

Can You Hear Her Now?



This August will mark the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, guaranteeing women the right to vote—and orchestras are responding with commissions of music by women composers this season and next. A century after the passage of the Amendment, the topic is more timely than ever.

Courtesy Library of Congress

Suffragists in Chicago protest President Woodrow Wilson's opposition to women's suffrage, October 1916, with police on horseback and on foot far right.

by Nancy Malitz

When composer Julia Wolfe and theater director Anne Kauffman began casting around for a project rooted in the unsung voices of American history, they had just completed *Fire in my mouth*, their 2019 oratorio about the disastrous Triangle Shirtwaist Fire of 1911. It killed more than a hundred young immigrant garment workers, some as young as fourteen, most of them women who had been locked inside. Presented with vocal soloists, chorus, historical images, and film footage, *Fire in my mouth*

had been a tremendous success at the New York Philharmonic in 2019; plans are underway for the work to be performed at Cal Performances at the University of California, Berkeley; the Krannert Center at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and the University Musical Society at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

So, wondered Wolfe and Kauffman, what next? The centennial of the 19th Amendment came up. “Anne came to me with the idea,” says Wolfe. “She knew this anniver-

*Note: Due to public-health precautions instituted during the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020, some performances mentioned in this article may have been canceled or postponed by the time this article is published.

sary year was coming.” The two tossed the idea around. Wolfe says one of them asked which state’s “yes” vote put the count over the top, making it possible for the Amendment to pass.

And there it was: Tennessee.

The ratification process required 36 states, and, says Nashville Symphony Music Director Giancarlo Guerrero, “We were the 36th state to ratify, on August 18, 1920—the state that made it over the line.” With audible delight, Guerrero says that the September 2020 world premiere of Wolfe’s new oratorio, *Her Story*, will be “the opening of our season, not with your usual Beethoven or Brahms, but a big splash with a living composer celebrating



Stephanie Berger

Virgil Thomson and Gertrude Stein’s opera *The Mother of Us All*, about women’s voting rights activist Susan B. Anthony, was performed in February at the Metropolitan Museum of Art with soprano Felicia Moore in the title role (above), and a chamber ensemble from the Juilliard School conducted by Daniela Candillari. *The Mother of Us All* was part of the New York Philharmonic’s Project 19 initiative drawing attention to the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment.

one of the most important milestones in American history, with a direct connection to Tennessee. It’s the perfect piece for the historical moment, within only weeks of the actual 100th anniversary.”

The 19th Amendment was officially adopted into law on August 26. Twelve additional states eventually also signed on,

A march by 10,000 women in New York City on May 4, 1912 provoked a dyspeptic editorial in the *New York Times* the next day, warning that if they got the right to vote, women would “play havoc with it for themselves and society, if the men are not firm and wise enough and, it may as well be said, masculine enough to prevent them.... We have said that the ballot will secure to woman no right that she needs and does not now possess.”

from Connecticut in September 1920 to Mississippi in March 1984. Despite this year’s anniversary celebrations of the 19th Amendment, it must be noted that the law did not include all American women. In 1920, “While middle-class white women celebrated with ticker tape parades, black women in the former Confederacy were being defrauded by voting registrars or were driven away from registration offices

under threat of violence,” Brent Staples wrote in a February 2, 2019 *New York Times* editorial. “Confetti was still rustling in the streets when black women across the South learned that the segregationist electoral systems would override the promise of voting rights by obstructing their attempts to register.”

Orchestras across the country, large and small, are already loudly involved in a centennial celebration of the 19th Amendment, which in 1920 gave women the right to vote, by offering an abundance of new music from female composers and otherwise drawing attention to the constitutional remedy. Apart from *Her Story*—a five-orchestra co-commission that will be performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, and San Francisco Symphony in 2020 and 2021—perhaps the most prominent initiative is the New York Philharmonic’s Project 19, which features a whopping nineteen commissions from women composers. Project 19 also includes a huge array of events ranging from voter registration tables at performances and co-commissions of new works by women poets to a composer mentorship program for girls in the orchestra’s Very Young Composers program. The nineteen commissions are being pre-



Chris Lee

Pictured: Eleven of the nineteen composers whose works will be given world premieres as part of the New York Philharmonic’s Project 19 commissioning initiative, with New York Philharmonic President and CEO Deborah Borda (far right in photo). From left: Jessie Montgomery, Mary Kouyoumdjian, Joan Tower, Angélica Negrón, Joan La Barbara, Caroline Shaw, Sarah Kirkland Snider, Tania León, Ellen Reid, Caroline Mallonee, and Paola Prestini.



Composer Ethel Smyth, a British suffragist, wrote works including the operas *Der Wald* (1903), which premiered at the Metropolitan Opera in 1903, and *The Wreckers*, first performed in Leipzig in 1906. Her song “The March of the Women” became the

anthem of the women’s suffrage movement in the U.K. and elsewhere.

miered during the 2019–20 and 2020–21 seasons. And there’s much, much more throughout the U.S. (see sidebar).

At the Nashville Symphony in September, the premiere of Julia Wolfe’s *Her Story* will feature the orchestra plus Boston’s all-female Lorelei Ensemble, known for its diverse set of vocal skills, and the production will travel to five co-commissioning orchestras. Guerrero will conduct at three including Nashville, the San Francisco Symphony in November, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra in spring 2021. Marin Alsop will conduct *Her Story* at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in February

2021, and the National Symphony Orchestra will take it up, under Music Director Gianandrea Noseda, in March 2021. The project is to be recorded by Naxos, which has its U.S. headquarters in Nashville. Klaus Heymann, Naxos’s founder, visits Nashville regularly from his home in Hong Kong, Guerrero says. “We always have dinner when he comes here,” says Guerrero, “and when I told him about this idea, he said, ‘You know what? Go for it.’”

Wolfe envisions props, some unusual placements for the singers, simple costumes, maybe projected scenic elements: “Like my other pieces, the main label that has stuck is ‘oratorio,’ but they’re really a little more like operas,” she says. “It’s a tricky thing, because you can’t go wild with staging, and the musicians have their own needs, and the orchestra has only so much time. I like that the musicians are onstage as part of the story, though. I really love the physicality. We were lucky that the New York Philharmonic was so terrific to work with. And in Nashville they are really game.”

Fighting for Equality, Then and Now

While there are many commissions planned this season and next, several smaller ensembles have put together thoughtful,



Peter Sterling

Composer Julia Wolfe

“It took a lot of time to get that vote, but there is more to be talked about,” says Julia Wolfe, whose *Her Story* will be premiered by the Nashville Symphony in September.

“Women had no rights. It was shocking, really.”

programming that gives historical perspective and fosters community engagement. Akron Symphony Orchestra Development Manager Kimia Ghaderi, also a violinist in the ensemble, notes that her orchestra has “said yes to women’s voices” with a season-long project called “Stand By Her” that includes seven works spread across four programs, by contemporary composers such as Gabriela Lena Frank (*Coquetos*), Joan Tower (*Made in America*), and Anna Clyne (*Masquerade*) as well as iconic older works such as *The Wreckers Overture* by Ethel Smyth, who was a British suffragette herself. About that term “suffragette”: it refers to members of the British Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU), a women-only movement founded in 1903 by Emmeline Pankhurst, which engaged in direct action and civil disobedience. In 1906, a *Daily Mail* reporter coined the term “suffragette” for the WSPU, from suffragist, to belittle the women advocating women’s suffrage. The militants embraced the new name, even adopting it for use as the title of the newspaper published by the WSPU.

“Our current season under our music director, Christopher Wilkins, is aligned with the 19th Amendment, but our program next year is also designed to achieve



Chris Lee

The New York Philharmonic gave the world premiere of Tania León’s *Stride* in February 2020, led by Music Director Jaap Van Zweden. *Stride* is part of the New York Philharmonic’s Project 19 initiative, and León says the composition was inspired by her grandmother and voting-rights activist Susan B. Anthony.

greater diversity and engagement generally,” Ghaderi says. Among activities the orchestra is offering are post-concert talkback sessions led by Ghaderi, a writing contest for high schoolers with a \$500 prize for the best essay about an influential woman composer, and actors mingling with concertgoers in Akron’s E.J. Thomas Hall lobby, including one who will portray a suffragette for a May 16 performance of music by Anna Clyne, Florence Price, Brooke Jee-in Newmaster, and others.

Ghaderi was surprised by the overture to Smyth’s 1906 opera *The Wreckers*, which the Akron Symphony performed in October. “It’s a really charming piece to perform. I was impressed not only with the quality, but also that not a single musician in the orchestra had ever come across it,” Ghaderi says. Indeed, Smyth’s music is due for renewed attention. *The Wreckers*, written in the first decade of the 20th century, was premiered in Leipzig in 1906; while in Europe Smyth met Clara Schumann, Dvořák, Grieg, Tchaikovsky, and Brahms. Her opera *Der Wald* was performed at the Metropolitan Opera in 1903—the last opera composed by a woman at that company until Kaija Saariaho’s *L’amour de loin* in 2016.

The most famous comment about Smyth comes from conductor Thomas Beecham, who visited the composer in 1912 while she was jailed in London’s Holloway Prison, along with some other suffragettes, for throwing stones at the window of a politician who opposed the women’s vote. Beecham said he came upon the women marching in the quadrangle to a song, and that Smyth was leaning out a jail window, “beating time in almost Bacchic frenzy with a toothbrush.” And although she was lauded late in life, Smyth long struggled to win respect for her music, which suffered from a prejudicial “double bind,” as Canadian musicologist Eugene Gates wrote in 2006: “On the one hand, when she composed powerful, rhythmically vital music, it was said that her work lacked feminine charm; on the other, when she produced delicate melodious compositions, she was accused of not measuring up to the artistic standards of her male colleagues.” Smyth’s work is vigorous and technically solid, and it’s worth being reminded of the fierce resistance she and her

fellow campaigners faced as the suffrage movement took hold.

The same year that Smyth was imprisoned in London for three weeks because of her agitating, a march by 10,000 women up Fifth Avenue on May 4, 1912 provoked a dyspeptic editorial in the *New York Times* the next day, warning that if they got the right, women would “play havoc with it for themselves and society, if the men are not firm and wise enough and, it may as well be said, masculine enough to prevent them.... Granted the suffrage, they would demand all that the right implies. It is not possible to think of women as soldiers and sailors, police patrolmen, or firemen, although voters ought to fight if need be, but they would serve on juries and elect themselves if they could to executive offices and Judgeships.... We have said that the ballot will secure to woman no right that she needs and does not now possess.”

Exploring Identity

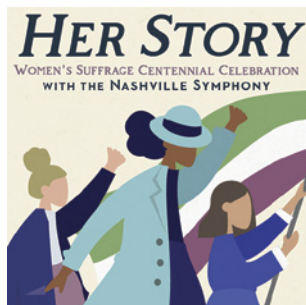
Brooklyn-based composer Mary Kouyoumdjian, 37, is one of the New York Philharmonic’s nineteen commissioned women composers. Her upcoming Project 19 commission will be a chamber work using prepared instruments for a “Sound ON” concert curated by Nadia Sirota in



Tony Matula

Nashville Symphony Music Director Giancarlo Guerrero says that the September 2020 world premiere of Julia Wolfe’s *Her Story* will be “the opening of our season, not with your usual Beethoven or Brahms, but a big splash with a living composer celebrating one of the most important milestones in American history, with a direct connection to Tennessee.”

October 2020. Kouyoumdjian has been exploring the issue of female identity through pieces such as her oratorio *Become Who I Am*, which was first performed by the Brooklyn Youth Chorus and Kronos Quartet in 2015. She recently re-orchestrated the work for California’s Berkeley



In September 2020, the Nashville Symphony will premiere Julia Wolfe’s new oratorio *Her Story*, about women’s voting rights. Below: Nashville Symphony Music Director Giancarlo Guerrero leads the orchestra at Schermerhorn Symphony Center.





“When I think about the centennial, on the one hand it is really amazing to see how far women have gotten,” says composer Mary Kouyoumdjian. “I love seeing all this voter registration. But there are also many steps backward.”

Symphony and the San Francisco Girls Chorus, which performed it in February. The inspiration came from Kouyoumdjian’s impressions in dealing with student singers. “In getting to know them, I realized it’s such a tricky time in anyone’s life,” she says. “It was so clear that some of the things they felt were amazing, but other things made them feel really insecure. So we had a lot of conversations about when do you feel at your most confident and assured, and do you feel a connection with your gender in terms of the way you are treated, or coached, or in what you see in the classroom. The students offered solutions that were sometimes optimistic and wonderful, but also sometimes extremely problematic, like, ‘Be more like a man.’

“When I think about the centennial,” Kouyoumdjian continues, “on the one hand it is really amazing to see how far women have gotten. I love seeing all this voter registration. But there are also many steps backward. I don’t feel comfortable [with] where things now are. All of us are still shouting to be heard. At least women today are not afraid to shout. The previous generation before me stayed kind of quiet. But now women composers, for example, are calling out the imbalance. I actually did not start out in concert composition. I started in film and TV, and that was a medium in which I did not feel I had a voice. In concert music there is gender imbalance and an uphill battle, although it is getting

significantly better. In film and TV, it is not even a hill.” Even as Kouyoumdjian duly noted her thrill over what had just happened at this year’s Oscars, when Hildur Guonadottir became the first woman since 1998 to win best score, for her *Joker* score, she acknowledged the tough reality: “It’s just a brick wall.”

Akron Symphony Orchestra Development Manager Kimia Ghaderi, also a violinist in the ensemble, says the orchestra has “said yes to women’s voices” with a season-long project called “Stand By Her” that includes seven works by women composers spread across four programs.



Dale Dong

Kimia Ghaderi

Standing, left to right: composer Mary Kouyoumdjian, San Francisco Girls Chorus Artistic Director Valérie Sainte-Agathe, and Berkeley Symphony Music Director Joseph Young at the world premiere of the re-orchestrated version of Kouyoumdjian’s oratorio *Become Who I Am*, February 2020. As one of the New York Philharmonic’s nineteen Project 19 composers, Kouyoumdjian will have a work premiered by the orchestra in 2020-21.

Cincinnati: All Around the Town

Cincinnati, Ohio is the site of an ambitious 19th Amendment initiative now underway, called “Power of Her.” The project was initiated by ArtsWave, an annual, city-wide fund-raising campaign for the arts, which made “Power of Her” its 2020 theme. Kathy DeBrosse, ArtsWave’s vice president of marketing and engagement, says the idea began to percolate several years ago when “we realized that we had 35 arts organizations in the city that were either founded or led by women.”

Patricia K. Beggs, then general director of Cincinnati Opera (she has since retired), approached ArtsWave with the idea of arts groups coming together and making the centennial of women’s suffrage a much bigger and more collaborative project. “Patty said, ‘Let’s change the

focus from fine arts to arts of any type, because the arts are what fuels the vibrancy and connections that the community has,”

DeBrosse recalls. “And also, ‘What if we made this centennial of suffrage to include other kinds of female-centric works, and

what if we included organizations founded by women, or led by women, or both, in terms of broadening?’ Cincinnati is sort of a big small town, where arts groups collaborate often anyway.”

Among the projects ArtsWave came up with was a very broad buy-one, get-one-free (BOGO) pass. “For donating at the \$75 level, you get a year-long subscription for BOGO offers from the many

Music to Vote For

Many orchestras are marking the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage with programs and other activities this season and next. A partial list is included below; please note that several events may be rescheduled due to postponements made in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

New York’s **Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra**: two weekends of 19th Amendment-themed music, including world premiere of Gemma Peacocke’s *All on Fire* by; Virgil Thomson and Gertrude Stein’s opera *The Mother of Us All*, about voting-rights activist Susan B. Anthony, a Rochester native; and *True and Devoted*, a documentary-style play by Mark Mobley featuring re-enacted interviews with five Rochester women. The **Juilliard School**’s “Trailblazers: Pioneering Women Composers of the 20th Century,” six free concerts featuring 32 women composers, for its annual Focus festival of new music, co-curated by Odaline de la Martinez and Joel Sachs. This summer’s **Ravinia Festival** will feature Paola Prestini’s Piano Concerto, a Ravinia co-commission; Florence Price’s Piano Concerto; and Richard Einhorn’s oratorio *Voices of Light*, inspired by Theodore Dwyer’s silent film *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, which will be screened live during the performance. New York City’s **Park Avenue Armory and the National Black Theatre**’s “100 Years | 100 Women,” which together with nine additional New York City-based cultural institutions, includes commissions of works created in response to the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, to be performed in May 2020. The commissioning institutions are Apollo Theater; the Juilliard School; La MaMa Experimental Theatre Company; the Laundromat Project; the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Museum of the Moving Image; National Sawdust; New York University; and Urban Bush Women. The **National Symphony Orchestra**’s free concert at Howard University, with music by Clara Schumann, Elizabeth-Claude Jacquet de la Guerre (1665-1729), Florence Price, Gabriela Lena Frank, Caroline Shaw, Lili Boulanger (1893-1918), Jennifer Higdon, and John Tower. Kentucky’s **Lexington Philharmonic** is beginning each 2019-20 program with a composition by a woman; composers include Libby Larsen, Julia Perry (1924-1979), Jessie Montgomery, Missy Mazzoli, and Loren Loiacono. The **Philadelphia Orchestra** is highlighting music by women composers all season with premieres by composer in residence Gabriela Lena Frank, Valerie Coleman, and others; the orchestra also is a partner of Vision 2020’s “Women 100: A National Celebration of American Women” equality initiative headquartered at Drexel University. The **Albany Symphony**’s 2019 “Sing Out! New York” festival in May-June 2019 had a double focus: the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment and the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall gay-rights uprising, with featured composers including Clarice Assad, Viet Cuong, Loren Loiacono, Andre Myers, and Rachel Peters. Vermont’s **Manchester Music Festival** this summer will perform music by women composers including Melanie Bonis, Rebecca Clarke, Lili Boulanger, and Amy Beach. Victoria Bond’s 2001 opera *Mrs. President*—about real-life candidate Victoria Woodhull, who ran for president in 1872, before women had the right to vote—will be performed on April 27 at New York City’s Symphony Space to mark the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage. The **Boulanger Initiative** in Washington, D.C., which presents chamber concerts of music by women, launched a section of its website entitled “19,” a project “to bring together like-minded organizations showcasing performances and exhibitions by women-identifying composers and artists surrounding the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment.” The theme of Florida’s **Sarasota Festival** this May and June will be the 19th Amendment, with composers to include eleventh-century composer Hildegard von Bingen, plus Joan Tower, Caroline Shaw, Natalie Joachim, and Maya Miro Johnson.



Puerto Rico-born composer Angélica Negrón, now based in Brooklyn, New York, is serving as composer in residence at the Dallas Symphony Orchestra in 2020-21. “There are these layers because of our complex relationship with the U.S.,” she says. Because she lives on the mainland, she can vote in the national elections, but that is not the case for the 3.2 million Puerto Rican Americans on the island.

groups participating in the Power of Her,” DeBrosse says. “The creativity comes in the way the various arts groups may take advantage. Our role would be to convene the efforts and help to brand and publicize them, but it would be up to the folks at the various organizations, whether they were the Children’s Theatre of Cincinnati or the Cincinnati Symphony or an arts gallery, to do the heavy lifting of lacing the Power of Her concept into their seasons.” More than 70 organizations are participating in the branding initiative.

The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra is linking its 19th Amendment-themed 2020 events to the Power of Her cam-

In Cincinnati, ArtsWave has an ambitious 19th Amendment initiative now underway, called “Power of Her” involving multiple arts groups. Kathy DeBrosse, ArtsWave’s vice president of marketing and engagement, says the idea began to percolate several years ago when “we realized that we had 35 arts organizations in the city that were either founded or led by women.”



paigned. Nathan Bachhuber, director of artistic planning and administration at the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and the Cincinnati May Festival, says the orchestra’s 125th anniversary this year puts an “intentional focus on work by women composers and conductors.” The 2020 May Festival will include Jessie Montgomery’s *I Have Something to Say*, a co-commission with the Cathedral Choral Society in Washington, D.C. The work draws on speeches given by American abolitionist and women’s rights activist Sojourner Truth and climate-change ac-

cently that are compelling and interesting, composed by people I would want to have coffee with. But it is also important how we talk about them, how we present them. We need to present these works not only with prominence, but also with pride, and to communicate in everything we do that this is important and exciting.”

Brooklyn, New York. Negrón is another of the New York Philharmonic’s nineteen Project 19 composers; the orchestra will premiere her new work at a “Sound ON” concert in February 2021. As a Puerto Rican native living on the mainland, she can vote in the national elections, but that is not the case for the 3.2 million Puerto Rican Americans on the island. They cannot have a role in electing U.S. presidents if they live in Puerto Rico. (The same wrinkle applies for residents of other U.S. territories such as American Samoa and Guam, in a general presidential election.)

“I moved here to go to school 13 years ago and of course I am aware that because more Puerto Ricans are moving here now, especially to Florida, and that they can vote once they do that, it is something that politicians are noticing and it causes some uneasiness,” Negrón says.

The complex nature of her American identity is constantly in Negrón’s thoughts. Among her composition teachers were Alfonso Fuentes, in Puerto Rico, and Tania León, in New York, and they have encouraged her to think about who she is and what her music says. “They are both performers and composers who improvise, and that Caribbean influence in their music feels to me like genuinely who they are,” says Negrón. “They are not the kind of composers who think, ‘I am going to throw in some of these rhythms.’ No. This is who they are. And that is me also.”

During the 2020-21 season, Negrón is serving as composer in residence at the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, which will perform the world premiere of her *En otra noche, en otro mundo (On Another Night, In Another World)* in February 2021. Foremost in Negrón’s thoughts when we spoke was a Los Angeles Philharmonic commission, yet without a title, which Gustavo Dudamel will conduct in November. “For this piece, I will write something that has to do with being a Puerto Rican outside of the island, and the experience of the diaspora,” Negrón said. “Also this kind of over-romanticism and sentimentality tied to the place where we’re from, and how that blends into the experience of what it means to be me. I am lucky that I live in New York and get to travel to Puerto Rico four times a year. But there are these layers because of our complex relationship with the U.S., and



In January, the Juilliard School spotlighted thirty-two women composers during its Focus festival, co-curated by conductor Joel Sachs and composer/conductor Odaline de la Martinez. Pictured at a panel discussion during the festival (left to right): composer Thea Musgrave; de la Martinez; Sachs; June Han, daughter of composer Young-ja Lee; and composer Ashley Jackson.

tivist Greta Thunberg. Bachhuber, with long-time experience programming orchestral music, says these days he doesn’t have to “work hard to find these talented women composers. I could easily come up with a list of the pieces I have heard re-

Voting Rights, American Identity

The struggle over voting rights isn’t over, and it’s also one of identity for composer and multi-instrumentalist Angélica Negrón, who was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in 1981 and is currently based in

Nate Bachhuber, director of artistic planning and administration at the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and May Festival, says these days he doesn't have to "work hard to find talented women composers. But it is also important how we talk about them, how we present them—not only with prominence, but also with pride, and to communicate in everything we do that this is important and exciting."



how do I re-frame that, particularly in thinking about the pieces programmed along with mine," she said, referring to Bernstein's Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story* that Dudamel and the LAFil will perform on the same program. (Dudamel is also slated to conduct the music in a new film remake of *West Side Story* that Steven Spielberg is directing.)

The movie version of *West Side Story* "is the reference for a lot of people when it comes to thinking about us," Negrón said. "So it is a kind of sensitive subject to talk

about. But at the same time, a lot of our people are really proud of that movie—and Rita Moreno as Anita is a goddess. Those are the nuances and layers of complexity that are such an integral part of the Puerto Rican experience as an American. It's hard to talk about. A lot has to do with me trying to understand things I don't understand. For me, it will be way easier to do this in music."

Over time, the 19th Amendment has utterly transformed the possibilities for women in the arts as in life, and it is en-

couraging to see so much attention being paid this year to the anniversary. But much hasn't changed, and the struggle for full equal rights continues. Julia Wolfe, who has been searching for appropriate texts for *Her Story*, says the work will cover "before, during, and after" the passage of the 19th Amendment. "It took a lot of time to get that vote, but there is more to be talked about," she says. "Women had no rights. It was shocking, really. Not property rights, inheritance rights, parental rights—husbands had the rights to the children. In fact, the Equal Rights Amendment still hasn't been passed, so it's very strange. We have come so far. And so much has changed. But then it hasn't so much." **S**

NANCY MALITZ is the founding music critic of *USA Today*, an editor at *ClassicalVoiceAmerica.org* and publisher of *ChicagoOntheAisle.com*. She has written about the arts and technology for the *New York Times* and *Opera News*, among other publications.



Astral's reputation as an industry leader in identifying top talent has made it a trusted partner for presenters. The rising stars in our program inspire listeners, while the skills they develop through our mentorship will help you deepen your community impact.

Contact Astral to enrich your concert season.
215.735.6999 | astralartists.org | bookings@astralartists.org

Photos: Timothy Chooi (Ryan Brandenberg), Chrystal E. Williams (Alex Kruchoski), Henry Kramer (Hugo De Pril)