a Lewisville Lake Symphony event.

Initial performances in a private setting are not traditionally considered a 'premiere.'

The Composers

Photo: Amanda Walker



The Symphony and UNT has selected a group of young, highly talented composers. To find them, they established a juried competition. The judges declared four of the entrants to be winners and worthy of the ambitions of the Project.

Clockwise from the left, composers Jiří Levíček, Jay Alan Walls, Eli Fieldsteel and Ben Johansen

Competition Judges

The 2010 Love and Immortality Composer's Competition was judged by:

Adron Ming, Music Director/Conductor, the Lewisville Lake Symphony

Dr. Pamela Mia Paul, Regents Professor of Piano at UNT

Dr. Joseph Klein, Professor of Music Composition. Chair, Division of Composition Studies at UNT.

Ben Johansen



I am curious. Dismantling and constructing interesting mechanisms is something I grew up doing, and continue to do, because I enjoy the journey of discovering how things work and how they are made. My intense drive to understand, experience, and

absorb all that I can greatly shows in my work. I love to learn, I love to teach, and I love to create.

I completed my Bachelor's in Music Education (with a saxophone emphasis) and Master's in Music Composition at Baylor University. I am currently at the University of North Texas (UNT) working on a Doctorate in Musical Arts in Composition Specializing in Computer Media and minoring in Installation Art.

This semester at UNT, I am a staff member of the Center for Experimental Music and Intermedia (CEMI) and a Teaching Assistant for Intermedia Performance Art class. Additionally, I am teaching Electronic Studio at Baylor University as an adjunct professor. I have also been asked to mentor a student in the Frisco Independent Study and Mentorship (ISM) program, a new and rewarding experience for me. Teaching and inspiring others about music, electronics, and art are among my most significant ambitions.

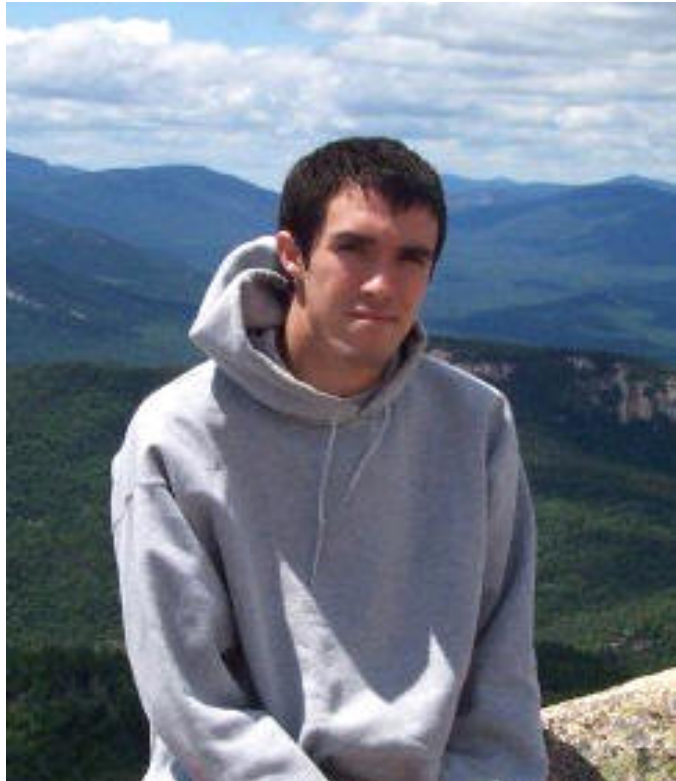
In my music, I approach a medium very methodically in order to discover how it is made and how it works. Then, I approach writing for that medium passionately in order to fill the medium with life and communicate through it. Interactive electronic music and music for acoustic instruments are of equal curiosity to me, and visual aesthetics are very important to me. My interests lie mostly in theatrical and spatial issues, improvisation, and installation art. Giving a listener an enjoyable journey of discovering new sounds and experiencing new things are integral parts of my life as a composer.

Samples of Ben's work can be heard at <http://www.benjohansen.com>

Eli Fieldsteel

Eli Fieldsteel (b. 1986) is an American composer, conductor, arranger, and percussionist with a particular interest in music for large ensemble. His works have been performed in a number of venues across the country.

Eli became seriously interested in composition in 2002, when he joined the Wesleyan Wind Ensemble as a percussionist. Over the next three years, the group performed and recorded six of his compositions for wind band. Eli received his Bachelor's degree in music from Brown University in 2008. During his time there, he studied composition, orchestration, and counterpoint with Gerald Shapiro. In 2005, he became the student conductor of the Brown Wind Symphony and conducted several of his new works. Eli has studied with David Bithell, Cindy McTee, and Jon C. Nelson at the University of North Texas, where he received his Master's degree in 2010. He is currently a doctoral composition student at the University of Texas at Austin.



Eli's recent work reflects an emerging interest in technology and electroacoustic music as well as a continuous desire to refine and personalize his rhythmic and tonal vocabulary. In 2009, *Fantasy for Wind Symphony* was selected as a finalist in the second Frank Ticheli Competition. In the same year, his orchestral work, *Cordillera*, was selected for performance by the UNT Symphony Orchestra in the school's annual Concerto Competition. In 2010, *Fantasy for Wind Symphony* was selected as the winner of the first annual Bandmasters' Academic Society of Japan competition and performed in Tokyo by the Kawagoe Sohwa Wind Ensemble.

Samples of Eli's work can be heard at <http://www.elifieldsteel.com/compositions>

"The emotional and representational power of music propels my work as an artist. My focus concerns the careful balance of pitch, gesture, timbre, and contour in order to create meaningful and expressive ideas. Music is remarkable in that it can tell a compelling story through sound alone. Music can breathe life into ink and paper.

I enjoy composing music with inherently physical, tangible qualities. Whether evoking a tender moment or a surge of passion, I want the music to leap from the page and draw the audience in. Above all else, I strive to create an enjoyable, memorable, and meaningful experience for the listener."

Eli Fieldsteel

Jiří Levíček

Jiří Levíček was born in 1984 in Brno, Czech Republic. He began studies at the Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in 1999 at the secondary school, and continued at the college level receiving his Bachelor's degree in 2006.

During the course of his academic career at the Janacek Academy, he attended summer piano courses in Prague, Český Krumlov and Kaunas (Lithuania), and participated in jazz workshops in Prague and Brno. Jiří went to the University of North Texas College of Music in 2006 as an exchange student and has remained there to pursue the prestigious Artist Certificate and Master's Degree. He has studied with Adam Wodnicki (classical piano), Stefan Karlsson (jazz piano) and Cindy McTee (composition), and has served as pianist for the famous One O'Clock Lab Band. His activities continue to enhance both the classical and jazz realms as a performer and composer.



Jiří has participated in a number of international piano competitions, and has performed widely both in Europe and the United States. He played his first concerto with orchestra at the age of 11; when he was fifteen he was invited to play Mozart Piano Concerto No.23 with Lithuanian Philharmonics under the baton of Paul Bermann; his first performance in USA took place at Czech Embassy in Washington D.C.; in 2009, he played for American Ambassador at The United States Embassy in Lima, Peru. In 2008, he was extensively playing with flutist James Scott both in US and Europe.

Hear two of Jiří's compositions at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRSM2FiZFFM>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xT6aGYfYaI>

"Emotional impact and logic are the main drivers for my compositions. As an active pianist, I have developed a deep understanding of the solo, chamber and orchestral works of "the greats" and to see how the music reflects their mind, soul and their environment. Although my musical 'voice' reflects the 21st century, the music of Bach, Haydn and Beethoven are my most essential guides of infinite creativity within clear form."

Jiří Levíček

Jay Alan Walls

Photo: Jonathan Walls

Jay Alan Walls (b. 1963) speaks a musical language that reflects his broad exposure to classical, jazz and popular idioms. He received his earliest training in piano and voice in his native city, Columbus, Ohio, and completed studies in vocal/choral music education at Harding University in Arkansas. At the University of North Texas, where he received a master's and is completing a doctorate, Walls has studied composition with Joseph Klein, Martin Mailman, Andrew May, and Cindy McTee. His teachers in electro-acoustic music have included Larry Austin, John Mallia, and Phillip Winsor.



A few highlights of Walls' accomplishments at North Texas include *Intimate Strangers*, a soundscape for dancers and fixed media, composed in collaboration with dancers from Texas Woman's University. *Three Sonnets* by Dante Alighieri for tenor and piano was premiered at Horchow Auditorium of the Dallas Museum of Art in 2007. Walls is currently composing *L'Occiale di Galileo*, a work for full orchestra celebrating Galileo's discoveries of the moons of Jupiter and the rings of Saturn in 1609 and 1610. Walls' chamber works include *Fugal Waltz on a Row* by Slonimsky for saxophone quartet, *Three Rags* for brass trio, *Autographs 1928: Four Songs for Soprano and Chamber Ensemble*, and *Rosa: Tango*, selected for performance by the Southern Methodist University String Quartet and presented on a master class with the New York-based string quartet ETHEL.

Walls' awards in composition include the Outstanding Music Composition Studies Graduate Student Award, the Dean's Camerata Scholarship, the Richard and Candace Faulk Scholarship, and the David M. Schimmel Memorial Scholarship. He has taught courses in music and Italian language in Searcy, Arkansas, in Florence, Italy, and in Houston, Dallas, and Denton, Texas. Beyond his professional pursuits, Walls enjoys cooking Italian food and spending time with his wife, two children, family and friends, and his church.

Samples of Jay's music can be heard at www.jayalanwalls.com .

"Music is a means of communication—a way of touching others more deeply than is possible with mere words. Yes, sometimes words have inspired me to write. I have borrowed the Psalms, Dante's sonnets, and even my maternal grandmother's autograph book from the late 1920s, but in each case the narrative is not created with words alone. Music connects with both intellect and emotion, and conveys ideas, feelings, virtues, collective memories, and the like. I often seek to make this sort of communication even more meaningful by finding connections with the past and weaving those elements into the fabric of a new work. From popular songs of my youth embedded in the texture of a saxophone quartet, to melodies for a tango derived from the numbers of Fibonacci's famous series, or even the spirit of discovery and perseverance of Galileo in a work for orchestra (with some of the scientist's brother's lute music tossed in the mix,) those connections enrich our shared experience and embellish the musical story...even without words."

Jay Alan Wells

Lewisville Lake Symphony

The Lewisville Symphony, recognized by the Texas Senate as one of the most respected regional orchestras in the State, serves an audience from 44 zip codes across the northern part of the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex.

The Symphony was founded in 1984 and has grown, under the baton of Music Director/Conductor Adron Ming, into an ensemble of highly talented, professional musicians who enthrall lovers of live music with masterworks that range from Mozart and Beethoven to Kurt Weil and Aaron Copland. All the musicians make their living through music. Some teach their instruments at Southern Methodist University or the University of North Texas. Others can be seen playing in the Fort Worth Symphony and in the pit at the Fair Park Summer Musicals and the Dallas Opera.



In cooperation with the University of North Texas, the Symphony also offers the Lewisville lake International Chamber Series. It features graduate students, and sometimes faculty, from the College of Music. Recent performers have come from Canada, China, Hungary, Japan, Mexico, Russia, South Korea, Taiwan, Ukraine, U.K., U.S.A., and Venezuela. The programs are usually a mix of well known traditional compositions and exciting modern compositions.



The Symphony believes the best time to get somebody enthralled by great music is to catch them young. It operates a Family Popcorn concert where the kindergarten set along with parents and grandparents get caught up with stories like Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf. The Symphony's Student Rewards program provides free tickets to middle school students and their parents and the Vernell Gregg Young Artists' Competition identifies high talent, primarily high school students, from across Texas and neighboring states.

More information

For more information, you may contact the Symphony at project@lewisvillesymphony.org

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www.lewisvillesymphony.org



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