

MY TIME IS NOW

INSPIRATIONS FROM THE GERSHWINS



Haerim Elizabeth Lee, violin | Alex Brown, piano

MY TIME IS NOW

In 2014, as a doctoral student at the University of Michigan, I saw a music history class was being offered on the works of Ira and George Gershwin. Through the Gershwin Initiative¹, the University of Michigan had access to incredible resources including a pristinely restored Steinway piano that once belonged to George Gershwin in his apartment in New York. Gershwin's music has always resonated with me throughout different stages of my life and I was curious to learn more.

I was astounded by George and Ira Gershwin's commitment to the creative process and how music could cross different genres with such grace and ease. I then came across a quote by George Gershwin: "My people are American, my time is today. Music must repeat the thought and aspirations of the times." These words and this ideology hit me in a moment of epiphany. Throughout my career I had explored many different genres of music, beyond traditional classical music, including

contemporary music, jazz and world music and collaborating with dance and visual arts. I truly relished the opportunity to perform these various genres and collaborate with other artists; however, I didn't know how I could actually build a musical career around these many different interests. The answer was clear the moment I read Gershwin's quote—it freed me from the constraints I had previously felt as a classical musician. Gershwin showed me a path to love all of the various genres of music that both influenced and shaped my life.

Like Gershwin, whose music was an interpretation of his contemporary world, I wanted to create an album that reflects the current times of *my* generation. This album celebrates the brilliance of Gershwin's music with new arrangements of his unfinished tunes. These are complemented by the contemporary works of distinguished American composers, who much like Gershwin, incorporated American musical styles. Additionally, it was truly a once-in-a-lifetime honor to perform and create music with George Gershwin's personal piano. I am incredibly proud to feature the premiere recording of Gershwin's piano on this album.

I would like to thank the University of Michigan, the Gershwin Initiative, Dr. Mark Clague, David Halen, and my wonderful collaborators Alex Brown (pianist) and Jesse Lewis (producer) for all of their incredible talents, time, and support. Thank you to my family for continuously guiding me through this musical journey and unconditionally loving me through all of my life pursuits, and for allowing me to dream as big, and fly as high, as I want. This album would not be possible without the love and support of so many. Thank you.

¹Gershwin Initiative: The University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance has entered into a long-term partnership with the Gershwin family to undertake a two-part initiative that will bring the music of George and Ira Gershwin to students, scholars, performers and audiences across campus and worldwide. The Gershwin Initiative includes a new scholarly edition of George and Ira's creative work, plus educational opportunities for U-M students to perform and learn about the Gershwins' art.



HAERIM ELIZABETH LEE

VIOLIN

Korean violinist Haerim Elizabeth Lee captivates audiences by “leaving them breathless with impeccable phrasing and relevant musicality” (*El Norte, Mexico*). Following Ms. Lee’s solo debut with orchestra at nine years old, she has been a guest soloist with the Filharmonica Bohuslava Martinu, Daejeon Philharmonic Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfonica de la Unal, Seoul Virtuosi, Winston-Salem Symphony, and Symphony of the Mountains among others. In 2015, Ms. Lee performed as the concertmaster with Yo-Yo Ma at the Kennedy Center Honors concert in Washington, D.C. to recognize Maestro Seiji Ozawa. As a performing artist and scholar, Lee has established herself as a visionary and was the first recipient of the Tarisio Young Artist

Grant as the Artistic Director of MoKo Musik for promotion and commission of Korean music. Ms. Lee frequently collaborates with composers and most recently performed the US-premiere of Unsuk Chin’s *Double Bind?* for violin and electronics. She is currently the Co-Artistic Director of the Innsbrook Institute & Music Festival in Missouri. Ms. Lee earned her Bachelor of Music degree in violin performance at the New England Conservatory, Master of Music degree at Rice University, Shepherd School of Music and Doctorate of Musical Arts at the University of Michigan. In addition, Ms. Lee has also studied at the McDuffie Center for Strings and at the Paris Conservatory. Ms. Lee now resides in New York City.

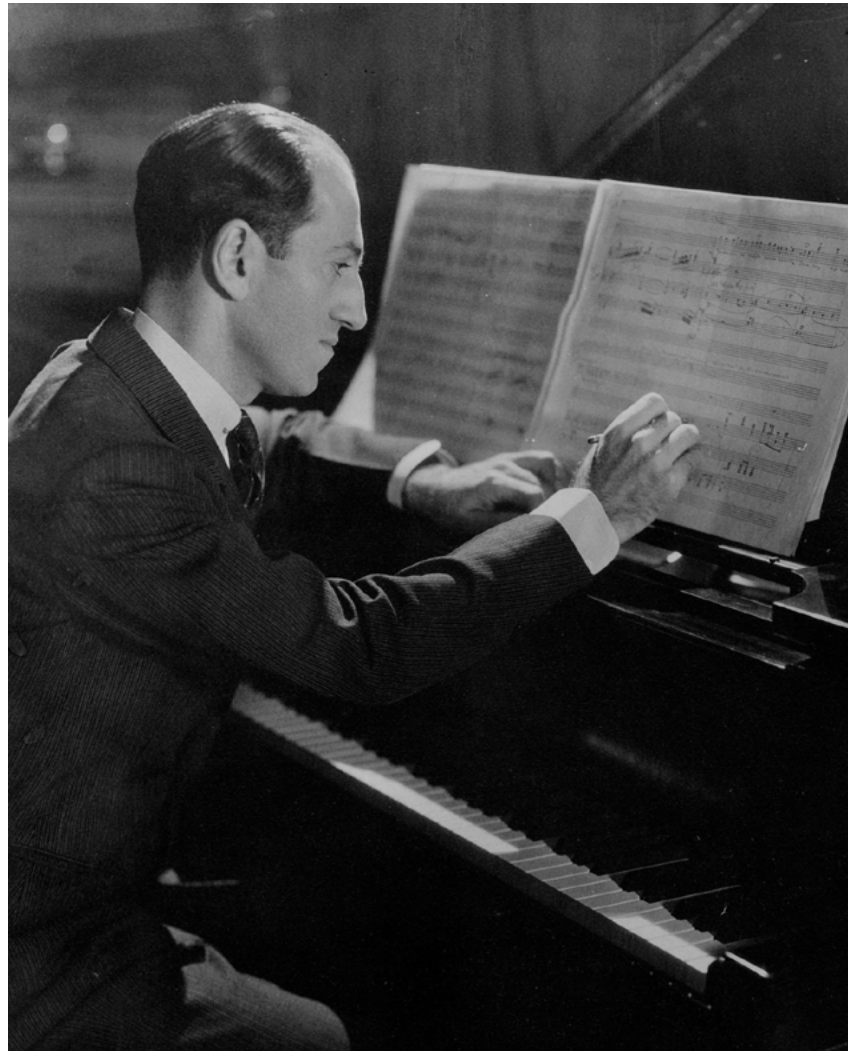


ALEX BROWN

PIANO

Grammy-nominated pianist and composer Alex Brown is quickly emerging at the forefront of a new generation of artists. *The New York Times* says he plays “with a crystalline touch and a worldly approach.” Brown frequently performs with his own group, and *Downbeat Magazine* described his 2010 album, *Pianist*, as “a really fine record that leaves you wanting more.” Brown has been a member of Paquito D’Rivera’s ensemble since 2007, performing on and contributing arrangements to their Latin Grammy award-winning album *Jazz Meets the Classics*. Brown collaborates frequently with vibraphonist Warren Wolf, steel pan virtuoso Victor Provost, and the classical wind quintet Imani Winds. In 2016, he performed Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* as a soloist with the Orquesta

Symphonica de Minería led by conductor Carlos Miguel Prieto in Mexico City. Brown has performed in many of the world’s greatest venues including Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City, the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, and the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City. As an arranger and orchestrator, he has had music performed by premier groups that include the Philadelphia Orchestra. Brown earned his Bachelor of Music degree in jazz performance at the New England Conservatory and his Master of Music degree in composition at the University of Miami’s Frost School of Music. In 2018, Brown joined the faculty of the Peabody Institute, part of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Brown is a YAMAHA artist and resides in New York City.



George Gershwin, Beverly Hills, 1937.
Photo by Renato Toppo.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN GEORGE GERSHWIN PIANO

This 1933 Model A Steinway piano, previously owned and played by George Gershwin in his Manhattan apartment, was donated to the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance in 2013 by George's nephew Marc Gershwin. It is a crowning symbol of the partnership between the Gershwin families and U-M that has created the U-M George and Ira Gershwin Critical Edition and Initiative.

After George's untimely death in 1937, the U-M Gershwin piano resided in the New York City apartment of George's mother Rose Gershwin. Following her death in 1948, Marc Gershwin's parents, Arthur and Judy, occupied the apartment. Almost never played during this period, the piano did not move from the apartment until it left for Ann Arbor in the spring of 2013.

The instrument is one of three pianos formerly owned by George Gershwin; the others are housed in the U.S. Library of Congress in Washington D.C. and the Songwriters Hall of Fame in New York. Steinway's records indicate that George Gershwin took delivery of the piano in January 1934 while preparing for the tenth anniversary tour of *Rhapsody in Blue*. It is presumed that he used the instrument to produce portions of *Porgy and Bess*, first performed in 1935. George Gershwin's piano is a remarkable part of the U-M collection, reserved for faculty and students performing the music of Gershwin and his fellow American composers.



George Gershwin, Folly Beach, South Carolina, June 1934.

1. IT AIN'T NECESSARILY SO George Gershwin arr. Jascha Heifetz
2. #TBT* Patrick Harlin
3. THREE PRELUDES, NO. 1 George Gershwin arr. Jascha Heifetz
4. THREE PRELUDES, NO. 2 George Gershwin arr. Jascha Heifetz
5. THREE PRELUDES, NO. 3 George Gershwin arr. Jascha Heifetz
6. FANTASY FOR SOLO VIOLIN* Ellen Taaffe Zwilich
7. VIVA FOR SOLO VIOLIN* Michael Daugherty
8. GRACEFUL GHOST William Bolcom
9. SUMMERTIME George Gershwin arr. Jascha Heifetz
10. A WOMAN IS A SOMETIME THING
George Gershwin arr. Jascha Heifetz
11. BESS, YOU IS MY WOMAN George Gershwin arr. Jascha Heifetz
12. MY MAN'S GONE NOW George Gershwin arr. Jascha Heifetz
13. TEMPO DI BLUES George Gershwin arr. Jascha Heifetz
14. SHORT STORY Gershwin, arr. Samuel Dushkin
15. AMERICAN IN PARIS George Gershwin arr. Jascha Heifetz
16. EMBRACEABLE YOU+ Gershwin, arr. Alex Brown
17. SLEEPLESS NIGHT+ Gershwin, arr. Alex Brown
18. VIOLIN PIECE+ Gershwin, arr. Alex Brown

* Premiere Recording

+ New Arrangement



George Gershwin, Los Angeles, 1937.

WORKS BY GEORGE & IRA GERSHWIN
NOTES BY DR. MARK CLAGUE

When George Gershwin was about six years old, he became mesmerized by the sound of Anton Rubenstein's *Melody in F*, emanating from a player piano at a Manhattan penny arcade. About four years later, he stood similarly transfixed outside his Lower East Side middle school during recess listening to his schoolmate Maxie Rosenzweig (later Max Rosen) play Antonín Dvorák's *Humoresque*. Gershwin later remarked, "It was, to me, a flashing revelation of beauty." While the *Three Preludes* and *Rhapsody in Blue* associate the name George Gershwin most popularly with the piano, the violin played a similarly formative role in inspiring the composer's sonic imagination.

Dvorák's wildly popular piano piece contains the seeds of Gershwin's signature artistic fusion of classical and popular. Written in the summer of 1894, *Humoresque* is built of unused musical motifs that Dvorák had created in America, during his stint as Director of the National Conservatory in New York. Like the *New World Symphony* and the *American String Quartet*, Dvorák's piano work fuses European and American culture. Its elegant arching and

rhythmically propelled melody traverses the borders of spirituals, ragtime, and a blue-note harmony. Its musical form is a simple doubling of the AABA 32-bar song form typical of Tin Pan Alley, featuring melodic contrast in a pleasing balance primed for popularity.

While his mother hoped George would become a lawyer or a businessman, she nevertheless encouraged an interest in music in all her children. In 1908, about the time that George heard Rosenzweig's *Humoresque*, the family attended the Carnegie Hall recital of violinist Mischa Elman. Like George's mother, Elman was of Lithuanian Jewish heritage. In 1921, George and his brother Ira would write the comic song, "Mischa, Jascha, Toscha, Sascha," celebrating the artistry and stardom of four Jewish paragons of the violin: Elman, Jascha Heifetz, Toscha Seidel, and Sascha Jacobsen. All four lived in New York and all were part of the brothers' social circle. George's musical setting imitates violin etudes with technical figuration along with open fifth tuning, and even recalls *Humoresque*. George delighted in performing the song whenever any of its title characters were

in the room. Its humor fuses fun with admiration, suggesting that Gershwin's understanding of the social potential of music as community might too have stemmed from Elman's Carnegie Hall debut and the example of these violin virtuosi.

Heifetz became a particularly close friend of the Gershwins and when his hopes of a Gershwin violin concerto were dashed in 1937 by the composer's too early death, the virtuoso began making his own Gershwin arrangements. These include the basis of three works featured on this recording—*Three Preludes* (1925), *An American in Paris* (1928), and the folk opera *Porgy and Bess* (1935). Heifetz, who was a composer himself, faithfully recreated Gershwin's music, but added decorative melodies of his own as well as idiomatic virtuosic gestures expected of a violinist in recital. Beginning with arranging the preludes in 1938–39, Heifetz set six episodes from Gershwin's operatic masterpiece in his five movement *Selections from Gershwin's Porgy and Bess* in 1944. His little-known arrangement of *An American in Paris* was begun after Heifetz had retired from the concert stage. His pianist and student Ayke Agus finished the highly compressed realization after the virtuoso's death. It lacks some of the polish and bravura of the

other two recital tested arrangements, while remarkably traversing the themes of the 17-minute concert work in about one third of the time.

Lee and Brown use Heifetz's realizations as a springboard for their own exploration of Gershwin's art, creating new introductions and adding layers of counterpoint, variation, and ornamentation, enriched harmonies, and jazz-inspired improvisations (most prominently in Brown's interlude to "It Ain't Necessarily So"). In doing so, they have simply updated the composer's aesthetic manifesto—"My people are American, my time is today"—to make these arrangements their own.

The duo's creativity comes to the forefront in four additional Gershwin selections. "Embraceable You," is their own arrangement of a classic George and Ira song. Originally written in 1928 for the never realized show *East Is West*, the song was soon included in the Gershwin's Broadway hit *Girl Crazy* (1930). Lee's unaccompanied introduction sets the stage for the romantic ballad.

The pentatonic melody, broken, syncopated rhythms, contrasts, and blue notes of *Short Story* translate Dvorák's *Humoresque* into a modern idiom. The piece was written in 1925 at the request of violinist Samuel Dushkin, another Leopold

Auer student, as a recital piece. Dushkin selected the two Gershwin piano pieces upon which it is based—*Sixteen Bars without a Name*, which became the A sections of the new piece, and *Novelette in Fourths* (1919), which formed the contrasting B section of the ABA' design. Gershwin and Dushkin performed *Short Story* together at New York's University Club in 1925 and again at a party in Paris in 1928. Gershwin seems to have realized *Short Story* for piano solo as well, including it as one of the original *Five Preludes* he performed in 1925 and later trimmed to three.

The wistful bluesy reverie *Sleepless Night*, more prosaically known as *Melody No. 17*, was most likely a part of Gershwin's *Five Preludes* as well. The title comes from a 1936 song, adapted by George and Ira using this same music.

Violin Piece was first published after George's death in an arrangement for piano by composer Kay Swift, also one of George's lovers. Ira gave what had been known as *Melody No. 40* the new title in honor of his brother's long friendship with violinist Max Rosen. The melody in 32-bar ABAB song form was most likely another orphan tune originally intended for the musical *East Is West*.

MARK CLAGUE P H . D .

Musicologist Mark Clague, Ph.D. serves as editor-in-chief of the *George and Ira Gershwin Critical Edition* and founding director of the University of Michigan's Gershwin Initiative (2013–). Dr. Clague's critical edition of George Gershwin's *An American in Paris* was given its world premiere by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in Paris and has now been performed across the globe. A specialist in the music history of the United States, Clague holds faculty appointments in the departments of Musicology, Entrepreneurship and Leadership, American Culture, AfroAmerican and African Studies, and Non-Profit Management at the University of Michigan. He is currently an Associate Professor of Music and Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs for the University of Michigan's School of Music, Theatre & Dance.





(above)
George Gershwin, DuBose
Heyward, & Ira Gershwin,
Boston, September 30, 1935.
Photo by Vandamm Studio, NY.

(right)
Ira Gershwin,
New York City, 1938.
Photo by Adolph Altman.

(previous)
George and Ira Gershwin,
New York, 1928.
Photo by Rex Hardy, Jr.



GRACEFUL GHOST RAG (1970)

The slow lyric syncopation of the *Graceful Ghost Rag* (1970) captures William Bolcom's memories of his father. "He was a very gentle man," said the composer, "and a very good dancer." Bolcom (b. 1938) was among the pioneers of the Ragtime Revival of the late 1960s and early '70s, when the music of James Scott, Joseph Lamb, and especially Scott Joplin was rediscovered, published, performed, and recorded. In Joplin's rhythms, Bolcom found inspiration to create dozens of new rags, including *Graceful Ghost* which has become his best-known composition. Arranged by the composer for violin and piano, the work's elegiac minor mode, aristocratic melodic line, and nimble syncopations entwine both piano and violin in a sentimental, yet sophisticated dance.

WILLIAM BOLCOM
B. 1938

National Medal of Arts, Pulitzer Prize, and Grammy Award-winner William Bolcom is an American composer of keyboard, chamber, operatic, vocal, choral, and symphonic music.

Born in Seattle, Washington, he began composition studies at the age of 11 with George Frederick McKay and John Verrall at the University of Washington while continuing piano lessons with Madame Berthe Poncy Jacobson. He later studied with Darius Milhaud at Mills College, with Leland Smith at Stanford University, and with Olivier Messiaen and Milhaud at the Paris Conservatoire, where he received the 2^{ème} Prix de Composition.

He joined the faculty of the University of Michigan's School of Music in 1973, was named the Ross Lee Finney Distinguished University Professor of Composition in 1994, and retired in 2008 after 35 years.

Bolcom won the Pulitzer Prize for music in 1988 for *12 New Etudes for Piano*, and his setting of William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience* on the Naxos label won four Grammy Awards in 2005 (Best Choral Performance, Best Classical Contemporary Composition, Best Classical Album, and Producer of the Year, Classical). For more information on Mr. Bolcom and his music, see www.williambolcom.com.

FANTASY FOR VIOLIN (2014)

"Any work for solo violin presents technical challenges, but it was my aim in writing *Fantasy for Solo Violin* to challenge the musical imagination and dramatic impulses of the violinist as well. For me, the best artist is not just a virtuoso but a creative spirit in communion with the music," remarked Ms. Zwilich who began her professional career as a violinist in the American Symphony under Leopold Stokowski. *Fantasy for Solo Violin* bursts to life with an opening declaration marked free, then plunges ahead firmly at the *Tempo Giusto* which is full of such hurdles as extended high-position passages, multiple-stopping, rapid string crossings, left-handed *pizzicatos*, and many more, pushing violinists to the outer limits of their technique.

ELLEN TAAFFE ZWILICH
B. 1939

At a time when the musical offerings of the world are more varied than ever before, few composers have emerged with the unique personality of Ellen Taaffe Zwilich. Her music is widely known because it is performed, recorded, broadcast, and—above all—listened to and liked by all sorts of audiences the world over.

Baker's *Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* [8th edition] states: "There are not many composers in the modern world who possess the lucky combination of writing music of substance and at the same time exercising an immediate appeal to mixed audiences. Zwilich offers this happy combination of purely technical excellence and a distinct power of communication."

A prolific composer in virtually all media, Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's works have been performed by most of the leading American orchestras and by major ensembles abroad. Her works include five symphonies and a string of concertos commissioned and performed over the past two decades by the nation's top orchestras.

Zwilich is the recipient of numerous prizes and honors, including the 1983 Pulitzer Prize in Music (the first woman ever to receive this coveted award), the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Chamber Music Prize, the Arturo Toscanini Music Critics Award, the Ernst von Dohnányi Citation, an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Guggenheim Fellowship, four Grammy nominations, the Alfred I. Dupont Award,

Miami Performing Arts Center Award, the Medaglia d'oro in the G.B. Viotti Competition, and the NPR and WNYC Gotham Award for her contributions to the musical life of New York City. Among other distinctions, Ms. Zwilich has been elected to the Florida Artists Hall of Fame, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 1995, she was named

to the first Composer's Chair in the history of Carnegie Hall, and she was designated *Musical America's* Composer of the Year for 1999. Ms. Zwilich, who holds a doctorate from The Juilliard School, currently holds the Francis Eppes Distinguished Professorship at Florida State University. For more information on Ms. Zwilich and her music, see www.zwilich.com.

VIVA FOR SOLO VIOLIN (2012)

Viva (2012) for solo violin was commissioned by violinist Vadim Gluzman, who gave the world premiere at the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Costa Mesa, California on February 23, 2012. This *tour de force* for solo violin unfolds as catchy polytonal musical riffs are layered and phrased in devilish grooves, which "set the soul on fire."

MICHAEL DAUGHERTY
B. 1954

Multiple Grammy Award-winning composer Michael Daugherty was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He is the son of a dance-band drummer and the oldest of five brothers, all professional musicians. Daugherty has achieved international recognition as one of the ten most

performed American composers of concert music, according to the League of American Orchestras. His orchestral music, recorded by Naxos over the last two decades, has received six Grammy awards, including Best Contemporary Classical Composition in 2011 and 2017. Daugherty's music has been commissioned and premiered by many of the world's leading orchestras including the Albany Symphony, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony (U.K.), Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Nashville Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, Pacific Symphony, Philharmonia Orchestra (London), Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, RAI Symphony Orchestra (Milan), and San Francisco Symphony.

As a young man, Daugherty studied composition with many of the preeminent composers of the 20th century including Jacob Druckman, Earle Brown, Bernard Rands and Roger Reynolds at Yale (1980-82), Pierre Boulez at IRCAM in Paris (1979-80) and György Ligeti in Hamburg (1982-84). Daugherty was also an assistant to jazz arranger Gil Evans in New York from 1980-82. In 1991, Daugherty joined the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance as Professor of Composition, where he is a mentor to

many of today's most talented young composers. He is also a frequent guest of professional orchestras, university wind ensembles, festivals and music conservatories around the world.

Daugherty's music is published by Michael Daugherty Music, Peermusic Classical, and Boosey & Hawkes. For more information on Michael Daugherty and his music, see www.michaeldaughertycomposer.com.

T B T (2 0 1 6)

#TBT short for "throwback Thursday" is an homage to the music of George Gershwin. Written for Haerim Elizabeth Lee's debut CD and the first album featuring George Gershwin's Steinway piano, Patrick Harlin wanted to showcase many of [his] favorite musical ideas that originated from Gershwin and became part of the American musical vocabulary. This is the first of a suite for violin and piano.

PATRICK HARLIN
B . 1 9 8 4

The New York Times writes that Patrick Harlin's *"aesthetics capture a sense of tradition and innovation..."* and that *"Mr*

Harlin is breaking new ground." Patrick Harlin completed his doctorate at the University of Michigan in 2016. His work spans both music composition and the field of soundscape ecology, research that has taken him to remote regions of the United States and Amazon Rainforest. Patrick collects field recordings on location for inclusion into music including his dissertation.

Awards include a 2013 Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Presser Award from the Theodore Presser Foundation. Patrick is the first recipient of the Aspen/Hermitage residency, and the

final awardee of the Rappaport Prize in Composition. His music has been performed by the St. Louis Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Alarm Will Sound, Rochester Philharmonic, Kansas City Symphony, Calidore String Quartet, Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, and many more. A recent Calgary Herald review

notes *"Rapture demonstrated both imagination and skill, qualities that are self-recommending. One can only hope for more performances and a bright future for the talented young composer."* For more information on Patrick Harlin and his music, see www.patrickharlin.com.

C R E D I T S

Recorded on January 2 – 4, 2016 at Britton Recital Hall, University of Michigan

The recording was made possible by research and funding from the School of Music, Theatre and Dance at the University of Michigan and the Gershwin Initiative.

Archival images courtesy of the Ira and Leonore Gershwin Trusts.

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Innova is supported by an endowment from the McKnight Foundation.

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