

SHIRLEY MIER

Composer 🎵 Music Director 🎵 Music Educator

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Education

- **Ph.D. in Composition**, 2005: University of Minnesota. Principal instructors: Alex Lubet (advisor), Judith Zaimont.
Dissertation: *Visages: A Song Cycle for Mezzo-Soprano and Orchestra*.
- **M.A. in Composition** (minor in Theatre Arts), 2002: University of Minnesota.
- **B.A. in Music** (Theory & Composition), 1988: Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA.
Advisor: Jonathan Chenette.
- Institute for European Studies, Vienna, Austria, 1986-87.

Awards and Distinctions

- **Recipient** of the Minnesota Regional Arts Board award (as part of the New Musical Theatre Exchange) for the musical *The Allen Street Yiddish Theatre Presents: Cinderesther*, 2020
- **Recipient** of The Howard B. and Ruth F. Brin Jewish Arts Endowment Fund Grant, for the musical *The Allen Street Yiddish Theatre Presents: Cinderesther*, 2013
- **Finalist** in the Frank Ticheli Composition Contest sponsored by Manhattan Beach Music (Category 2, Young Concert Band), for *Maiden Voyage*, 2006.
- **Doctoral Dissertation Fellow**, University of Minnesota, 2004-05.
Dissertation: *Visages, A Song Cycle for Mezzo-Soprano and Orchestra*; explores cross-cultural themes connecting China and America.
- **Winner** of the University of Minnesota School of Music's annual Call for Scores competition, for "Tibetan Girl" (mezzo soprano and orchestra; excerpt of *Visages*), 2005.
- **Winner** of the Fifth Annual H. Robert Reynolds Composers' Competition, 2004, for *Theme and Deviations for Band*. New York premiere at Carnegie Hall by the National Wind Ensemble, May 30, 2004.

Publications

- **Steampunk Overture** (Grade 4 Concert Band), Grand Mesa Music Publishers, 2017
- **The Twelve Dancing Princesses** (children's musical), Dramatic Publishing, 2016
- **Forge Ahead!** (Grade 3 Concert Band), Alfred Music, 2013
- **'Twas the Night Before Christmas** (children's musical), Dramatic Publishing, 2012
- **Song of the Wind: An Aztec Legend** (Grade 2 Concert Band), Alfred Music, 2011
- **Maiden Voyage** (Grade 3+ Concert Band), Grand Mesa Music Publishers, 2010
- **Nancy Carlson's "Harriet and Walt"** (children's musical), Concord Theatricals., 2010
- **Madeline's Christmas** (children's musical), Dramatic Publishing, 2005
- Educational piano duets: **Western Trail** (2004), **Royal Pavane**, (2001), **Four-Leaf Clover**, **Journey Home**, **Follow the Piper!** (2000) (Nat'l Federation Selection, 2004-06), Alfred Music

Commissions

- ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time***, incidental music. Century College, Oct. 2021
- ***She Kills Monsters: Virtual Realms***, incidental music. Century College, Oct.-Nov. 2020
- ***The Grapes of Wrath***, incidental music. Century College, April 2019
- ***The Nightingale***, musical adaptation of the fairy tale. Libretto by Jennifer Kirkeby. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, March 2018
- ***Of Lakes and Legends***, chamber orchestra. Century College Chamber Orchestra, May 2017
- ***Steampunk Overture***, concert band. St. Michael-Albertville High School Wind Ensemble, May 2016
- ***The Twelve Dancing Princesses***, musical adaptation of the fairy tale. Libretto by Jennifer Kirkeby. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, March 2015
- ***Llama Llama Holiday Drama***, musical adaptation of the book. Libretto by Jennifer Kirkeby. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, November 2013
- ***Courage Shining Forth***, symphonic band. Minnesota Symphonic Winds, April 2013
- ***Duck for President***, musical adaptation of the book. Libretto by Jennifer Kirkeby. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, September 2012
- ***Where the Mountain Meets the Moon***, incidental music. Script by Jeannine Coulombe, based on the book by Grace Lin. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, April 2012
- ***Llama, Llama, Red Pajama***, musical adaptation of the book. Libretto by Jennifer Kirkeby. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, January 2012
- ***Six Scriabin Preludes***, orchestral arrangement of piano preludes by Alexander Scriabin. Century Chamber Orchestra, Century College, March 2011
- ***Laura Numeroff's "If You Give a Moose a Muffin,"*** musical adaptation of the book. Libretto by Jennifer Kirkeby. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, January 2011
- ***Forge Ahead!***, Grade 3 concert band. Cottage Grove Middle School Eighth Grade Band, Cottage Grove, MN, March 2010
- ***'Twas the Night Before Christmas***, musical adaptation of the famous poem. Libretto by Jennifer Kirkeby. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, November 2009
- ***Song of the Wind: An Aztec Legend***, Grade 3 concert band. Roosevelt High School Band, Minneapolis, MN, May 2009
- ***Robert Munsch's "The Paper Bag Princess,"*** musical adaptation of the book. Libretto by Jennifer Kirkeby. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, April 2009
- ***Jan Brett's "The Mitten,"*** musical adaptation of the book. Libretto by Jennifer Kirkeby. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, January 2008
- ***Mashed Monsters***, original musical. Book/lyrics by Christina Akers. Minnesota Fringe Festival, July-August 2007
- ***Strange Attractor***, electro-acoustic ballet exploring chaos theory. American Composers Forum and The Dance Institute (formerly Ballet Arts Minnesota), Pantages Theatre, Minneapolis, April 2007
- ***Nancy Carlson's "Harriet and Walt,"*** musical adaptation of the children's book. Libretto by Jennifer Kirkeby. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, January 2007
- ***Stages Theatre's "A Christmas Carol,"*** musical adaptation of Charles Dickens' novel. Libretto by Buffy Sedlachek. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, November 2006
- ***Madeline's Christmas***, musical adaptation of the children's book. Libretto by Jennifer Kirkeby. Stages Theatre, Hopkins, MN, 2004

- ***Soulless, Bloodsucking Lawyers: A (Brief) Musical!***, 2003. Co-composed with playwright Toni Halleen. Minnesota Fringe Festival, 2003, and Bryant Lake Bowl, 2004 (Highest Attended Show at the 2003 Minnesota Fringe Festival, and voted Audience Pick for Best Musical.)
- ***Theme and Deviations for Band***, Seward Concert Band, Minneapolis, 2003
- ***Twelfth Night*** (text settings), Shakespeare in the Park, Twin Cities, 2003
- ***When You Get a Minute***, theme song for Kevin Pearson film, Minneapolis, 2002
- ***The Three Billy Goats Gruff***, musical adaptation of the fairy tale. Book/lyrics by Mark Rosenwinkel. Stages Theatre, 2002

Other Compositions: Concert Music

Jazz Band

Spanky the Llama Blues (3'), Carondelet Middle School Jazz Band, 2005

Orchestra

Visages: A Song Cycle for Mezzo-Soprano and Orchestra (18'), 2005:

Century Chamber Orchestra, November 2008

U of M Symphony Orchestra, March 2005 ("Tibetan Girl")

Dakota Valley Symphony, April 2006

Century College Chamber Orchestra, November 2008 (chamber orchestra version)

Chamber/Miniature

A Light Breeze (1'), percussion solo, 2007

Express Lane (100 items or fewer) (1'), percussion ensemble, 2007

Blink: a string quartet in 100 notes (1'), 2007

Invention for String Trio (5'), U of M, 2001

Album Leaves (3'), brass quintet, U of M, 2001

Mini-Suite for Oboe and Bassoon (5'), U of M, 2000

Vocal/Choral

Visages: A Song Cycle for Mezzo-Soprano and Piano (piano-vocal arrangement of the orchestral work) (18'), 2005 (multiple performances)

One Hundred Years, chorus/piano (3'), Silver Bay, NY, 2002 (commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Silver Bay Association)

The Buck in the Snow (Edna St. Vincent-Millay), mezzo/piano (4'), U of M, 2001

Herbst (Autumn) (text: Rainer Maria Rilke), SSAA (2'), 2000

Other Compositions: Theatre and Dance

The Allen Street Yiddish Theatre Palace Presents: Cinderesther, a musical retelling of the Cinderella story in the Yiddish Theatre tradition; book/lyrics by Brian Vinero, 2021

Much Ado About Nothing, University Theatre, U of M, 2002

Alexander At Delphi, musical drama; book/lyrics by Minrod Mier. Center for Independent Artists, 2002, and Minnesota Fringe Festival, 2010 (**M.A. Thesis**)

The Bitter Festie Play, incidental music; book by Minrod Mier. MACT One-Act Play Festival, 2001

Heart of the Faerie Queen, incidental music; book by Minrod Mier. Minnesota Fringe Festival, 2000

The Skid Row Kids Save Christmas, holiday musical; book/lyrics by Minrod Mier. Far From the Tree Productions, Minneapolis, 1999

A Cup of Kindness, incidental music; book/lyrics by Minrod Mier. MACT One-Act Play Festival, 1999

An Old-Fashioned Christmas, title song to holiday production. Grand Theatre, Stillwater, MN, 1996

Messiah, incidental music. Genesis Theatre, Minneapolis, 1989

The Caucasian Chalk Circle by Bertolt Brecht. Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA, 1988 (**Senior project**)

Residencies and Educational Outreach

- Resident Composer/Conductor:

- Williamsburg High School, for *Steampunk Overture*, Williamsburg, IA, April 2021 (virtual)
- Cretin Derham Hall High School, for *Steampunk Overture*, St. Paul, MN, February 2020
- Richfield High School, for *Steampunk Overture*, Richfield, MN, January 2020
- Farmington High School, for *Maiden Voyage*, Farmington, MN, January 2020
- Minnehaha Academy, for *Steampunk Overture*, Minneapolis, MN, January 2020
- Mounds View High School, for *Maiden Voyage*, Arden Hills, MN, October 2018
- Spring Lake Park High School, for *Steampunk Overture*, Spring Lake Park, MN, 2017
- St. Hubert Catholic School, for *Forge Ahead!*, Chanhassen, MN, May 2017
- St. Michael-Albertville HS Band, for *Maiden Voyage*, St. Michael, MN, February 2015
- Kenyon-Wanamingo High School Band, for *Maiden Voyage*, Kenyon, MN, May 2012
- Zumbrota-Mazeppa HS Band, for *Maiden Voyage*, Zumbrota, MN, October 2011

- Composer Residencies and Conferences:

- St. Michael-Albertville HS Band, for *Steampunk Overture* (commission), 2015-16
- Cottage Grove Middle School, for *Forge Ahead!* (commission), 2009-10
- California State University-Bakersfield, for *Theme and Deviations for Band* (rehearsed & conducted the ensemble; gave master classes, seminars, and public talks), June 2009
- Symposium 30 for New Band Music, for *Theme and Deviations for Band*. College Band Directors National Association (Virginia Chapter) Richmond, VA, 2005
- SCI Region VI Conference, for *Theme and Deviations for Band*, San Antonio, TX, 2005

- Guest Composer/Conductor:

- Minnesota River Valley Wind Ensemble fall concerts, for *Theme and Deviations for Band*, Mankato, MN, 2010
- Mankato Wind Ensemble (MSU-Mankato) at the MMEA Midwinter Clinic (Mpls, MN) and the MSU-Mankato Winter Band Concert (Mankato, MN) for *Theme and Deviations for Band*, 2008

- Guest Composer/Presenter for the U of MN Composition Seminar class, February 2016

- Composition Judge for the MMTA Piano Duet Competition, 2014 & 2015

- Writer and Presenter of “Exploring the Blues,” an educational workshop at the SUUSI (Southeast Unitarian Universalist Institute) conference, 2014-2019

- Presenter at the 2010 Century College Campus Conference, *Journeys*, for “Visages: Tale of a Journey” and “The Music of Cabaret”, Century College, April 2010

- Co-Presenter at the 2008 Century College Campus Conference, *Revolution!*, for “Revolution: The

Soundtrack!", Century College, April 2008

- **Music Resource Specialist** (Consultant, Arranger, Pianist): World Culture Magnet School's "On Stage" production, *Music of the Americas*, St. Paul, 2007
- **Guest Speaker** at Minnehaha Academy: *Music in Theatre: Telling the Story*, 2007
- **Clinician** at MMEA Midwinter Clinic: *Using the Book Creatively II: Music, Literacy, and the Arts*, 2006

Teaching Experience: Higher Education

Instructor of Music, Century College, White Bear Lake, MN, Fall 2007 – present

Courses taught:

- Music Theory (four-semester sequence)
- Ear Training (four-semester sequence)
- Music History I and II
- Fundamentals of Music
- Songwriting
- Enjoyment of Classical Music
- Popular Music in American Society
- Theatre Orchestra
- Century Chamber Orchestra (Music Director and Conductor, 2007-08 and 2014-15)

Committees and Task Forces: Academic Program Review task force, OER task force, College Affordability Committee

Music Dept. Executive, various years

Social Media guru, 2014-present: creation and maintenance of the Century College Music Dept. Facebook page (www.facebook.com/centurycollegemusic)

Instructor for the PACE program (Preparing to Achieve a College Education), for underrepresented students in the Twin Cities with high academic potential, 2009-2012

Lecturer, University of Wisconsin, River Falls, Spring 2006 (one-semester appointment)

Course: Music Theory and Ear Training 131

Teaching Assistant, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, 2000-2004

Courses taught: Foundations in Music Theory: Analysis and Ear Training I, II, III and IV.

Duties included:

- Teaching the ear-training lab
- Teaching seminars in music technology, part-writing and ear training
- Grading assignments and proctoring individual sight-singing and keyboard skills tests

Instructor of Record for Foundations in Musical Theory: Analysis and Ear-Training II, U of M, Summer 2001

Lab Monitor, U of M Computer Music Lab, Ferguson Hall, 2004.

Music Theory Tutor, U of M second-year theory students, 2004-05.

Consultant for the proposed music theory curriculum at the new Main Street School of Performing Arts, Hopkins, Minnesota, 2003-04

Grading Assistant, MUS 212 (Harmony), Grinnell College, 1987-88

Instructor Assistant, Ear Training Lab for MUS 212 (Harmony), Grinnell College, 1985-86

Teaching Experience: Performance

Piano, Voice and Composition Teacher:

Private instruction in composition, 2007-present

Chenoweth Music Studio (piano and voice), Roseville, 1996-2000

Chaska School of Music (piano), 1995-98

Member: Minnesota Music Teachers Association, 1997-2001

(Served on the Theory Committee)

Teaching Experience: Theatre Education

Music Director and Pianist:

Stages Theatre's Teen Workshops in Musical Theatre, 2007-09

Escalate Studio's Musical Theatre and Audition Workshops, 2005-07

Stages Theatre's Summer and Winter Workshops in Musical Theatre, 2001-06

Stages Theatre's Junior Conservatory Workshop, 2005

Steppingstone Theatre's Musical Theatre Extravaganza! Workshops, 2002-04

Stages Theatre's Summer Conservatory Workshops, 2002-05, 2007-08

American Variety Theatre Company's Summer Workshops, 1995-98

Composer and Pianist: Steppingstone's Step on Stage Workshops, 2001-04

Theatre Workshop Instructor: *Free to Be, You and Me*, Stages Theatre, 2001

Improvisational Theatre Pianist and Playwriting Workshop Instructor:

Florida Studio Theatre, Sarasota, FL, 1993

Performing Experience

Bandleader and Keyboardist, Hell-Burnin' Sinners, country & bluegrass band, 2019-present

Guest Conductor: Seward Concert Band, 2007

Pianist/Actor: 100 Years of Rotary, Great American History Theatre, 2005

(Performances in St. Paul, MN; Waterloo, IA; Chicago, IL; Hutchinson, MN)

Guest Conductor: Dakota Valley Summer Pops Orchestra, 2005-06

Pianist/Keyboardist: Dakota Valley Summer Pops Orchestra, 2001-05

Substitute Pianist: Shepherd of the Hill Presbyterian Church, Chaska, 1998-2003

Improvisational Theatre Pianist: Stevie Ray's Comedy Troupe, 1994-2005

Composed and arranged music for improvisational sketches, accompanied improvised scenes, created musical improvisation structures and assisted with sketch preparation.

Accompanist: Nostalgia, women's vocal trio, 1995-98

Co-Creator, Co-Director and Pianist: Forgotten Broadway, 1996

Music Directing Experience

Educational Theatre

Music Director for 20+ productions, including:

Annie Jr., Stages Theatre, 2011 (pianist/conductor)
Willy Wonka, Stages Theatre, 2010 (pianist/conductor)
You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown, Stages Theatre, 2008 (pianist/conductor)
Honk!, Stages Theatre, 2007 (pianist/conductor)
Stages Theatre's "A Christmas Carol," Stages Theatre, 2006
Seussical, Stages Theatre, 2006 (pianist/conductor)
The Best Christmas Pageant Ever, Steppingstone Theatre, 2005
Charlotte's Web, Stages Theatre, 2005
The Emperor's New Clothes, Steppingstone Theatre, 2005
Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Stages Theatre, 2003
Wizard of Oz, FAIR Middle School, Crystal, MN, 2003
Three Billy Goats Gruff, Stages Theatre, 2002

Community and College Theatre

Music Director for 50+ productions, including:

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, Century College, 2019
The Grapes of Wrath, Century College, 2019
Spring Awakening, Century College, 2018
Hairspray, Century College, 2018
Hair, Century College, 2017
The Rocky Horror Show, Century College, 2016
Company, Century College, 2014 (pit orchestra conductor)
The Pirates of Penzance, Century College, 2012 (pit orchestra conductor)
Cabaret, Century College, 2010 (pit orchestra conductor)
Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Morris Park Players, 2006 and 1999
Jesus Christ Superstar, Morris Park Players (MPP), 2003
West Side Story, MPP, 2000
Little Shop of Horrors, MPP, 1998
Oliver!, Masquers Theatre, 1998
The Secret Garden, Lakeshore Players, 1996
Hello, Dolly!, Masquers Theatre, 1995
Gypsy, Lakeshore Players, 1994
Amahl and the Night Visitors, Masquers Theatre, 1993
Cabaret, Lakeshore Players, 1993
Of Thee I Sing, Lakeshore Players, 1992
Godspell, Masquers Theatre, 1992
Jesus Christ Superstar, St. Louis Park Players, 1992
Fiddler on the Roof, Masquers Theatre, 1991
A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, MPP, 1991
South Pacific, MPP, 1990

My Fair Lady, Masquers Theatre, 1990

Tintypes, Lakeshore Players, 1990

Oklahoma!, Community Theatre of Burnsville, 1990

The Fantasticks, Follow Me Players, St. Louis Park, MN, 1989

Annie Get Your Gun!, Masquers Theatre, 1989

Applied Music Study

- Piano Instruction from John Jensen, Minneapolis; Gerold Heitz, Vienna; Barb Lien, Grinnell College
- Voice Instruction from Ann Frederickson, Minneapolis
- Conducting lessons from Stephen J. Ramsey (Dakota Valley Symphony), Minneapolis

Professional Development/Enrichment

Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED) participant, Century College, 2014-15

MCUCM Conference attendee (technology breakout sessions), St. Paul, MN, 2012

Sibelius 7 Software Training study (online course), 2012

Teaching Professor Conference attendee, Washington DC, 2012

Midwest Band Clinic attendee, Chicago, IL, Dec. 2008

MMEA Midwinter Clinic attendee, Mpls, MN, Feb. 2008

Composer participant & attendee at ACF's Tuesday Salon concerts, St. Paul, MN

Attendee at the Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute (open rehearsal), 2006

Composer participant at the SCI Region VI Conference, San Antonio, TX, 2005

Composer presenter in Master Classes at the University of Minnesota, given by: Samuel Adler, Jennifer Higdon, Aaron Jay Kernis, Libby Larsen, Stephen Paulus, George Tsontakis

Seminar and Workshop Participation:

Century College Campus Conferences, 2008, 2009, 2010

Century College Teaching Circle: Wellness in the Classroom, Century College, Spring 2008 (semester-long project)

Active Learning: Techniques to Engage Students, Century College, 2007

Grand Rights: Licensing Music for Dance & Theater, 2007

Music in Motion, collaborative workshops for composers and choreographers (American Composers Forum), 2005-06

Publishing for Composers (American Composers Forum), 2005

Preparing Future Faculty Retreat (U of M), 2004

Preparing for Music Teaching in Higher Education (U of M), 2004

New Music Forum (Muziko Nova: St. Olaf College), 2004

Business Basics for Composers (American Music Center), 2001

Professional Affiliations and Organizations

American Composers Forum
ASCAP
College Music Society
Society of Composers, Inc.
The Dramatists Guild

References

Elliot Wilcox, Music Dept., Century College
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Dr. Amy Roisum-Foley, Director of Bands, Minnesota State University-Mankato
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Sandy Boren-Barrett, Artistic Director, Stages Theatre Company
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Alex Lubet, PhD, Morse Alumni Distinguished Teaching Professor of Music
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Additional references available upon request.