Overview of the Collection

Repository: University of Redlands
Armacost Library
1200 E. Colton Avenue
Redlands, CA 92373

Creator: Pierce, Alexandra, 1934-

Title: Compositions of Alexandra Pierce

Date: 1973-2012

Abstract: The Alexandra Pierce Collection at Armacost Library preserves digital copies of published compositions by Alexandra Pierce (1934- ), a noted twentieth-century American composer, scholar and educator known for her study of physical movement in music.

Historical Sketch

Born February 21, 1934, Alexandra Pierce received a Bachelor's of Music at the University of Michigan in 1955, a Masters of Music at the New England Conservatory of Music in 1958, and a Masters in Music History at Radcliffe College in 1959.

In the 1960s, Pierce achieved broader recognition as a composer, while pursuing research interests related to the role of rhythm in music through doctoral study at Brandeis University. She received research grants to study Native American music and the music of Bela Bartok. Her dissertation project advanced a definition of rhythm as the interplay of “structural accents” that punctuate the temporal movement of a piece of music.

In 1968, Dr. Pierce joined the faculty of the University of Redlands, where she taught until her retirement in 2001. A prolific composer, Pierce was active in many genres. Many of her earlier works were composed for piano; the 1970s saw the commissioning of her first symphony, Behemoth, for the University of Redlands/Redlands Community Symphony Orchestra, and a
chamber quartet, *Music for Dance*, for Eyes Wide Open, a Los Angeles dance company. Both scores won first prize in the Mu Phi Epsilon National Composition Contest. During the 1980s and 1990s, Pierce wrote numerous vocal works, often to texts by her husband, the poet and drama professor Roger Pierce. Her second symphony, *Dances on the Face of the Deep*, premiered in 1988, and her string quartet *Outcrops and Upshots* garnered another Mu Phi Epsilon prize in 1995.

The insight that attentiveness to physical movement could help musicians understand the structure of a musical work and improve their performance motivated much of Pierce’s teaching and lecturing. Her first book *Spanning: Essays on Music Theory, Performance and Movement* collects essays on physical injury, healing and expressiveness for musicians, with particular emphasis on pianists. Roger and Alexandra Pierce’s shared interest in physical movement across the arts resulted in two coauthored books, numerous conference presentations/demonstrations and the creation of a touring workshop, “Moving Voices,” integrating poetry, movement and music.

Pierce received the 2004 University of Redlands Creativity in Retirement award. She currently lives in Colorado, where she continues to teach music and performs with her husband as the Moving Voices duo.

**Scope and Content Note**

This collection contains PDF-formatted copies of many of Pierce’s published compositions, representing four decades of her output. The library’s circulating collection also holds Pierce’s published books on music education and analysis, as well as many recordings and published scores.

**Administrative Information**

**Acquired From:** Alexandra Pierce donated electronic copies of her scores to Armacost Library between 2011 and 2012.

**Restrictions on Access:** There are no restrictions on research use of this collection.

**Restrictions on Use:** All scores are under copyright to various publishers, including Subito [formerly Seesaw Music Corporation], Sisra Publications, and Media Press. Researchers are responsible for obtaining permission from the rightsholder for purposes outside of academic fair use.
Chronological List of Works in the Collection

*Take my Hands and Let Them Move* for SATB (1973)
*Antares* for piano four-hands (1974)
*Greycastle* for prepared piano (1974)
*Offering to Birdfeather* for piano (1974)
*Song in Licia for Salvo* for piano (1974)
*Coming to Standing* for piano (1975)
*Danse Micawber* for piano (1975)
*Isaiah 40:31* for SATB (1975)
*My Lady Hunsdon’s Pavane* for two clarinets (1975)
*Spectres* for prepared piano (1975)
*Sweeney among the Nightingales* for piano four hands (1975)
*Behemoth* for orchestra (1976) [full score and parts]
*Blending Stumps* for prepared piano (1976)
*Orb* for prepared piano (1976)
*Prelude and Fugue* for flute (1976)
*Dry Rot* for prepared piano (1977)
*The Great Horned Owl* for marimba (1977)
*Maola* for harp (1977)
*Three Pieces for Clarinet and Piano* (1977)
*Transverse Process* for piano (1977)
*Buffalo Bill* for clarinet, tape and prepared piano (1978)
*Fool’s Gold* for vibraphone (1978)
*Job 22:28* for two clarinets (1978)
*The Lost River, Sevier* for piano (1978)
*Report to God* for SATB and piano (1978)
*Soundings* for piano (1978)
*Variations 7* for prepared piano (1978)
*After Dubuffet’s ‘Limbour as a Crustacean’* for clarinet and percussion (1979)
*Popo Agie* for prepared piano (1979)
*Quartet, Music for Dance* for clarinet, horn, marimba and prepared piano (1979)
*Resurrection: A Christmas Anthem* for flute, keyboard and SATB chorus (1979)
*Serenade* for guitar (1979)
*A Common Chase* for flute and marimba (1980)
*Echo and Narcissus* for flute and piano (1980)
*Jabberwocky* for SATB and piano (1980)
*Serenade* for piano (1980)
*Six Sentient Waltzes* for prepared piano (1980)
*Seven Waltzes for Emily Dickinson* for prepared piano (1980)
*Two Choral Works* for men’s chorus (1980-1981)
*Four Songs on Poems of James Joyce* for low voice and piano (1981-1983)
Cambodian Dancer for cello and piano (1983)
Two Sound Studies for prepared piano (1983)
Four Easy Piano Pieces (1966-1983)
Ballad and Ostinato for piano (1985)
Escaped Exotics for flute (1985)
Never No Summer for flute, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet and trombone (1985)
Spring and Fall: To a Young Child for low voice and piano (1985)
Three Songs of Innocence for SSA and piano (1988)
White Bongo for flute, viola and harp (1988)
House of Retrial for flute, violin and bassoon/cello (1989)
Mixed Nocturne and Toccata for piano (1989)
Ornaments for clarinet (1989)
Calliope Dances for oboe and piano (1990)
Calypso of Ogygie for marimba (1990)
“the spirits that lend strength are invisible” for piano (1990)
Caryatids I for harp (1991)
Caryatids II for harp (1991)
The Road to Calvary for SATB chorus (1991)
Three Contemporary Folksong Settings for low voice and piano (1985-1992)
Two Movements Through Space for piano (1992)
Psalm 100 for voice and piano (1993) [soprano and mezzo-soprano versions]
Seven Line Drawings for clarinet (1993)
Three Songs on Poems of Emily Dickinson for accompanied low voice (1993)
[versions for harp and piano accompaniment]
Traces in Movement for violin, percussion and piano (1993)
Waltz, Op. 120 for piano (1993)
Four Done Deals for piano (1994)
Set of Six for violin and percussion (1994)
Moretti Music for vibraphone (1995)
Set of Three for oboe and piano (1995)
Short Suite Overture for orchestra (1995)
There Was a Young Man Who Said Though for voice and piano (1995)
Bestiary for SSA and piano (1996)
Four Movements for String Quartet (1996)
Suite for English horn and piano (1996)
Bible Bestiary for tuba and speaker (1997)
Keener’s Way for piano (1997)
Song and Dance for oboe and piano (1997)
Upslope for piano (1998)
Counterchange I for clarinet and piano (1999)
Counterchange II for clarinet and prepared piano (1999)
Suite for alto saxophone and piano (1999)
Tributaries for flute and piano (1999)
The Phantom Horsewoman for speaker and piano (2000)
Rings of Saturn for piano (2000)
Intimations for piano (2001)
Sheep for contralto and piano (2002)
Dark Zephyrs for flute and piano (2007)
Ballad in Six Colors for organ (2008)
A Red, Red, Rose for violin and viola (2008)
To Rumi for soprano and piano (2008)
Green Grow the Rashes for medium voice and piano (2010)
Heart of the Beast for piano (2010)
Landforms for cello (2011)
Scherzando Song for viola (2012)
String Quartet No. 2 “Outcrops and Upshots” (2012)