

PLANET M  
RECORDS

M E L I A   W A T R A S  
P L A Y / W R I T E

**Melia Watras**, viola/composer  
**Sheila Daniels**, narrator  
**Leilehua Lanzilotti**, composer  
**Rachel Lee Priday**, violin  
**Michael Jinsoo Lim**, violin  
**Herbert Woodward Martin**, voice/poet  
**Valérie Muzzolini**, harp  
**James Pritchett**, writer  
**David Alexander Rahbee**, conductor  
**Carrie Henneman Shaw**, voice  
**Frances White**, composer

### **Brazen butterfly ensemble**

Violin I: **Michael Jinsoo Lim** (concertmaster),  
**Jennifer Caine Provine** (assistant  
concertmaster), **Annika Kounts**  
Violin II: **Sol Im** (principal), **Heewon Park**,  
**Liza Zurlinden**  
Viola: **Erin Wight** (principal),  
**Kayleigh Miller**, **Daniel Stone**  
Cello: **Eric Han** (principal), **Olga Ruvinov**,  
**Christopher Young**

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### **Melia Watras**

**5 Poems of Herbert Woodward Martin**  
for narrator, violin and viola (2021)\*

- |   |                              |      |
|---|------------------------------|------|
| 1 | Fragment for Emily Dickinson | 2:54 |
| 2 | Prima volta                  | 0:43 |
| 3 | Normal Desires               | 2:25 |
| 4 | Seconda volta                | 0:50 |
| 5 | Mystery                      | 4:15 |
| 6 | In Pandemic Times            | 1:56 |
| 7 | Terza volta                  | 0:35 |
| 8 | Song: An Endless Flight      | 2:57 |
- Carrie Henneman Shaw, voice;*  
*Michael Jinsoo Lim, violin;*  
*Melia Watras, viola*

### **Melia Watras**

- 9 **A brazen butterfly alights** for viola solo,  
harp and strings (2021)\* 6:46  
*Melia Watras, viola; Valérie Muzzolini,*  
*harp; David Alexander Rahbee, conductor;*  
*Brazen butterfly ensemble*

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### **Melia Watras**

- 10 **Echo** for violin solo (2020)\* 5:21  
*Rachel Lee Priday, violin*

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### **Frances White/James Pritchett**

- 11 **As night falls** for violin, viola, narrator  
and electronic sound (2012)\* 18:23  
*Michael Jinsoo Lim, violin;*  
*Melia Watras, viola;*  
*Sheila Daniels, narrator*

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### **Leilehua Lanzilotti**

- 12 **ko'u inoa** for solo viola (2017) 6:38  
*Melia Watras, viola*

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### **Melia Watras**

- 13 **Hertabuse** for narrator  
and violin (2021)\* 3:03  
*Herbert Woodward Martin, narrator;*  
*Michael Jinsoo Lim, violin*

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### **Melia Watras**

- 14 **Weeping Pendula** for voice  
and loop pedal (2021)\* 6:37  
*Carrie Henneman Shaw, voice*

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### **Leilehua Lanzilotti**

- 15 **to be two** for violin  
and viola (2021)\* 5:29  
*Michael Jinsoo Lim, violin;*  
*Melia Watras, viola*

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\*World premiere recording

Total time = 68:53



**Melia Watras**

# Program Notes

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*Play/Write* sprung forth from cherished collaborations and friendships with composers, writers, poets and musicians. It is a reflection of my work as a violist and a composer (one who wields both bow and pen!) and the joy that exists in the overlap between words and music.

Program notes by the composers are below.

—Melia Watras

**Melia Watras: 5 Poems of Herbert Woodward Martin** for narrator, violin and viola (2021)

I have been lucky and grateful for many meaningful and important relationships in my life. One of these is with poet Herbert Woodward Martin and his family.

When my father, Joseph Watras, took a professor position at the University of Dayton, he quickly became close with his new colleague, Herbert Martin, which sprouted friendships throughout generations of both families. That beginning was a little over four decades ago!

Among many things, Herb Martin is an expert and renowned scholar on the works of Paul Laurence Dunbar, and a spellbinding performer. Having the opportunity to hear him read is a revelation, and to hear his perspective on all things is a gift.

For this composition, I reached out to Herb in February, 2021, and asked if I could set his poem titled *Song: An Endless Flight*. It has held special meaning for my husband and me since it was a part of the recitation Herb gave at our wedding. I was overjoyed when he said yes. As I corresponded with Herb, I realized I wanted to form a small collection, and decided on these five poems of his. The addition of three short *voltas* is a nod to Mussorgky's *Promenades* - here alluding to a turn of a page.

It was deeply moving to listen to Herb's reading of his poetry as I composed. I am honored to include poems that he dedicated to Mike and me (*Song: An Endless Flight*) and to my parents (*Fragment for Emily Dickinson*).

This collection is dedicated with affection and appreciation to Sue and Herbert Woodward Martin.

**Melia Watras: A brazen butterfly alights** for viola solo, harp and strings (2021)

*A brazen butterfly alights* takes its title from a line in the poem *Song: An Endless Flight* by Herbert Woodward Martin, poet extraordinaire. Herb dedicated the work to me and my husband, Michael Jinsoo Lim, and, on the occasion of our wedding, included it in his memorable reading. My piece is an exploration of the different worlds I find myself in when hearing, reading and ruminating on this poem.

*A brazen butterfly alights* is written in gratitude and dedicated to Herbert Woodward Martin, the fantastic harpist Valérie Muzzolini and expert conductor David Rahbee. Valérie's generosity in sharing her knowledge of the harp was instrumental in the creation of the work, and I am always so excited to share the stage with this world-class performer. David has been lauded as a five-time winner of the American Prize for Orchestral Programming, and I am thankful to him for including *A brazen butterfly alights* and providing it with its premiere.

**Melia Watras: Echo** for violin solo (2020)

As I began composing cadenzas to Beethoven's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 61, at the request of violinist Rachel Lee Priday, my superb colleague at the University of Washington, I had in my mind a set of cadenzas that, with slight modification, could also stand alone as a single piece for a violinist to perform outside of the context of the concerto. *Echo* for violin solo arose from this idea.

Many thanks to Rachel, to whom my cadenzas and *Echo* are dedicated to, in friendship and admiration.

**Frances White: As night falls** for violin, viola, narrator and electronic sound (2012)

*As night falls* is the third in a series of works for strings with texts written by James Pritchett. In all three pieces, the texts are about roses: sometimes lists of rose names, sometimes fanciful, poetic stories about roses. The original piece, *The Old Rose Reader*, was framed by a narrative that described a man reading about roses to his wife; the second piece, *The book of roses and memory*, acts as a kind of reflection on and remembrance of the first piece.

In *As night falls*, we wanted to do something different. We had always imagined the stories being told by the man, and began to wonder what it would be like to create a piece from the woman's perspective. The text that resulted from this plan exists in two layers, background and foreground. The background appears in the electronic part, read by a male voice: it consists of fragmentary, somewhat abstract poems derived from the rose stories of the previous two pieces. The foreground is read by the live female narrator, and is much more realistic and emotional, consisting of the woman's memories and reflections on a long marriage that is now coming to its end with her approaching death. As she moves in and out of various stages of awareness, sometimes hearing her husband's voice as he reads to her, her thoughts wander, sometimes alluding to events that are only suggested, sometimes clearly describing emotions or memories.

The other two works of the series share some musical materials. In *As night falls* I refrained from alluding to these materials – instead, I tried to create music that is in the same sonic world as the other pieces, but has a completely different feeling and texture. Because this is a duet, I inevitably found myself thinking of the violin and viola representing, in some sense, the couple in the story: but they also create a kind of commentary on the text, that magnifies and empathizes with the human condition of the characters.

*As night falls* was written for Michael Jinsoo Lim and Melia Watras, with funding from The New Jersey State Council on the Arts.



**Carrie Henneman Shaw, Michael Jinsoo Lim and Melia Watras**

**Leilehua Lanzilotti: ko'u inoa** for solo viola (2017)

A homesick bariolage based on the anthem *Hawai'i Aloha* (dedicated to Nawahineokala'i).

**Melia Watras: Hertabuisse** for narrator and violin (2021)

*Hertabuisse* is part of my continued work with poet and friend Herbert Woodward Martin. I had previously showcased his poems in two forms: setting his words in a quasi-sprechstimme style in *5 Poems of Herbert Woodward Martin*, and as inspiration for sound worlds in *A brazen butterfly alights*. I asked Herb if he was interested in a new collaboration, this time with him reading to a single violin, played by Michael Jinsoo Lim. Among the writings he sent, he highlighted *Hertabuisse*. *The African*, which deeply moved me. In the end, I decided on two versions for *Hertabuisse*: one with Herb's exquisite words and one for violin alone.

**Melia Watras: Weeping Pendula** for voice and loop pedal (2021)

Dedicated with much gratitude to the captivating singer, Carrie Henneman Shaw.

Weeping Pendula

poem by Michael Jinsoo Lim

Weeping Pendula

Reaching to the ground,

Asking to be found,

Casting penumbra,

Waiting to be crowned.

© 2021 by Michael Jinsoo Lim

**Leilehua Lanzilotti: to be two** for violin and viola (2021)

*to be two* was written for Melia Watras and her husband, violinist Michael Jinsoo Lim, and takes its title from the book by philosopher/linguist Luce Irigaray. Excerpts from the following passage by Irigaray are woven into the score:

“Thanks to perception, we can become, the one for the other, a bridge towards a becoming which is yours, mine, and ours. I can be a bridge for you, as you can be one for me. This bridge can never become the property of either. The bridge which I am for you will never be mine or ‘to me.’ I perceive you, I create an idea of you, I preserve you in my memory—in affect, in thought—in order to assist you in your becoming. While I become me, I remember you.” (p. 43)

Aside from general timbre shifts, shaping of the simple melody is left to be found together, “the one for the other.”

## Biographies

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**Melia Watras** has been hailed by *Gramophone* as “an artist of commanding and poetic personality” and by *The Strad* as “staggeringly virtuosic.” As a violist, composer and collaborative artist, she has sustained a distinguished career as a creator and facilitator of new music and art. Watras has released 9 albums, while performing on 13 others as violist of the Corigliano Quartet. As a composer, her music has been heard on National Public Radio’s *Performance Today*, and can be found on the albums *Play/Write; String Masks; 3 Songs for Bellows, Buttons and Keys; Firefly Songs; Schumann Resonances* and *26*. Watras’s adaptation of John Corigliano’s *Fancy on a Bach Air* for viola is published by G. Schirmer, Inc. and can be heard on her *Viola Solo* album. She is currently Professor of Viola at the University of Washington School of Music, where she was awarded the Ruth Sutton Waters Endowed Professorship, the Adelaide D. Currie Cole Endowed Professorship, the Donald E. Petersen Endowed Fellowship, the Kreielsheimer and Jones Grant for Research Excellence in the Arts, and the Royalty Research Fund.

**Sheila Daniels** is honored to mark her 6th cross-disciplinary collaboration with Melia Watras and Michael Jinsoo Lim. A Seattle-based multi-disciplinary theater maker, her recent projects include direction of Eleanor Burgess’ *The Niceties* with INTIMAN, Paula Vogel’s *Indecent* at Seattle Repertory Theatre and an independent workshop of a new musical, *A Debate with Three Andy Warhols* by John Aldous & Lucas Segall. She is currently directing her first documentary film, *Hidden Bodies: Body-typing and Shame in Theater in America* and serving as Chair of the Theater Department at Cornish College of the Arts, where she has taught acting, devising and directing for several years.

**Leilehua Lanzilotti** (b. 1983) is a Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) composer / sound artist dedicated to the arts of our time. A “leading composer-performer” (*The New York Times*), Lanzilotti’s work is characterized by expansive explorations of timbre. Lanzilotti’s practice explores radical indigenous contemporaneity by integrating community engagement and ways of knowing into the heart of projects. Lanzilotti was honored to be a finalist for the 2022 Pulitzer Prize in Music for *with eyes the color of time* (string orchestra), which the Pulitzer committee called, “a vibrant composition . . . that distinctly combines experimental string textures and episodes of melting lyricism.”

A consistently exciting artist, renowned globally for her spectacular technique, sumptuous sound, deeply probing musicianship, and “irresistible panache” (*Chicago Tribune*), violinist **Rachel Lee Priday** has appeared as soloist with major international orchestras, among them the Chicago, Houston, National, Pacific, St. Louis and Seattle Symphony Orchestras, Boston Pops Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and Germany’s Staatskapelle Berlin. Her distinguished recital appearances have brought her to eminent venues, including Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts’ Mostly Mozart Festival, Chicago’s Ravinia Festival and Dame Myra Hess Memorial Series, Paris’s Musée du Louvre, Germany’s Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival and Switzerland’s Verbier Festival. Passionately committed to new music and creating enriching community and global connections, Rachel Lee Priday’s wide-ranging repertoire and multidisciplinary collaborations reflect a deep fascination with literary and cultural narratives. In the fall of 2019, she joined the faculty of the University of Washington School of Music as Assistant Professor of Violin.



Violinist **Michael Jinsoo Lim** has been praised by *Gramophone* for playing with “delicious abandon,” and hailed by the *Los Angeles Times* as a “conspicuously accomplished champion of contemporary music.” Concertmaster and solo violinist for the internationally acclaimed Pacific Northwest Ballet, Lim is featured as soloist with the company in concertos by Stravinsky, Prokofiev, Bach and others, and has toured with PNB to Paris and New York City. Lim is artistic director of the Seattle-based ensemble Frequency and was co-founder of the award-winning Corigliano Quartet, with whom he appeared on over a dozen albums. His discography can be found on Naxos, Planet M, Sono Luminus, DreamWorks, Albany, Bridge, CRI, Bayer Records, RIAX and New Focus. His new solo album *Kinetic*, featuring world premieres of newly-commissioned works by Leilehua Lanzilotti, Paola Prestini and Watras, will be released in 2024. In addition to his work as a performer, Lim serves on the faculty of Cornish College of the Arts.

**Herbert Woodward Martin** is a prize-winning poet and performer, an actor and playwright, a singer and opera librettist, a professor, and a scholar. Born in Alabama in 1933, Martin and his family moved to Toledo, Ohio, when Herbert was twelve years old, Martin served as professor of English and poet-in-residence at the University of Dayton for more than thirty years, where he taught creative writing and African-American literature. He has devoted decades to editing and giving performances of the works of the poet and novelist Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906). He is also the editor of four books as well as the author of nine volumes of poetry.

Born in Nice, France, **Valérie Muzzolini** began to study harp at age seven. At age twenty-three, she was appointed to her current position as principal harpist of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra. Valerie has performed as guest harpist with the Nice Philharmonic Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio-France, the Mariinsky Orchestra and the Oregon Symphony Orchestra. She is also a very active chamber musician and dedicated educator.

Valérie studied with Elizabeth Fontan-Binoche in Nice, Marilyn Costello and Judy Loman at the Curtis Institute of Music, and Nancy Allen at Yale University.

**James Pritchett** wears many hats, both literally and figuratively. Many know him for his writings on John Cage, including the book *The Music of John Cage*. Pritchett was one of the first writers to deal with John Cage’s music on its own terms—as music. He has also collaborated with composer Frances White on several projects featuring storytelling and music, including *The Old Rose Reader* and *From a fairy tale*.

**David Alexander Rahbee** is currently Senior Artist in Residence at the University of Washington School of Music in Seattle, where he is Director of Orchestral Activities and is chair of orchestral conducting. He has recently worked with the Seattle Symphony, Chattanooga Symphony, the Seattle Modern Orchestra, National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia, Guernsey Symphony and Sewanee Music Center Orchestra. He was recipient of the American-Austrian Foundation’s 2003 Karajan Fellowship, the 2005 International Richard-Wagner-Verband Stipend, and the Acanthes Centre in Paris in 2007. He participated in masterclasses with Kurt Masur, Sir Colin Davis, Jorma Panula, Zdeněk Mácal, Peter Eötvös, and Zoltán Peskó. His principal

conducting teachers were Charles Bruck and Michael Jinbo at the Monteux School. He holds degrees from Indiana University, New England Conservatory, and University of Montreal. He also studied at Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Vienna.

Praised in the *New York Times* “as graceful vocally as she was in her movements”, “consistently stylish” (*Boston Globe*), and as a “cool, precise soprano” (*Chicago Tribune*), **Carrie Henneman Shaw** is a two-time McKnight Fellowship for Performing Musicians winner (2010, 2017). She has premiered major works by such Minnesota composers as Jocelyn Hagen and Abbie Betinis, whose annual Christmas carols she recorded for Minnesota Public Radio, and sung American premieres by such composers as Georg Friedrich Haas, Hans Thomalla, and Augusta Read Thomas. In addition to her work as an interpreter of contemporary works, Carrie specializes in music of the 17th century and has performed operatic roles with one of America’s leading Baroque opera companies, Boston Early Music Festival. Carrie is a member of Chicago’s Ensemble Dal Niente, Quince Ensemble, and uluul. She holds degrees in English and voice performance from Lawrence University and a doctorate from the University of Minnesota. She teaches at the University of Washington in Seattle.

Composer **Frances White’s** work has been called “stunning” (*American Record Guide*), “moving” (*Fanfare*), “spectacularly beautiful,” and “so atmospheric and sensuous it is almost fragrant” (*Musicworks*). Her music conveys intimacy and immediacy, with a tactile and expressive approach which derives from a sincere belief in the transformative nature of sound. A 2004 Guggenheim fellow, she has received awards, grants, residencies and commissions from organizations such as the the Fromm Foundation, the MAP Fund, the NJ State Council on the Arts, the Ditson Fund, Prix Ars Electronica, the Copland Fund, the International Computer Music Association, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, The Crossing Chamber Choir, The Dale Warland Singers, the Composers Guild of NJ, the MacDowell Colony, the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, the Puffin Foundation, New Music USA, and the Bang On A Can Festival, among many others. For more info: [www.rosewhitemusic.com](http://www.rosewhitemusic.com)

Recorded September 6-11, 2022, at the Chapel at Bastyr University, Kenmore, WA, except: *As night falls* vocal track and *Weeping Pendula* recorded by Doug Niemela; *Hertabuisse* vocal track, recorded by Brigham Fisher

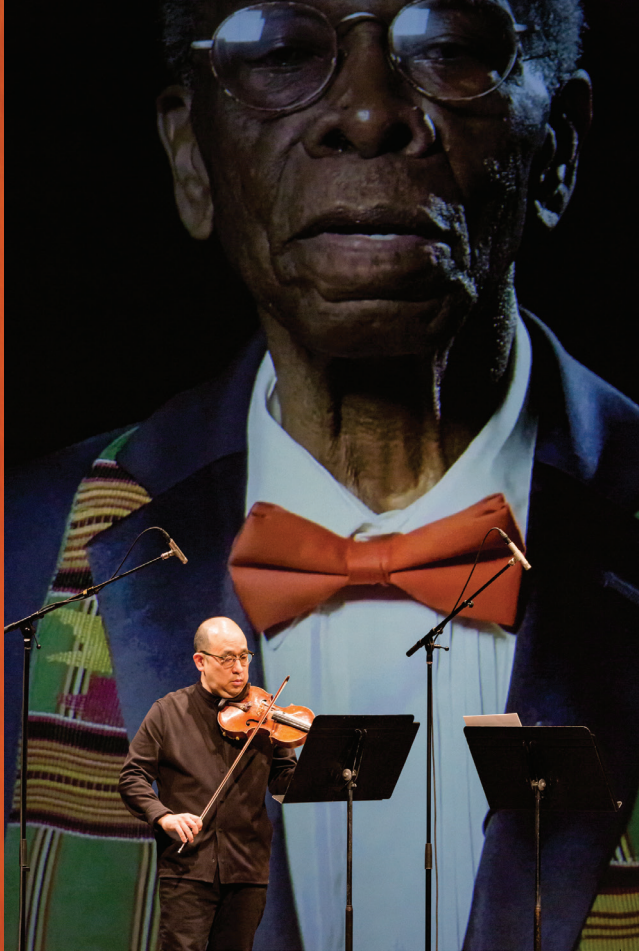
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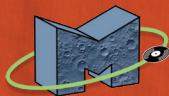
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**Michael Jinsoo Lim and  
Herbert Woodward Martin**





**PLANET M  
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PMR-005

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