

KATHRYN ALEXANDER BIO, Full

Composer Kathryn Alexander, a 2006 recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, has written a wide variety of works, both acoustic and technological. Her pieces draw upon a range of disciplines, including literature, the visual and plastic arts, the sciences, and technology to develop formal schema that distill from the abstract rather than from literal, programmatic meaning. This interdisciplinary approach has culminated in an extensive array of compositions, ranging from pieces for solo instrument and chamber ensemble, solo voice and orchestra, to technological presentations and multimedia works. When Alexander engages music with the other arts, whether for dramatic or abstract expression, or as sonic sculpture, she seeks to highlight the processes of transformation and the beauty of change. The result is a varied repertoire of solo, chamber and large-scale compositions described variously by critics as music in which "... the gestures were bolder, the moods more volatile, the climaxes more clearly marked and - most significant - the sounds enormously more colorful," and where "... the instrumentalists out-Bartoked Bartok in their extramusical pursuits."

In addition to the Guggenheim Fellowship, Alexander has been awarded a Radcliffe Fellowship at the Center for Advanced Study at Harvard University (2004-2005), a Computerworld Laureate Award from the Smithsonian Institute (2000-2001), a Composer's Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts (1989-1990), and the Rome Prize (1988-1989). She has won annual awards from ASCAP (1993-2006) and has held residencies at the MacDowell Colony (1994/1989), The Millay Colony (1990), The Virginia Center for the Arts (1990), Yaddo (1989), and the Atlantic Center for the Arts (1986). Alexander was a composition fellow of American Opera Projects (2003), the Vermont Chamber Music Festival of the East (1998), the Culture/Rockefeller Exchange (1998), the Words and Music Festival at Indiana University (1994), June-in-Buffalo (1987), and The Tanglewood Music Center (1985). She was an awardee for the Women's Philharmonic Orchestral Readings Project (1996), a MUSICA Grant (1990), and the Margaret Jory Fairbanks Fund (1989). In 1995, Alexander won the *Outstanding Young Alumna Award* from Baylor University, her alma mater.

Alexander's commissions include, among others, the Williams Chamber Players (2006-2007), The NOW Ensemble (2006), the Blue Elm Trio (2004), the Yale Camerata and Pro Musica (2003), the Interfaced Culture Conference (2002), the Vermont Chamber Music Festival of the East (1998), the Digital Media Center for the Arts (1998), the Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard University (1998/1993), the Rockefeller Foundation (1997), The Women's Philharmonic (1996), The Center in San Diego (1995), The Hopkins Center for the Arts (1994), the California E.A.R. Unit (1993), the National Flute Association (1991), the National Endowment for the Arts (1990), Contemporanea Musicali Internazionale (1990), the Old Stone Singers (1989), Boston Musica Viva (1989), and the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition (1986).

Alexander's recent instrumental works include: *AroundAbout* (2006-2007), a piano trio for the Williams Chamber Players; *In The Purest Air, Sapphirine* (2006), a chamber concerto for electric jazz guitar soloist, Mark Dancigers, and The NOW Ensemble; *Dreams and Reveries* (2005), a percussion quartet for the Yale Percussion Group; *From The Faraway Nearby* (2004), a piano trio for the Blue Elm Trio; and *In Memoriam* (2003), for baritone and soprano soloists, and large chorus and percussion quartet that is based on recent poems by Maxine Kumin.

Alexander's recent technological works include: *Aria, Cortège, Plainte* (2004), a sonic landscape derived from the spectral characteristics of native Hawaiian chant; ... *ManiaREDUX* (2004), for virtual percussion and interactive multimedia technologies; ... *mania!* (2002), for live solo percussion and interactive audio and video; and *Abstracted Cisms* (2001), a multi-media

performance piece for alternate controllers and performers based on the abstract shapes and contours in Willem de Kooning's painting *Abstract XIII*.

At Yale University, Alexander has been recognized numerous times and has received a Senior Faculty Fellowship (2003-2004), Griswold Faculty Research Grants (2003/2000/1998), an award from the Center for the Study of Globalization (2002), an inaugural special projects grant from the Digital Media Center for the Arts (1999-2000), a Morse Faculty Fellowship (1999-2000), and multiple grants from the Friends of Music (1998-2006), the Moore Fund (1998-2006), the Instructional Innovation Fund (1999-2001), and the Baker-Steyer Fund (1998-2002). In 2001, Alexander was awarded the *Yvonne and John McCredie Prize for the Best Use of Information Technology in Teaching in Yale College*. She is the founding director of YalMusT (Yale University's Music and Technology Lab) which sponsored the Interfaced Culture Conference in May of 2002, a gathering of composers and teachers who met to promote interactive arts through presentations on multimedia creativity, pedagogy, and research. Alexander is also the associate director of CSMT, the Center for Studies in Music Technology, at Yale's School of Music.

Alexander is an active mentor and teacher for young composers and a contributing member of the compositional community. She has sat on the juries of ASCAP, the Annapolis Symphony's Charter 300 Composer Competition, counter)induction's Composition Competition, the MacDowell Colony, the Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, and the Rome Prize in Musical Composition. She has served on the Council of the Society of Fellows of the American Academy in Rome (1998-2006) and in the fall of 2002, she co-curated a concert series held at Carnegie Hall, *Americans in Rome: Music by Fellows of the American Academy in Rome*.

A native Texan, Alexander comes from a musical family where she found it natural to be involved with music from an early age. She completed her Bachelor's degree at Baylor University as a flutist, studying with Helen Ann Shanley, and then went on to The Cleveland Institute of Music to work with Maurice Sharp, principal flutist of the Cleveland Orchestra. While there she began to compose. Alexander studied with Donald Erb and Eugene O'Brien at The Cleveland Institute of Music and later earned her DMA in composition at the Eastman School of Music, working with Samuel Adler, Barbara Kolb, Allan Schindler and Joseph Schwantner, and pursued additional study with Leon Kirchner at the Tanglewood Music Center. She has taught at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music (1994/1987-1988), Dartmouth College (1990-1993), the University of Oregon (1995-1996), and currently teaches composition and music technology at Yale University, where she also directs the Yale College Composition Seminar and Yale College New Music.