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**COMPOSERS: ANCIENT GREECE – EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY
“WHERE ARE ALL THE WOMEN?”**

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By

Tracie Higashi

**Thesis Committee:
Donna Grace, Chairperson
Hannah Tavares
Richard Johnson**

We certify that we have read this thesis and that, in our opinion, it is satisfactory in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Education in Curriculum Studies.

THESIS COMMITTEE:

Donna Grace

Chairperson

Thomas M. Savary

Rh. Johnson

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This thesis has taken me on a scholastic journey whereupon I have questioned my *reality*, sought a variety of philosophies on what is “truth” resulting in a layered world of “other possibilities”. It has raised the question of “why” and sought to ignite a catalyst of change. Change that was started by those who have come before me...

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ABSTRACT

Composers: Creators of musical works and communicators of the tonal language. Those who are proclaimed “musical genius” and granted “immortality” in history through the perpetuation of their works in various types of media and in the educational institutions. In musical educational curricula that canonize the great composers from Ancient Greece through the Early Twentieth Century time periods, the question remains: “Where are all the women?” This study explores this question through a review of literature, interviews and an examination of musical works. The culmination of this project has been the creation of four original DVDs and bringing the stories of selected women composers to life.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Composers: Creators of musical works and communicators of the tonal language. Those who are proclaimed “musical genius” are granted “immortality” in history through the perpetuation of their works in various types of media (oral traditions, historical documents, CDs, DVDs, television, radio, internet resources etc.), publications, at concert performances and in the educational institutions (through the *curricula*). In musical educational curricula that canonize the great composers from Ancient Greece through the Early Twentieth Century time periods, the question remains: “Where are all the women?”

In an article:

by the eminent psychologist Carl E. Seashore titled ‘Why No Great Women Composers?’ in 1940, he was continuing a long tradition espousing the inferiority of women in music. As far back as 1880, music critic George P. Upton argued that ‘it does not seem that woman will ever originate music in its fullest and the grandest harmonic forms. She will always be the recipient and interpreter, but there is little hope she will be the creator.’ Seashore concurred, theorizing that ‘woman’s fundamental urge is to be beautiful, loved and adored as a person; man’s urge is to provide and achieve in a career (Library of Congress, Retrieved November 8, 2003, para.1).

If indeed Carl E. Seashore and George P. Upton were correct in their assumptions, then the history of women in music composition would remain “silent” and void. The only allotted recognition for a woman would be in the realm of a “performer”. To be viewed as an outstanding performer, a vehicle or interpreter of the musical score

produced by men was socially accepted, but to be thought of as a “creator”, “an originator” of sound, form and texture, the “dictator of musical expression and interpreter of the world around” was not considered in the realm of a “woman”. She may perform but she may not create...and if she creates, she does not meet the male standard of “genius”. Thus, began my search for the “women composers”...

The Study

In this study, I have explored this question through a review of literature, interviews and musical works. The culmination of this research was the creation of four original DVDs. The first video is a broad overview that highlights ten women composers: Sappho, Hildegard of Bingen, Francesca Caccini, Josephine Lang, Clara Schumann, Louise Farrenc, Cecile Chaminade, Amy Beach, Katherine Hoover and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich. The second and third films are in-depth features on the lives of Clara Schumann and Queen Lili'uokalani. The fourth video is a reflection of my scholastic journey and the music, thoughts, and questions that have been raised, revised and unearthed. It is the video that my advisor, Dr. Donna Grace suggested that I put in “poetic form” which in turn, “set me free”... Freedom to express historical knowledge and beliefs using diverse forms (through artistic imagery, poetry, musical theme, silence, color etc.) and raise questions of change through a different *lens*.

The DVDs offered alternative tools for presenting knowledge and learning. It is when the “word”, the “image” and the “music” are integrated that such a powerful medium is formed. Such a medium could be used within the classroom setting to learn about the historical women composers, stimulate discussions and ignite possibilities for the future generations.

In addition, there is another video that has been scripted and the artwork completed by John Zeleznik, however, it remains in storyboard form due to it requiring film “animation”. The short video features the life of Hildegard of Bingen and was geared toward elementary aged children (specifically, kindergarten through third grade). If the issue of the historical restoration of women composers is ever to engage social and political deliberation, then as one of the interviewee’s pointed out “the material must be made available”... for public consumption and scholarly debate. Film animation would lend itself well within the elementary school setting and engage students in such discourse.

How important are these deliberations? How important is it to question the *reality* that is put forth by our society? Can *reality* be a constructed lens from particular perspectives and created to maintain exclusive agendas? Do we continue to ignore new knowledge and alternative discourses that may propel us to redefine “definitions, criteria” and history? The “truth” and musical canons are ever evolving if we as a people are growing, investigating and seeking to raise questions. Such questions have led to a discovery of historical oppression that denied women into institutions of higher learning, access to positions of social and political power including historically significant scholarly status.

In the chapter that follows, a feminist theoretical framework will be used to provide some insight into understanding power relations and post colonial influences that continue to resonate within contemporary music curricula within our educational institutions.

Chapter 2

The Search and Historical Overview

It is not uncommon to encounter an attitude or perception that since the educational institutions do not equally include women composers in their musical curricula, that conceivably there have not been any historical women composers of noteworthy ability whose works would require scholarly study. Or perhaps, there were no women composers in musical history prior to the 20th century. However, according to Susan McClary (musicologist):

Prior to 1970 very little was known or least remembered about women in music history. Women had vanished; virtually no traces remained on concert programs, on library shelves, or in the textbooks that musicians absorb as gospel. I remember being told in graduate school at Harvard that if there had been women composers, we most assuredly would have been told of them ...feminist musicologists (scholarly study of music) in the 1970s turned up far more than anyone could have anticipated... To be sure, a few exceptional women had been mentioned in the textbooks (as in art history, almost always because they were related to famous male composers). But, serious carefully documented studies of these women now have appeared, along with editions of their music and even some recordings (1993, pg. 2).

It is due to the dedicated work of feminist musicologists and other scholars who are interested in the preservation and restoration of women composers in musical history that the investigation turned up hundreds of names.

Composers such as:

Ancient Greece: Sappho

Medieval and Baroque Period: Hildegard of Bingen, Francesca Caccini,

Barbara Strozzi

Classical Period: Anna Amalia, Maria Theresia von Pradis

Romantic Period: Queen Lili'uokalani, Josephine Lang, Clara Wieck Schumann,

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel

Late Romantic Period: Louise Farrenc, Cecile Chaminade

(Jezic, 1988, pgs.vii-ix)

(See table on pgs. 56-57 for additional listings)

*Norton's Grove of Women Composers lists 875 composers.

Subsequent to finding evidence that there were women whose compositional works are highly valued by modern day scholars, along with the recognition of their talents by their famous historical male counterparts who viewed these women as exceptional (as indicated further in this paper) and yet, struggled with the acknowledgement of *woman as a creator...as a composer*. The question then becomes: "Why have these women remained 'invisible' in musical curricula?"

Historical Overview:

In order to address the "invisibility" of women composers in educational curricula, it is critical to view these women in the context at large, which is, *the history of women as a gender* and the discriminations that women faced in a *patriarchal* society. This inquiry will include the MiddleAges (476 – 1450) and the Romantic Period (1827-

1900) with women composers represented in each historical period. *Patriarchy*, as defined by Lerner is:

... the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women in society, in general...It implies men hold power in all important institutions of society and that women are deprived of access to such power. It does not imply that women are either totally powerless or totally deprived of rights” (Lerner, 1986, pg. 238).

The theory of *feminism* will be the main vehicle through which the *critical analysis* of the historical, oppressed role of women will be addressed. According to Drislane and Parkinson’s *Online Dictionary of Social Sciences*, “*feminism*” is defined as

a diverse political and intellectual movement chiefly developed by women, but having increasing influence with both sexes, that seeks to criticize, re- evaluate and transform the place of women in social organization and culture. Common to feminists is the assumption that social organization and culture have been dominated by men to the exclusion of women and that this exclusion has been accompanied by a diverse pattern of evaluation, and disadvantage that have marginalized women’s status in most known societies. Consequently, a major area of concern to feminism is the recovery and articulation of women’s experience in history and in contemporary societies and a wholesale reconstruction of the fundamental intellectual assumptions of social practices and of many areas of study (Retrieved October 22, 2003, para.3).

The restoration of the history of women composers and the recognition of their works, would in fact, provide essential missing links to the heritage of music. However, who dictates what is deemed “worthy of recognition” and “worthy of historical significance”? According to Narayan and Harding, “what we hold to be the nature of knowledge is not culture free but, is determined by the methodologies and data legitimated by dominant cultures” (Narayan & Harding, 2000, pg. 69).

As Lerner (1993) points out, “It is helpful to distinguish between history – events of the past – and recorded History – events of the past as interpreted by succeeding generations of historians. The latter is a cultural product, by which events of the past are selected, ordered and interpreted. It is in recorded history that women have been obliterated or marginalized” (pg. 4). Ashby and Ohrn write:

For thousands of years the achievements of women, if not actively erased from human history, have been largely ignored. History was written almost exclusively by men about men – men’s wars, men’s accomplishments and men’s discoveries. But today, as women around the world are forging ahead in industry, politics, and the arts and sciences, it is more important than ever to look back at those who laid the groundwork for our current achievements (1995, synopsis, para. 2).

The legacy of women... a rich history to be restored, studied and academically recognized in all fields, including musical composition. Women comprise more than half of the human population, how can it be that they are severely underrepresented in musical history (Lerner, 1993)? Do the answers lie in the oppressive, patriarchal structures that denied women “equality” and discriminated against them in the educational institutions? What about the socially imposed gender roles that sought to contain women within the

private/domestic domain and continue their subservient role to their husbands? These gender roles restricted women's (especially those that were married) economic stability and rise in status that could only be attained through the *approval of men*. The prevalent attitude of women being "less than equal", "the weaker sex" or "the interpreter not the creator"... "not a composer"... was constantly being reinforced by the philosophies of the time.

However, there are documents that establish female compositions as early as the Ancient Greece Period when a prominent woman composer named Sappho (600 B.C.) whose music and poetry accompanied by the lyre were so renowned that Plato himself, called her the "tenth muse". She invented the four-line Sapphics stanza and was one of the first lyricist's to write in the first person mode (Amarishi, Retrieved June 7, 2003).

Middle Ages

In the Middle Ages approximately 476 A.D. through 1450 A.D., women were allotted certain rights and privileges based upon their single or widowed status and class standing. Single and aristocratic widows were allowed to own property and conduct economic transactions independently and without having to ascertain the approval or support of men. However, if a woman married, she encountered a reduction of power and position, for she became secondary to the role of her husband (Needham, 1996).

Needham (1996) reveals the vast reduction of rights, and economic power imposed upon married women by the patriarchal structures:

In contrast to the freedoms that single women possessed, married women encountered a loss of power when they tied the knot. The wife gave her land to her husband, thus reducing her power and increasing his. A

woman's dowry consisted of a land tract and her land was merged with her husbands. The woman lost legal competency and was not held responsible for her own actions (pg. 1).

The married woman's role was to support her husband and his career/occupation while caring for the domestic/private domain centered on child rearing and upkeep of the home. These women were denied self-determination rights and were subject to the dictates of a paternalistic society in which the men were considered superior and held absolute power in the public sector. It was the men (aside from some women in the aristocracy and higher classes) who held public office, controlled public institutions and maintained economic control both in and outside of their households (Lerner, 1993, Needham, 1996, Weiss & Rinear, 2002).

Educational Institutions

The discrimination against women continued into the educational institutions (during the twelfth century), when prior to the twelfth century single or widowed women of aristocratic birth could find themselves entering a convent and gaining access to an education. The convents were the institutions of learning for women although, under the supervision of male clergy. However, the separation of educational inequities between men and women widened dramatically during the early twelfth century, when McBride (Retrieved April, 2005) notes:

...new centers of learning came into being –the universities. These grew up in Oxford, Cambridge, Paris, Bologna and other cities in Europe, and began to displace monasteries and convents as centers of learning in Europe. The consequences for women were significant, as admission to

the university was dependent on being ordained in the church (being a priest, or deacon, or member of a lesser order). Because women could not be ordained, they could not share in the explosion of learning...As the universities grew in importance, monasteries and convents became increasingly irrelevant to the world of learning and ideas, leaving women out (pg. 3).

The denial of women into the institutions of higher learning, compounded with the lack of female representation in the political sector, along with the rejection of their economic and social self-determination, developed into a cyclical state of women's oppression. According to Lerner:

Structural, legal and economic inequalities between men and women have held the focus of attention with educational deprivation seen mostly as yet another form of economic discrimination in that it restricted women's access to resources and self support (1993, pg. 10).

Medieval Troubadours and Trobairitz

For a woman composer in the Middle Ages, environments for musical compositional study and performance existed either in the church (convents) or in the secular musical settings of poetry espousing courtly love in the works of the troubadours and trobairitz (male and female lyric poet musicians) (McBride, Retrieved April, 2005, Pendle, 1991).

Women were composing music, having it performed (even if it was limited to their own community) and gaining recognition as creators of music and poetic verse.

Women's musical history has existed as long as their male counterparts, yet, much of the

works were composed anonymously (by nuns) and many pieces have not survived in complete form (i.e. a large body of the works of the women troubadours are missing elements of the compositions). The exceptions were those compositions that were viewed as “worthy” by the patriarchal society and were copied and preserved through the convents and monasteries.

In chapter three, the brilliance of Hildegard of Bingen will be articulated. She was chosen as an exemplary iconic figure to represent the genius and virtuosity of the women of her time. Had she been a man, her notoriety would have withstood the erasure commonly experience by women of her ability and intelligence.

Chapter 3

Hildegard of Bingen

Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) born in Nahe, Germany, also known as the “Sybil of the Rhine”, was a brilliant woman of the Middle Ages who was a renown abbess, composer, activist, teacher, artist, herbalist, scientist, healer and poet. She was the tenth child born into a noble family and dedicated at birth to the church. During that time, it was common practice for noble families who were having difficulties with sustaining large numbers of offspring, to *tithe* the tenth child (especially if female) to the church. It would be through the church that Hildegard would receive her education and later reveal her *visions* that began at the age of five.

When Hildegard was eight years of age, she was sent to study with a woman called Jutta of Sponheim. Jutta was an *anchoress*, which meant she dedicated her life to God and lived cut-off from the world (in a small cottage attached to the Benedictine monastery at Disibodenberg). Jutta’s food would be passed through a small window and she would spend her time in prayer, Bible studies, handiwork like stitching and embroidery and in the education of young girls interested in the church. Hildegard and the other girls would enter Jutta’s cottage and study reading, writing, the Psalter and singing. Following Jutta’s death, in 1136, Hildegard (at the age of thirty eight) was elected to be the leader of the convent (Camelite Missions, Retrieved September 21, 2003, Jones, Retrieved September 17, 2003, Lerman, 1995).

Throughout her life, Hildegard received visions from God, but she chose not to write them down until the age of forty-two when she became very ill. With the aid of her

secretary, the monk named Volmar and the nun, Rikkarda, she began to record her visions (Jezic, 1998). Hildegard's description of the life altering vision:

And it came to pass...when I was forty-two years and seven months old, that the heavens were opened and a blinding light of exceptional brilliance flowed through my entire brain...and suddenly I understood the meaning of expositions of the books...(Jones, Retrieved September 17, 2003, pg. 2).

Yet, Hildegard was also overwhelmed by feeling of inadequacy and hesitated to act. She wrote:

But although I heard and saw these things, because of doubt and low opinion of myself and because of diverse sayings of men, I refused for a long time a call to write, not out of stubbornness but out of humility, until weighed down by a scourge of God, I fell onto a bed of sickness" (Jones, Retrieved September 17, 2003, pg. 2).

Although Hildegard viewed her visions as being from God, she continued to seek the approval of men in the patriarchal Catholic Church. Hildegard wrote to Bernard of Clairvaux expressing her concerns and visions. In Hildegard's

book of her visions, *Scivias* (Know the Ways of the Lord) was recommended by Bernard of Clairvaux to the Synod of Trier. The commission appointed by Pope Eugenius III examined Hildegard, after which the Pope acknowledged the authenticity of her visions. This made Hildegard a public figure, whose advice was sought by high and lowly and whose influence reached throughout Europe (Lerner, 1993, pg. 54).

It would be through these *visions* that Hildegard would base her writings, musical compositions, art and public activism. It was only through male approval that Hildegard's works, position and influence increased dramatically. She had risen to "honorary" male status and was a consultant to Popes, Kings and nobility. Hildegard was able to relocate the nuns (under her care) to new convents not protected by a monastery (unheard of at the time), to write books on natural science (derived from Greek cosmology), theology, religious revelations, medicine, to invent her own 900-word language. She also defied an "issue by the Mainz diocese, in the absence of the Archbishop...to exhume a body of a man who had been excommunicated but, Hildegard had believed had made his peace with the Church before his death" (Lerner, 1993, pg. 56). As a composer, Hildegard wrote a large number of musical works that were performed in the convents. Would she have been able to be such a prominent leader and scholar, had she not attained the approval of the Pope? Would her books have been copied within the convent walls and continued to be studied and discussed by male scholars into the Renaissance Period? Would the Pope have even considered her work, if it were not substantiated through *visions*, the way of the female *mystics*? Would any of her musical compositions have survived past the twelfth century?

Hildegard's Music

Music was a vital component of the religious curriculum in the church convents. Hildegard's compositions consisted of her original music and poetry. She composed primarily "monophonic music in the form of sacred plainchant, for which she wrote original poetry" (Jezic, 1998). *Plainchant* consists of a single melodic line that is

chanted. Melodies used in plainchant are *melismatic*, where there are many notes per syllable. Hildegard's works include:

Ordo Virtutum, a morality play with 69 songs, *Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum*, containing the music for: 43 antiphons, 18 responds, 7 sequences, 4 hymns, 1 Kyrie, 1 alleluiah and other miscellaneous items (Jezic, 1998, pg. 14).

Regarding Hildegard's music:

...Her texts (from her chant cycle *Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum*) contain some of the most unusual, subtle, and exciting poetry of the twelfth century....Hildegard built her works from a small number of melodic formulae; however, her development process resulted in more-continuous, composed musical lines. Musical stability arises from organic melodic unity rather than from conventional factors such as strophic form or regular poetic meter.

Hildegard's songs often encompass a wide range, covering two octaves or more. Her frequent use of ascending and descending leaps of a fifth is also exceptional by traditional forms, her works in other genres, such as the Kyrie, have identifiable precedents in Gregorian chant repertoire (Pendle, 1991,pg. 24).

Pendle continues with identifying Hildegard's numerous chants that honor women (i.e: Virgin Mary , St. Ursula and other groups of women) and how

...her poetic imagery is frequently woman-centered and women take an active role in the spiritual story of salvation Hildegard presents. In this way she inspired women to become aware of their *power* in the material world and to exercise that

power. Working within a women's community, Hildegard developed remarkable leadership and extraordinary creativity. Only as a member of a religious community of women could she have brought together her scientific, artistic and theological creations (1991, pg. 25).

However it was only through the approval of *men* that Hildegard received the notoriety and status that she held.

Is it important to study the musical works of gifted women composers such as Hildegard of Bingen? A woman who was a genius of her time and yet suffered from the patriarchal (male dominated) institutions and ideologies that viewed women as subservient and inferior unless she was *touched by God* and her works *approved by a man*. A composer who Pendle (1991) describes as "a composer of seventy-seven religious songs and a lengthy music-drama that has no medieval parallel" (pg. 23). "Hildegard overcame the biggest obstacle all thinking women faced and still face – the overwhelming burden of proving their right and their ability to think at all in opposition to traditional gender-roles they were expected to fill" (Lerner, 1993, pg. 57). One might add that it is the same obstacle that women composers have faced up until the late nineteenth century –*having to prove their ability to think and be creators of noted distinction.*

Chapter 4

Romantic Period and Clara Schumann

The end of the Middle Ages (476- 1450) into the beginning of the Romantic Period (1827 – 1900), a span of approximately 377 years, consisted of women immersed in the Reformation religious movement, the witch hunts, the rise of the middle class, the French Revolution of 1789 and the eventual rise in prosperity of music and the arts.

For the European women composers and musicians during the 1800's, an increase in musical opportunities arose with the outgrowth of concert halls and opera houses, which provided musicians the opportunity to perform to a much wider audience population. New music schools developed and the patronage system, which was previously known to be in the realm of the aristocracy, was now moving into the middle class. Many middle class families supported their daughters with music lessons, primarily studies in voice and piano, in an attempt to gain social acceptance, provide family entertainment and augment future marital possibilities (Pendle, 1991).

However, women were not to regard music as a serious career that they could pursue. Moreover, women were socially discouraged to perform publicly and to publish music under their own names. It was the attitudes such as those posed by the highly influential educational philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) that pervaded the Romantic era. He stated: "There are no good morals for women outside of the withdrawn and domestic life...The peaceful care of the family and home are their lot...The whole education of women ought to be relative to men...(Pendle,1991, pg. 98)." According to Pendle these statements:

affected the roles and education of women in every sphere, but were particularly damaging to the development of women composers and performers. ...The Romantic ethos idolized the artist-genius – always male- who was seeking self-expression. Woman was idealized; her function was to serve as a Muse for the creator, to inspire and nurture the man (1991, pg. 98).

Clara Schumann

Into this early nineteenth century environment on September 13, 1819 in Leipzig, Germany, was born Clara Josephine Wieck. Clara's father Friedrich Wieck was a highly respected, progressive piano teacher and owner of a piano store; her mother Marianne Tromlitz was an accomplished soprano, talented pianist and teacher.

In 1825, the couple divorced and Clara and her siblings were given to their father for custodial care. During those times, children were viewed as “property of their father” (Jezic, 1998) and thus began the formal musical training of Clara, under the strict supervision of her father. When Clara reached seven she was practicing three hours a day on the piano, one-hour assigned to lessons and the other two scheduled for practicing. Friedrich Wieck, who was the dominating musical force in Clara's life, made sure Clara had lessons in theory, harmony, counterpoint, composition, orchestration, voice and violin with prestigious teachers of the time, along with daily walks in the mornings to strengthen the body and study in operatic scores and attending performances. Friedrich Wieck was not the typical patriarch who wanted his daughter to study music as a vehicle to enhance her marital possibilities; he sought to raise his daughter to the “honorary male status” of being a virtuoso performer and “composer” through his training techniques, input and methods.

At the age of nine, Clara wrote her first piano composition, *Four Polonises Op. 1* and gave her first public appearance. At eleven, she performed her first complete piano recital and at the age of twelve began her first of many concert tours throughout Germany and Paris (Jezic, 1998). In 1938, Clara was named honorary member of Vienna's *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*, as well as nominated by the Emperor and Empress as *Kammervirtuosin* of the Imperial household. The Empress stated, "She is a great virtuoso, I have never heard such playing" (Chissell, 1983, pgs. 54-55). Among her other admirers were some of the most famous male composers and writers of the nineteenth century: Schubert, Chopin, Paganini, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms and Goethe. Liszt wrote, "Her compositions are really very remarkable, especially for a woman. There is a hundred times more ingenuity and true sentiment in them than in all the fantasies, past and present of Thalberg" (Reich, 1985, pg. 195).

In 1840, a day before her twenty-first birthday, Clara Wieck married, against her father's wishes, one of her father's students, the gifted composer, Robert Schumann and they had eight children together. Clara and Robert shared their musical ideas and supported one another in many respects. Robert had much of Clara's compositions published and Clara performed and promoted Robert's work during her concerts. However, society's view of the role of a woman was displayed in Robert's own words when he wrote:

Clara has written a number of small pieces that show a musical and tender invention that she has never attained before. But to have children and a husband who is always living in the realms of imagination, do not go together with composing. She cannot work at it regularly and I am often disturbed to think how

many profound ideas are lost because she cannot work them out. But Clara herself knows her main occupation is as mother and I believe she is happy in the circumstances and would not want them changed (Reich, 1985, pg. 215).

Clara did manage to compose and continued to perform during her years of marriage, which in turn, helped the family finances and the promotion of her husband's compositions. In her diary she wrote:

There is nothing that surpasses the joy of creative activity, even if only for those hours of self-forgetfulness in which one breathes solely in the realm of tones...There is really no greater pleasure than having composed something and then to hear it...(Reich, 1985, pg. 215).

Throughout her life, Clara seemed (as expressed by other women composers of the past) plagued by a sense of insecurity regarding her compositional gifts. As was the attitude of many during this time, women were viewed as skilled performers, but secondary to men in composition. Though Clara's pieces were at times publicly performed and though peers like the renowned violinist Joachim and the highly acclaimed composer, Mendelssohn, expressed their admiration for her pieces, Clara still viewed her work as inferior and lacking. In her diary entry for November 25, 1839, Clara wrote:

I once believed I had creative talent, but I have given up this idea; a woman must not wish to compose – there never was one able to do it. Am I intended to be the one? It would be arrogant to believe that. That was something, which only my father tempted me in former days. But I soon gave up believing this. May Robert always create; that must always make me happy (Reich, 1985, pg. 216).

Clara's Music

Clara Wieck Schumann's career included 1,300 public piano recitals, her compositions are comprised of: "29 songs, 3 part songs, 20 pieces for solo piano, 4 orchestral with piano works, cadenzas for 3 piano concertos by Beethoven and Mozart; works Opus 1-23 and with 17 without Opus numbers" (Smith, 1995, Retrieved October 3, 2003, pg. 3). She was considered one of the greatest pianist's of the nineteenth century, an accomplished composer by her peers, a creative influence on Robert Schumann and Johannes Brahms and their works and yet, she suffered from the societal oppression of women regarding her insecurities about her being a composer of equal status to her male counterparts. Due to the prevailing attitudes of the inferiority of women, the patriarchal political structures that ruled society, Clara was denied full empowerment and self-realization as a gifted mistress of musical composition. Robert Schumann once wrote:

In contrast to other virtuosas, she (Clara) almost always avoided playing her own compositions, although she composed better and more solidly than many of the most famous artists of that time (Reich, 1985, pg. 215).

Chapter 5

Political Arenas and Effects

Political and Economic Control

It would only be through the approval and support of a man or men that a woman stood a chance in being recognized as an outstanding musician and composer. Men were in control of the musical institutions, organizations and publishing companies. They held the power and controlled the exposure of musical compositions and performances. Being in control of the selection, promotion and distribution of musical works can be a powerful tool used to strategically decide what becomes “accepted” by the public. As Michel Foucault writes:

...many of the elements that are supposed to provide access to music actually impoverish our relationship with it. A certain rarity of relation to music could preserve an ability to choose what one hears, and thus a flexibility in listening. But the more frequent this relation is (radio, records, cassettes), the more familiarities it creates; habits crystallize; the most frequent becomes the most acceptable and soon the only thing perceivable (Scott, 2000, pgs. 164-165).

Are musically accepted works (cultural “taste”) created through *exposure* and if so, what are the implications of compositions that remain unpublished or scarcely available for public scrutiny? Is the “frequency” of musical works reinforcing *inequality* or can it be used to restore *equality*?

...Only as the patterns and relationships become familiar does the music itself become evocative and significant. This is why most people go to concerts to hear

a beautiful performance of music that they know (Ammer, Janet Baker-Carr, 2001). And this is why music by women must be programmed and reprogrammed until its very familiarity supports its journey to equality (Glickman & Schleifer, 2003, pg. 11).

Is true equality even possible? If one considers gender, then what of race, class, sexuality and culture? There are six factors that Christina Ammer points to that:

...describes the proper climate for a creative artist's production and participation in society (Glickman & Schleifer provide clarity in definition of terms): access to education, financial stability, time (to create is dependent on a woman's domestic and financial position), encouragement (by an inner circle for support and psychological strength), acceptance by society (permits performances, publication, inclusion in histories and competitions honors) and survival of the creation (depends on all the other factors, especially publication), (Glickman & Schleifer, 2003, pg.7).

On a global scale, Derek Scott draws attention to the connection between national *power and cultural value* citing times where nations support certain musical movements/eras that promote their national composers and the creations. Music then becomes a vehicle for perpetuating political power.

In the 1960s 'Perspectives of New Music' became the leading pro-modernists journal. The fact that this is a North American publication adds weight to a well-worn contention that there is a link between power and cultural value. Is it by chance that the emergence of the United States as a superpower coincides with a participation in the promotion of modernism-most obvious in the visual arts but

also significant in music?...After the United States, France pours the most money into modernism, but here support comes from the state rather than wealthy businessmen, foundations or multinational corporations. There is perhaps a desire to establish France as the cultural leader of post 1992 Europe” (Scott, 2000, pg. 15).

Social and Cultural

Culture is a social product...The social and economic factors relevant to the understanding of art include: contemporary forms of patronage; dominant institutions of cultural production and distribution (workshops, academies, art schools, music publishers, broadcasting companies and so on); the relationship of the State to cultural production (censorship, control of certain institutions, funding); the sociology of cultural producers (background, class, gender); and the nature and constitution of consumers (literacy rates, availability of cheap materials as a result of improvements in printing, reproduction, social divisions among audiences/viewers/readers). The history of any art is a history of the interplay of these many factors (Wolf, 1987, pg.5).

All these relationships or “factors” impact the evolution of one’s culture, create what are socially acceptable behaviors and values and perpetuate these beliefs through consumer reproduction and exposure. What *culture or cultures* are being reflected within the educational curriculums? Who are remaining “invisible” in academic representation?

If one were to examine the curricula used within the educational institutions, it is apparent that the post-colonial manifestation of a politically, economically and socially

dominant culture is still reflected. These contemporary curricula continue to maintain the patriarchal, European dominated philosophies through selected portions and admissions of a perceived history, recognition of certain historical figures, viewpoints, values, and the cultural perceptions of those in power and what they feel is “worthy of learning, sustaining, reinforcing etc.” Julie Kaomea points out:

...the under-represented minority groups in the school curricula of (post) colonial societies in which colonialist economic and psychodynamics continue to exist...The under-representation of minorities decry the widespread class, gender, sex and race bias in these materials and justifiably argue that all too often the ‘legitimate’ or ‘official’ knowledge of the textbook does not include the historical experiences and cultural expressions of labor, women, people of color and others who have been denied power (Kaomea, 2000, pg.1).

What about the women composers? How are they being represented or not represented? What of the women composers of “color”? Trin Minh-ha states:

It is difficult for any woman to find acceptance for her writing, it is all the more so for those who do not match the stereotype of the ‘real woman’ – the colored, the minority, the physically or mentally handicapped” (1989, pg. 9).

The Great Chain of Being

Cultural hegemonic practices and beliefs found support and reinforcement with the dawn of the “Empirical Revolution” that began with the rise of the “Scientific Method”. The movement was based upon the creation of hypotheses, collection of data and concluding generalizations (required for replication purposes) that resulted in a highly biased, postcolonial perception of cultures. One such product was the

evolutionary theory of the “Great Chain of Being”. This theory “essentialized” cultures, created hierarchies with sharp binaries and was recognized and supported by a “congressional mandate”. As stated by Lesko:

In 1893, the World’s Columbian exhibition opened in Chicago, with a congressional mandate to be ‘an exhibition of the progress of civilization in the New World...The world exhibition can be reread as a representation of the established hierarchy of peoples within a long-playing scientific drama. The hierarchy expressed in the architecture and spatial layout of the Columbian Exhibition was widely known as the Great Chain of Being, a rank ordering of species from the least primitive to the most civilized, based on evolutionary theory. The Great Chain of Being located white European men and their societies, norms and values at the pinnacle of civilization and morality (Lesko, 2004, pgs. 20-21).

The “Great Chain of Being” was a vehicle to maintain power structures under the guise of progress and scholarly study:

The late 1800’s inherited a long and rich set of images and ideas about progress, and rich set of images and ideas about progress, and the new sciences of physical anthropology, psychology, biology, and medicine offered tools to better understand progress; to rank individuals, groups and societies as savage, backward, or most advanced; and to diagnose impediments to progress. The Great Chain of Being was a constant reference point in popular scientific conversations in the late 1800’s. The Great Chain of Being refers to the hierarchy of animals, people and societies that portrayed evolutionary history and a

sociological ranking extending from European middleclass males and their republican government on the top, through women to savage tribes, with the lower animals at the bottom...progress was also defined as the 'advance from superstition to reason' and 'from simplicity to complexity' (Lesko, 2004, pg. 22).

The "Great Chain of Being" viewed a society's creation of gender binaries (the specifically defined roles and noted differences between men and women) as being only recognized by those who were comprised of the "higher order" (the more civilized, the white European, the educated etc). As noted by Lesko:

Gender, too was an essential component of civilization, and advanced races clearly identified the sexes. 'Savage (that is, nonwhite) men and women were believed to be almost identical, but men and women of the civilized races had evolved pronounced sexual differences.' Thus the clearly separate spheres of women and men in the Victorian era 'were assumed to be absent in savagery, but to be an intrinsic and necessary aspect of higher civilization' (Lesko, 2004, pg. 25).

These gender binaries and prejudiced views sought to sustain patriarchal control in structures of "power" (i.e. the political, economic and educational institutions).

Impact on Self-Image

Socially imposed gender roles sought to contain women within the private/domestic domain (verses the public domain) and reinforced the subservient role women played toward their husbands that in turn, impacted their self-image. The obstacles that women faced with having to choose between motherhood and pursuing an education, to being denied the right to enter the higher educational institutions,

dramatically affected their sense of self-worth. There is a consistent pattern of self-doubt, a perception of *inadequacy* to men and their works (up until the late nineteenth century) that has been reiterated by many of the most talented women in women's history.

Much more serious in its impact on female thought was the internalization by women of their inferiority, which made them uncertain or defensive as their right to think. Medieval women writers, even the most powerful, such as the female mystics, all found it necessary to announce their unworthiness to the reader.

Hildegard of Bingen, one of the most learned women of her century, referred to herself as 'ignota' an 'ignorant woman' (Lerner, 1993, pg. 5).

Chapter 6

Queen Lili'uokalani

In 1999, Hui Hanai published *"The Queen's Songbook (Her Majesty Queen Lili'uokalani)* with most of the compositions from a manuscript entitled *He Buke Mele Hawaii: Hawaiian Songs with Words and Music* which Queen Lili'uokalani prepared in 1897" (Conrad, 1999, pg. XII Preface).

He Buke Mele Hawaii contains 110 songs with melodies and translations by the Queen, and it is undoubtedly the collection she was referring to when she wrote her publisher at the turn of the century, 'I want to get this work out in good shape, so that my enemies may see that I am more intellectual than they want to give me credit for' ... The book was unpublished at the time of the Queen's death and has remained so until the present... Hui Hanai believes the Queen's Songbook fulfills Lili'uokalani's desire to be recognized for her musical abilities (Conrad, 1999, pg. XII Preface).

For women to be "recognized" and acknowledged for musical composition giftedness (ancient Greece through early twentieth century time period) has been a continual struggle. It has been even more difficult for the "marginalized", the native/indigenous people whose standards/values of excellence may differ due to cultural criteria. Should women composers be judged under patriarchal criteria with a historical colonial framework? Or do we as a society need to revise definitions of musical compositional greatness with regard to the criteria of the culture in which the woman composer identifies with? "Criteria" that the people of that culture consider noteworthy,

such as the use of native language, melodic construction, poetic imagery, tonality, etc.

As Manu Meyers writes:

There is vast inequality between the diversity of knowledge structures (e.g. empiricism) and what is respected, assessed and promoted in our schools and society (Gould, 1981). And for many marginalized people, this gap increases with the growing push toward homogeneity...Hawaiian epistemology begins to define a new form of empiricism, one that does not degrade the instinctive, innate or ancestral knowledge...Hawaiian notion of 'gifted' speaks of differing belief structures which place values and morality at the center of what it means to be a contributing member of a community. The attributes for 'giftedness' are (Martin, 1996, pg. 102): Aloha, Lohe, Na'auao, Ho'opili, Ha'aha'a, Kuha'o, Kina'ole and Kela Imi pono (2003, pgs. 76, 78 & 87).

How is it possible that one of the most prolific women composers of Hawai'i who once wrote the following is not represented or scarcely represented throughout the music educational curricula continuum kindergarten through the university levels?

To compose was as natural to me as to breathe; and this gift of nature, never having been suffered to fall into disuse remains a source of the greatest consolation to this day...I have never yet numbered my compositions, but am sure that they must run well up to the hundreds. Of these not more than a quarter have been printed, but the most popular have been in such demand that several editions have been exhausted...even when I was denied the aid of any instrument, I could transcribe the tones of my voice (Queen Lili'uokalani, 1990, pg. 31).

How can the last Hawaiian reigning monarch, Queen Lili'uokalani, who is revered by the island people as being one of the most distinguished and gifted composers, not have her pieces consistently sung, performed and recorded throughout the islands (including public educational curricula, concert halls, not only in the categorized Hawaiiana courses)?

Life and Music

Queen Lili'uokalani was born to High Chief Caesar Kapa'akea and the High Chiefess Keohokalole on September 2, 1838. When Lili'u was born, she was given to her hanai parents, High Chief Paki and High Chiefess Konia. For ali'i to give their children to other ali'i, fortified the ties within the families (Lowe, 1993, Gillet, 1999).

The environment in the Hawaiian Islands during the early nineteenth century were such that:

By 1838, Hawai'i was nominally under the rule of Kamehameha III and governed in fact by his elder half-sister, the 'kuhina nui' Kina'u. A system of 'kapu', the basis of social order in the Islands for many generations, had been formally dissolved in 1819, and Polynesian religious traditions had increasingly been supplanted by Protestant Christianity. The New England missionaries who arrived in 1820 introduced not only a new faith but new ideas of morality, government, and music (Gillet, 1999, pg. 1).

When Lili'u was three years old (three years and eight months) she was sent to the Chief's Children School (later named Royal School) where the children of high birth were schooled in arithmetic, reading, writing, spelling, Christianity and the rudiments of

music. She played the piano, guitar, organ, autoharp, sight read, sang and composed. Her first teachers at the school were Amos Cooke and Juliet Cooke who were New England missionaries (Lowe, 1993, Gillet, 1999). In her autobiography, Lili'uokalani notes that "my facility in reading music at sight was always recognized by my instructors" (Gillet, 1999, pg. 4). She remarks that she could:

... scarcely remember the days when it would not have been possible for me to write either the words or the music for any occasion on which poetry or song was needed. To compose was as natural to me as to breathe (Gillet, 1999, pg. 4).

Eventually, the missionary reform and manipulation of the educational curricula impacted religion, language (English being the language reinforced in the schools), political structures, dress, gender roles, and self-perception of the indigenous population. By teaching and perpetuating the idea of English as the dominant, "first world" language, the Hawaiian language was then de-valued and culture impacted. For in language lies thought and embedded values of a particular culture.

It is more difficult to determine how Lili'u developed the ability to express herself as a poet in the Hawaiian language...English was the language of instruction for the fourteen years of her formal education, and for the first nine of those formative years she was a boarder at school...Though it cannot be documented, it seems likely that Lili'u had the benefit of tutelage in Hawaiian language and poetics from her 'hanai' parents after the Royal School discontinued boarding in 1850 (Gillet, 1999, pg. 5). Why is it important to seek the origins of Lili'u's development in the Hawaiian language and poetic lyrics? In the Hawaiian culture, the "word" is just as important as the "melody".

Few of Lili'u's songs, however can be definitively interpreted, and the exceptions prove the rule that, true to Hawaiian tradition, Lili'uokalani preferred to speak through veils of metaphor, which obscure her meaning to those outside her culture and time... The ambiguities of the lyrics do not interfere with enjoying the songs or appreciating Lili'uokalani's talents; indeed, they encourage careful and open-minded listening. No subsequent Hawaiian composer has written so many beautiful lyrics, specially 'mele ho'oiipoipo'(love song or chant) and adapted them so effectively to the measure phrases of Western music. This success, along with the creation of 'Aloha Oe', secures Lili'uokalani an honored place among Hawaiian composers (Gillet, 1999, pg. 19).

At the age of seventeen, Lili'u left school and became an active member of the royal court. It was during this time that she began to compose some of her earliest works such as "Nani Na Pua Ko'olau" that later became published in the Hawaiian and English languages (Gillet, 1999). In 1862, at twenty-four years of age, Lili'u married John Owen Dominis.

Lili'u continued to compose and notate her compositions, date her works and indicate places of their creation. Under the request of Kamehameha V (in 1866), Lili'u composed "He Mele Lahui Hawai'i" (The Hawaiian National Anthem). The work was completed within a week of the request and became her first published work. In her own words:

In the early years of the reign of Kamehameha V, he brought to my notice the fact that the Hawaiian people had no national air. Each nation, he said, but ours had its expression of patriotism and love of country in its own music; but we were

using for that purpose on state occasions the time-honored British anthem, 'God Save the Queen'. This he desired me to supplant by one of my own compositions (Lili'uokalani, 1990, pg. 31).

The king was present for the purpose of criticizing my new composition of both words and music...He admired not only the beauty of the music, but spoke enthusiastically of the words...(Lili'uokalani, 1990, pgs. 31-32).

"He Mele Lahui Hawai'i" remained the Hawaiian National Anthem for the next decade until it was replaced by King Kalakaua's own composition, "Hawai'i Pono'i". King Kalakaua wrote the lyrics to "Hawai'i Pono'i" and then "gave directions to the master of the band to set these to music" (Lili'uokalani, 1990, pg. 32).

In 1890, after proclaiming Lili'uokalani as regent, King Kalakaua departed to San Francisco. During the trip, King Kalakaua died and on January 29, 1891, at the age of fifty-two, Queen Lili'uokalani ascended to the throne. Hawai'i's Queen wanted a new constitution that would restore power to the monarchy and ensure that only the Hawaiian born or naturalized males had voting privileges. In addition, the restoration of unilateral power would be given back to the Hawaiian rulers. According to Queen Lili'uokalani, the new constitution evolved out of the support of her ministers and the many petitions received from the Hawaiian people (Lowe, 1993). In her own words the Queen wrote:

...at the request of a large majority of the Hawaiian people, and by and with the consent of my cabinet, I proposed to make certain changes in the constitution of the Hawaiian kingdom, which were suggested to me as being for the advantage and benefit of the kingdom and subjects and residents thereof. These proposed changes did not deprive foreigners of any rights or privileges enjoyed by them

under the constitution of 1887, promulgated by King Kalakaua and his cabinet, without the consent of the people or ratified by their votes. My ministers at the last moment changed their views and requested me to defer all action in connection with the constitution; and I yielded to their advice...(Lili'uokalani, 1990, pg. 281).

However, a small group of pro-American businessmen saw the new constitution as a threat to their power and profits attained through the sugar industry, land ownership and other businesses. Hence, they formed the Annexation Club (later renamed the Committee of Safety) led by Sanford B. Dole and supported by the United States Minister John Stevens. The Committee of Safety sought to overthrow Hawaii's Queen and gain annexation into the United States (Lowe, 1993). In 1893, Queen Lili'uokalani was overthrown.

Under the order of President Grover Cleveland, Commissioner Blount was sent to investigate the overthrow. Subsequent to the submittal of Commissioner Blount's report, President Cleveland came out in opposition to the overthrow and Hawai'i's annexation to the United States.

While the United States House of Representatives agreed with President Cleveland the senate did not...Some senators worried about what the queen would do to those who had overthrown her...The men who had deposed the queen had earlier been recognized by President Benjamin Harrison, the president in office before President Cleveland. Since President Harrison had been sympathetic to the annexationists the United States Senate would not support President Cleveland (Lowe, 1993, pgs. 61-62).

Hawai'i was granted annexation into the United States as a United States territory in 1898, then in 1959 Hawai'i became the 50th state in the Union.

In 1895, Queen Lili'uokalani was arrested and imprisoned at the Executive Building (later renamed as Iolani Palace). She was restricted in a corner room for eight months for the alleged knowledge of a revolt by her supporters to restore her to the throne. In her autobiography, Queen Lili'uokalani denies the allegations (Lili'uokalani, 1990, pgs. 282-283). It was during her imprisonment that she wrote down a song she had composed years earlier called "Aloha Oe" or "Farewell to Thee" (Lowe, 1993). She also wrote several more pieces one of which is "Ke Aloha O Ka Haku" or "The Queen's Prayer" (Gillet, 1999).

Following her incarceration, Queen Lili'uokalani composed the following musical pieces that reflected political unity:

'Ka Wai 'Apo Lani' (Heavenly Showers), a song expressing hope that she would be returned to the throne... 'Ke Aloha Aina' (Love for the Land), alternatively called 'He Lei Aloha' (A Lei of Love). The song is a plea for the land and for the life of the nation and an exhortation to her people to remain resolute (Gillet, 1999, pg. 17).

She continued her pursuit of the restoration of the Hawaiian kingdom by traveling to Washington and lobbying. On her way to Washington, she stopped at Boston where:

...an old acquaintance, Captain Julius Palmer, proposed that she publish her story and volunteered his services as secretary. That was the genesis of her autobiography (Gillet, 1999, pg. 17).

Queen Lili'uokalani stayed at Washington, D.C. for seven months and concurrently worked on lobbying for the restoration of the monarchy, her autobiography, "a translation of *Kumulipo* , an extended genealogical chant; and an opera called *Mohailani* (Chiefly Offering), based on the experiences of her reign" (Gillet, 1999, pg. 17). She also finalized *He Buke Mele Hawai'i*, a compilation of some of her compositions.

The last decades of her life brought many sorrows, but Lili'uokalani by then evidently no longer took solace in composing, only two songs are known from those final years...She took several more futile trips to Washington in efforts to prevent the loss of crown lands...(Gillet, 1999, pg.18).

During her lifetime, Queen Lili'uokalani wrote hundreds of songs, solo chants, dance chants and the incomplete three act opera *Mohailani* (Wright, 1998). She saw the value of writing her lyrics in both the Hawaiian language and many times translated her pieces into English. Hawai'i's Queen understood that the publishing of her works created opportunities for the perpetuation of her culture, perspectives and historical documentation. In her autobiography she declares:

...And yet it still remains true that no other composer but myself has ever reduced them (Hawaiian musical compositions) to writing (Lili'uokalani, 1990, pg.53).

She goes on to explain that the Hawaiian custom of musical perpetuation resided in the oral tradition. Musical works that were admired were passed on through performance and disseminated throughout the community. Also, within the ancient chants and poetry lay the history of the Hawaiian people (Lili'uokalani, 1990). Through musical composition, notation and publication (acquiring relationships with publishers to support

her works, and having her compositions published herself), Queen Lili'uokalani took steps to continue the perpetuation and preservation of a sacred part of the Hawaiian culture...the "music".

As a composer, Lili'uokalani chose to use Western notation and Western musical influences while maintaining the Hawaiian cultural values of the use of the poetic "metaphor" or "kaona" (the hidden meaning) within the lyrical content while providing a prominent melody.

Lili'uokalani's music has strong roots in indigenous tradition yet is definitely acculturated (indigenous music with foreign influences), as it follows the structure of Western music. Indeed, together with her family and friends, in their prestigious social position, Lili'uokalani was highly influential in amalgamating elements of foreign music and indigenous Hawaiian music to produce the form of musical expression that many Hawaiians now regard as the classic Hawaiian song (Gillet, 1999, pg. 301). At the time Lili'uokalani composed, a song's survival depended primarily on the appeal of its melody...(Gillet, 1999, pg.19).

There is no doubt that Queen Lili'uokalani's status as a person of royal birth allowed her to be granted an education and exposure to many musical experiences. Her aristocratic status helped to promote her compositions and create associations with people in positions of power (i.e. publishers, concert masters etc.). Her Hawaiian heritage provided a rich cultural environment that highly valued musical composition and performance. All these factors combined with Queen Lili'uokalani's intelligence, inner drive and gifted musical ability helped to nurture her compositional development. As a

composer, within the musical criteria of the music of Hawaii, Queen Lili'uokalani is highly revered and worthy of historical "greatness".

Yet, even as a woman of the highest status, Queen Lili'uokalani wrote of her having to prove herself (as stated earlier):

I want to get this work out in good shape, so that my enemies may see that I am more intellectual than they want to give me credit for...(Conrad, 1999, XIV Preface).

Why would Hawai'i's Queen need to demonstrate and establish her intellectual abilities as a composer? Was it because she was a "woman" or a "woman of color" or perhaps a "woman of color who held a position of power"? For the compilation of her compositions to be viewed as musical creations of scholarly status was important to Queen Lili'uokalani. Over a century later:

The efforts of those last monarchs are better appreciated today than they were during their lifetimes, thanks to the changes in attitude wrought by time. A pluralistic society no longer dominated by the views of the early mission; an explosion of knowledge in Hawaiian anthropology, ethnomusicology and dance ethnology; a new emphasis on ethnic pride and diversity – all combine to heighten public appreciation ...of Hawaiian artistry. Indeed, it seems almost unaccountable today that one hundred years ago ancient Hawaiian traditions were disdained as 'primitive' or 'vulgar' (Gillet, 1999, pg. 19).

How does one imply and reinforce scholarly importance, historical relevance and brilliance in musical composition? Whose cultural compositional icons are being represented and whose are not?

In his book, *Culture and Imperialism*, Said (1993) puts forth much evidence to demonstrate that even literature and the arts helped to establish the hegemony of colonial empires by reflecting and reinforcing it through their enduring narratives (Petzold, 2002, pg. 422).

Are the dominant, patriarchal, colonial cultures continuing to be maintained through the educational institutions within the curricula?

Queen Lili'uokalani provides us with a clear example of how culture and colonial influence impacted musical compositions of indigenous populations. Henceforward, this work will examine the definitions of "greatness" and the debate of culture in music composition.

Chapter 7

What is *Greatness* and *The Cultural Debate*

After a brief overview of the historical discriminations and oppression faced by women, there is a need to inquire why many educational music curricula have not been reassessed, recoded or redefined the history of classical music and included women composers? Two issues (in an article by Susan McClary) become prominent in regard to the posed question, first: “What is ‘greatness’ in music? Second, “Is music culture free”, neutral in cultural agenda?

The relative absence of women from symphonic and opera repertoires has often been cited as evidence of their inability to achieve ‘greatness’... The bulk of music by women involved solo voice, piano or small chamber ensembles – genres that do not have the same prestige value as the orchestral and operatic repertoires from which they were usually barred (McClary, 1993, pg. 5).

McClary goes on to state:

Yet if women’s music frequently does not show to advantage under the criteria we have absorbed through our training, then might there be other, more appropriate criteria? For perhaps some of them were not trying to duplicate what they had learned; maybe they were attempting to articulate a different sense of the world...(McClary, 1993, pg. 5).

Is there a “female criteria of composition” that needs to be developed or will that create sharp binaries and result in a “female hierarchy”? Is there another possibility?

How are we to assess “genius” or “greatness” in musical composition? Are the creations of larger works to be the standard repertoire by which “greatness” is determined? Is it

possible to recognize an exceptionally gifted composer through a chamber piece? Should more merit be placed on the compositions of orchestral and operatic works? If so, do we need to understand the historical origins of such values? Who would benefit from such criteria and who would be marginalized? Those in the position to determine the *criteria*, usually are the ones who benefit from that *criteria*, resulting in the construction of a “hierarchy” that promotes invisible agendas if not critically analyzed and deconstructed. Those in these positions of power and influence are also able to influence and implement change. Should there be a reassessment of the classical music hierarchal construct? Is musical beauty and brilliance limited to breadth and symphonic works?

What of the issue of music being “culture free”, free of cultural reproduction and ethnocentricity? According to McClary:

Music is still protected by ‘cultural debate’... Yet, the alternative to cultural criticism is to accept the works of the canon ... So long as that canon determines the ‘universal’ standards against which all musics are to be evaluated, the others are written off as incompetent or trivial (McClary, 1983, pgs. 5-7).

The canons being the works of Eurocentric, male composers whose compositions are considered to be innovative for the time period and on a level of mastery that few can achieve.

In all of this, the maintenance of an elite culture and of the traditional preserve of ‘high art’ operates at the symbolic level to reinforce the social power of a particular minority... ‘cultural capital’, taken from the work of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, to describe the way in which different social groups use culture as a kind of capital, confirming their social position, excluding other

social groups and guaranteeing the reproduction of these social divisions from one generation to another (Janet Wolf) (Leppert & McClary, 1987, pg. 7).

Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron's "educational reproduction theory" puts forth the idea that the educational institutions sustain the reproduction of "subordinate groups" while the dominant class remains in power:

Symbolic violence is the imposition of the meaning system of one group onto that of another. They call the deep-seated ways of perceiving and understanding that develop in this process the 'habitus'... While the 'habitus' serves to separate group from group, it also serves to provide legitimacy to the symbols of the dominant culture. The school is the primary agency for establishing this legitimacy, and it does so by developing in the members of the subordinate culture a distant respect for the unapproachable objects and symbols of the dominant culture ordinarily found in such institutions as museums, concert halls, and 'the classics'. Because the school presents itself as an apolitical and neutral forum, Bourdieu and Passeron believe that those in the subordinate cultures come to accept the claim to cultural superiority that is made for the symbols of the dominant culture (Feinberg & Soltis, 2004, pgs. 62-63).

It is through the internalization of these dominant symbols that each individual finds their "voice". In the chapter that follows, interviews were conducted in an effort to capture a rich spectrum of these "voices".

Chapter 8

Interviews and Analysis

With the help of three interviewees, I was able to ascertain an extensive array of viewpoints. In choosing these individuals the following factors were considered: gender, socio-economic status, educational background and musical experience. All three interviewees wish to remain anonymous. It was the hope of this writer to capture a spectrum resplendent in diversity and insight. I will be using RMP for the retired, male, music professor, with a PhD in Musicology, FSC for the female symphony conductor with a Master's in Orchestral Conducting and FC for the female composer with a Master's in Social Work. I have selected to highlight their responses to three questions taken from the forty-five minute interviews conducted in-person.

Question: In your music education, do you remember ever being exposed to women composers and if so, when, who were they and how were they presented?

RMP – “As a young pianist, my first impression was that women composers wrote little pieces for children, so when we thought of women composers we thought of pieces for the piano...At the university level they weren't represented at all well until maybe 1988 or 1990. Perhaps eventually the textbooks and books of musical examples would include work by a female composer because of the women's movement...for example Hildegard of Bingen... eventually Clara Schumann and maybe a few others. And I myself, didn't know very much about women composers and I think when I started teaching not much was available but, toward the end of the time I taught, I remember I was using examples from women composers... especially twentieth century composers, for example Ellen Zwilich... Amy Beach”

FSC: "...I think they were pretty basic... pretty much skim the surface...Hildegard was interesting... I think we played some recordings of music that we think is hers...Clara Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn have such uninteresting lives just historical, as historical being either the sibling of a great composer or the wife of a great composer...I think we focused on that quite a bit rather than Robert Schumann perhaps, we listened to an entire symphony of his... Instead of that, we talked about Clara Schumann's life and I can't remember, but, perhaps we listened to a short piece by either women but, I think about, you know, there's a number of piano compositions by Clara Schumann but, I don't remember sitting there listening to a symphony by anybody... it was rather superficial..."

FC: "No, never anywhere...If you're talking about formal education, I took a U.H. 108 class where it's only a class to teach teachers how to teach music but, there was no real exposure to women composers... We just had the piano minuets by Mozart and other male composers..."

Question: In your opinion, what do you think is the "criteria" that creates the musical "genius" or what we as society see as compositional "greatness", worthy of scholarly study?

RMP: "Well, a composer gets publicity by being performed or being recorded...so, if the composer is not recorded or not performed then, people don't have much of a chance to become familiar with their works. So, the composer has to somehow... make his works performed and published... and listened too. But, if that doesn't happen then there's no way that people will be able to judge... to some extent there was a feeling among the mainly male composers, that women weren't really

gifted... they could not 'create'. Since then, we've found that there have been composers who were women whose works maybe didn't get much attention... So I think that it's partly the attitude toward women in general that has kept them from being performed."

FSC: "Whether it's Mozart who mastered the tonal language probably by the age of ten or eleven... These people mastered a language very quickly... and because of that facility they were then able to say something 'new' within that language... I don't know if we'll go into the direction of women verse men but, in these cases... these men that we think of as being genius' and a lot of them are incredibly gifted and left us with incredible works of art... but, they were not raising children and they were educated as young boys... encouraged especially in the European system to be a pianist, a choral conductor, an organist, to be a composer..."

FC: "Genius is specific to a context...we can't strip it of it's context... If we realize it's context specific: culturally, individually, historically and specific to a structure of power then we would allow the boundaries to be more permeable and changeable. We need to realize that 'genius - like' 'beauty' is not an unchangeable, static entity, it's something culturally specific, historically specific. Typically, the musical composer compositional prototype was White, Anglo Saxon male... the male prototype set the 'criteria'..."

Question: **If women composers were represented within the educational curriculums, how do you think that would have impacted you (or your students)?**

RMP: "Well, I think in the last say fifteen years the faculty and composition faculty have given more attention to female composers and encouraging young women to do degrees in Composition..."

FSC: “I think it would be tremendous... I think if in high school the pieces I played were written by female composers, if it were forty-fifty percent female conductors on the podium, if it were at least thirty-forty percent female composers you know, I think it would make a tremendous difference in a female psyche to know ‘it’s okay’... I do remember seeing Augusta Reed Thomas and I was so struck with her seriousness ... that really woke me up and told me that ‘it was okay’ to be that neurotic and that serious... obsessed with music and sound and not care that your hair looks perfect or if anyone is going to like you or not. That was really important.”

FC: “It’ll make a difference for women composers because their works will be heard but, that won’t change what is beneath that which is their non-representation in the first place. What has happened historically in terms of the non-representation of women composers is just a ‘symptom’... because the problem is so deep, it has to happen on many levels, it is so embedded in definitions of language and how we define our reality... how we have self conversation and how we converse with the world... That’s where education comes in... if you change the nature of people’s thinking, re-write the scripts in people’s heads then you can change the nature of the power structure...But, that’s not going to necessarily happen just in the public schools. You also have to look where the next generation of the wealthy/powerful are, to see what educational institutions they will attend. Re-socialization, on all levels—individual, institutional and inter-systemically needs to occur so that the nature of reality is not defined by the propaganda set forth by the power structure.”

Analysis

These three interviews offered me diverse perspectives that are reflections of our society at this point in time. It is interesting to note, that all three interviewees accepted the fact that there were women composers in the past however, it is the criteria of their “genius’ or greatness” that is in question and where these women fall on the hierarchal “gifted” spectrum. The exception being FC who pointed out that there is a need to “re-socialize, on all levels” for ‘genius –like beauty’ is not an unchangeable, static entity, it’s something culturally specific, historically specific...” RMP believed that people need to hear the music of these women composers in order to be able to analyze their compositional abilities. FSC felt (further along in the interview) that due to the limited education that women were allowed to participate in, their works are not as developed as their male counterparts. It is only when women were able to engage in scholarly study (in the universities) that their works were refined and on par with the male standard of giftedness or greatness. Therefore, she felt that the twentieth century women composers (who were able to attend the universities, practice and refine their skills etc.) are the ones who can possibly be one of the “great” composers of our time... Time will tell... FC is for implementing “change”, “allowing the boundaries to be more permeable”. She said later in the interview: “Can you imagine if the ‘female prototype’ was the criteria? Who would then be left ‘invisible’?”

The concept of invisibility has been identified and illuminated in feminist circles for quite some time. It has been used to reinforce the disempowerment of women and women composers alike. The next chapter reveals data that has documented the continuous exclusion (thus invisibility) of historically noteworthy women composers.

Chapter 9

Musical Publications

The non-representation or historical absence of women composers in the political, social, economic and educational institutions has been reinforced through their continued invisibility (or scarcity) in numerous musical publications. In an overview of music publications and educational textbooks noted by Glickman & Schleifer (2003) in *From Convent to Concert Hall* the statistics are as follows:

In 1987, Diane Jezic and Daniel Binder queried, 'Benign Neglect of Women Composers?' A survey of fourteen music appreciation texts published between 1979 and 1985 showed that 28 percent cited no women composers, over 50 percent named only one or none, and only five of the fourteen texts included names of three or more women composers (mixing pop music women with classical composers)(pg. 5).

...In reviewing forty-seven music history textbooks published between 1947 and 1985, Jezic and Binder found that twelve did not include a single woman composer, seventeen named one or two, and twelve texts included one or more paragraphs on women composers, limited to American or twentieth-century women... Jezic and Binder assert that the omission of women extends to editors and publishers as well (pg. 5).

...Georgia Peeples and Jennifer Holz revisited the textbook scene with *Where Are We Now?* (2001). Limiting their research to the Classic-Romantic period, they examined four music history texts and three music appreciation texts. The small numbers of women composers whom they found and the minimal growth in their

inclusion during fourteen years of feminist musical activity reflect a bleak picture (pg.5).

...Suzanne G. Cusick (2001) questions twentieth-century music scholarship on women. She describes her journey through eighty-five years of the 'Musical Quarterly' (first edition in 1915), and reports that articles on women rarely appeared. When they did, the women were described as doomed to 'categorical failure to achieve excellence in music', or, in the case of Pauline Garcia-Viardot and Clara Wieck Schumann, portrayed, as 'musical humans understood as interesting associates of canonic male composers, but not as figures to be studied in their own right' (pg. 6).

Glickman (1991) examined:

...195 American and foreign competitions in instrumental and vocal performance, conducting, and composition... The results demonstrate that women consistently placed behind men in all competitions, except in competitions for sopranos.

When year-by-year findings were analyzed with reference to concurrent political activity in the women's movement (i.e., the founding of the National Organization for Women – NOW, the passage of Title IX legislation, and efforts to pass the Equal Rights Amendment –ERA in the 1970's and 1980's), remarkably, women's accomplishment in musical competitions improved; they won more prizes. When the ERA was defeated in 1982, women's achievements declined to a level only slightly above that in 1967 (pg. 7).

Glickman and Schleifer (2003) also include those publications that are committed to the historical restoration of women composers and the perpetuation of women's musical compositions. Publications such as:

...The New Grove Dictionary of Women Composers released in 1994, *Women Composers: Music Through the Ages* by G.K. Hall, a multivolume anthology of music and articles and a poster entitled 'Notable Women Composers', prepared by the Hildegard Publishing Company in 1994, offers 391 names, including ninety-four women born between 1750-1900 (pg.6).

According to Glickman and Schleifer (2003), the goal of many new publishing houses is "to draw attention to the woman composer's existence and excellence...Even today this remains an uphill battle" (pg.6).

It is a "battle" that will require as FC (female composer interviewee) stated earlier (in the preceding chapter), "re-socialization on all levels – individual, institutional and inter-systemically" (pg. 47). "New publishing houses" and the new musicologists have been striving to evoke change in the scholarly view and historical restoration of the women composers.

How important is our musical history? Who would benefit from the recognition of the women composers within the political, social, economic and educational institutions? How would such a movement affect society? Without the support of the publishing houses, things will remain status quo. As RMP (retired music professor interviewee) stated (in the preceding chapter):

...a composer gets publicity by being performed or being recorded...so, if the composer is not recorded or not performed then, people don't have much of a

chance to become familiar with their works. So, the composer has to somehow...make his works performed and published and listened too. But, if that doesn't happen then there's no way that people will be able to judge..." (pgs. 45-46).

The compositional works of the historical women composers must be published in order for the masses to hear, analyze and decide for themselves what is "compositional greatness".

Chapter 10

Conclusion

Musical Genius, Compositional Beauty and Cultural Diversity

The debate on “woman as a creator... a genius of composition... worthy of greatness” has been an ongoing struggle for those who are seeking recognition of the abundance of women artists. What are the criteria for works of “beauty”? Educational discourse needs to include the awareness of *beauty* as being defined by those in *power* and the implications of the selections of what is considered, most beautiful, most popular, of the highest value, of the most refined culture, language, class etc. and how that impacts society and people’s attitudes.

In addition, is the concern of equal representation of “the other”, “the marginalized” (through gender, race or sexuality), the “women composers of color” pertinent to the discussion on what is of musical value? Whose culture and gender is being perpetuated?

Is it time for society to have a diverse and inclusive repertoire of what is considered aesthetically beautiful in classical music composition (ancient Greece through early twentieth century time periods)? Perhaps, that would in turn create as stated by FC “a new perspective on what is *beauty*?” By whose standards shall the pieces be deemed “genius”? Should a historical patriarchal framework be used to analyze compositional greatness? Or do we as a society need to “re-code” our definitions of musical compositional greatness with regard to the criteria of the culture in which the woman composer identifies or is identified with? Do we need criteria that is based upon what the people of the culture consider noteworthy; criteria that strives for a global, multicultural

inclusive representation verses exclusivity and the patriarchal definition of “authenticity” in musical composition? Are we a society that places a higher value on “quantity”? Should the ability to compose large symphonic and operatic works be the only gage used to measure the aesthetic value of the art form and the genius contained therein?

We are a “global” humanity and it is of fundamental importance that we recognize and acknowledge *all* cultures and the strength of cultural and sexual diversity. The cultures that have remained “invisible” in written history and in the political, educational and societal institutions need to be recognized through their own cultural perceptions and values (customs, definitions of musical compositional “giftedness” etc.) that are representative of their “identity” as a “people”. These are the historically marginalized cultures, the indigenous people and ... the “women”.

Women’s Liberation

A part of women’s sexual and spiritual liberation resides in women viewing themselves as “beautiful beings” of creation. A woman is beautiful because “she is a woman”, with a rich and powerful heritage of gender and a legacy that has sought to sustain itself through the efforts of both women and men. History has been rewritten, edited and at times hidden due to its specificity dictated and determined by the political structure during a historic time period and reinforced through the social and educational institutions. Therefore, it can be changed to “restore” the women composers and their works in musical history within the educational, social, economic and political institutions. For women to see themselves as intellectual, worthy of “greatness”, with a diverse heritage can be a dramatically empowering “lens” toward an “awakening”. We can choose to ignore the discriminations, oppression, racism and sexism that has

historically pervaded our society towards women and continue to devalue their past contributions to our artistic history or as FC (female composer) stated earlier we can view the structures of power as “permeable”.

A global, *woman centered* historical tradition stimulates all sorts of possibilities for women. Knowing one’s history and culture as “women” allows women to see their past, analyze their present and change (if they so choose) their future. It is a part of their “identity” as a gender, and it is their legacy created by the great women composers of the past and those who believed in their “genius”...

The Quest

The quest for equality... equal representation in the political, economic, social and cultural arenas and educational institutions has been an on-going struggle for women. Our history as a civilization is incomplete, for it has forgotten, or chosen to eliminate the contributions of women and that must be rectified. Will the current educational institutions continue to ignore the musical compositions of these great women? Will these women continue to be judged under the same historical patriarchal criteria that sought to restrict their educational opportunities? Will the availability of the works of women composers continue to be scarcely available in music stores and publications? Do we as a society have an obligation to seek out these works, demand it as a crucial part of all musical curricula and do what we can to recognize these women of the past? Not as a passing statement or in a fleeting moment of recognition but, through critical, scholarly analysis, historical relevance and in academic and community performances. To deny women their musical history is to impact and restrict their futures and maintain their oppression.

Appendix A

Selected Works of Hildegard of Bingen

The following list is a selection from the *Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers and Women Composers: The Lost Tradition Found*:

Editions

Abbess Hildegard of Bingen (1098 – 1179) Sequences and Hymns, ed. C. Page

(Newton Abbot, 1982): *Columa aspexi*

Ave, generosa

O ignis spiritus

O Ierusalem

O Euchari

O viridissima virga

O presul vere civitas

O Ecclesia.

The 'Ordo virtutum' of Hildegard of Bingen, ed. A.E. Davidson (Kalamazoo, 1985) (Sadie, J., Samuel, R., 1995, pg. 220).

Dedication of the Church:

O virgo ecclesia pangendum

Nunc gaudeant maternal viscera

O orzchis ecclesia

Ocoruscans lux stellarum

Kyrie eleison

(Sadie, J., Samuel, R., 1995, pg. 221).

Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum (1175 – 80s), containing the poetry and music for: 43 antiphons, 18 responds, 7 sequences, 4 hymns, 1 Kyrie, 1 allelujah and other miscellaneous items (Jezic, 1988, pg.14).

Appendix B

Selected Works of Clara Wieck Schumann

The following list is a selection from the *Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers and Women Composers: The Lost Tradition Found*:

Editions:

Clara Schumann: Romantische Klaviermusik, ed. F. Goebels, (Heidelberg, 1967)

Clara Weick Schumann: Selected Piano Music (New York, 1979).

Clara Schumann: Samtliche Lieder, ed. J. Draheim and B. Hofst (Wiesbaden, 1990).

Clara Schumann: Seven Songs, ed. K. Norderval (Bryn Mawr, 1993)
(Sadie, J., Samuel, R., 1995, pg. 414).

Piano Works:

4 Polonaise, Op. 1 (1828 or 1830)

Waltz caprices, op. 2 (1833)

Romance, op. 3 (1833)

Walzes, op. 4 (1835)

Soiree Musicales: toccatina, ballade, nocturne, polonaise, 2 mazurkas, op. 5
(1836)

Concert Variations, op. 8 (1837)

Impromptu, op. 9 (1837)

Scherzo, op. 10 (1838)

3 Romances, op. 11 (1839)

Scherzo in C minor, op. 14 (1845)

Orchestral and Chamber:

Piano Concerto in A Minor, op. 7 (1835-36)

Piano Trio in G Minor, op. 17 (1846)

Piano concertino in F Minor (1847)

3 Romances for violin and Piano, op. 22 (1855)

(Jezic, 1988, pgs. 99-100).

Vocal Works:

Three songs (F. ruckert), (1841)

Am Strande (R. burns, trans. Gerhard), 1840

Volkslied (H. Heine), 1840

Die gute Hacht (Ruckert), 1841

Sechs Lieder, 1840-43 (1844)

O Thou My Star (F. Serre), 1846

(Sadie, J., Samuel, R., 1995, pg. 414).

Appendix C:

Selected Works of Queen Lili'uokalani

The following list is a selection from *The Queen's Songbook* and the *Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers*:

Songs:

Nani Na Pua Ko'olau 1850s

'Imi Au Ia 'Oe E Ke Aloha 1866

Thou E ka Nani Mae 'Ole 1867

Liko Pau Lehua 1868

Puia Ka Nahele 1868

Ahe Lau Makani 1868

Puna Paia 'A'ala 1868

Ke Ano La'i Mai Nei Ka Nahele 1869

Mololani 1873

Ninipo Ho'onipo 1876

Ka Wai Mapuna 1876

Aloha 'Oe 1878

Manu Kapalulu 1878

He Inoa No Ka'iulani 1878

Ka Makani Lawakau 1880

Ka ipo Nohea 1881

Ka 'Oiwī Nani 1886

The Queen's jubilee 1887

Ka Wiliwiliwai 1890

Tutu 1890s

Ke Aloha O Ka Haku (Lili'uokalani's Prayer) 1895

(Queen Lili'uokalani's "most memorable melodies, as selected by Dorothy K. Gillet", *The Queen's Songbook*, 1999, pgs. 314-315).

Opera:

Mohailani (comic opera, 3), inc.

Hawaiian solo chants and dance chants (*mele oli* and *mele hula*) and chant arrs.

(Wright, L., Gillet, D., *Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers*, 1995, pgs. 282-283).

Appendix D

Brief List of Women Composers

The following is a short list of some of the historical women composers. It is a small fraction of these gifted women creators. Composers names were ascertained from: *The Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers*, *WRPM – Women’s Revolutions Per Minute* and *Women Composers: Music Through the Ages Volumes 1,5, 6 & 7*.

Sappho (7th century BC)

Kassia (9th Century BC)

Hildegard of Bingen (1098- 1179)

Maddalena Casulana (ca. 1540 –1590)

Francesca Caccini (1587 – 1640)

Chiara Margarita Cozzolani (1602 –1678)

Barbara Strozzi (1619 –1677)

Antonia Bembo (1643 –1715)

Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de la Guerre (1665 –1729)

Marianne Von Martinez (1744-1812)

Francesca Lebrun (1756 –1791)

Maria Theresia von Paradis (1759 –1824)

Maria Szymanowska (1789 – 1831)

Louise Farrenc (1804 – 1875)

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (1805 – 1847)

Josephine Lang (1815 –1880)

Clara Wieck Schumann (1819 –1896)

Emilie Mayer (1821 – 1883)

Pauline Garcia Viardot (1821 –1910)

Liliu'okalani (1838 –1917)

Teresa Carreno (1853 – 1917)

Amy Marcy Cheney Beach (1867 – 1944)

Lili Boulanger (1893 – 1918)

Cecile Chaminade (1857- 1944)

Ethel Smyth (1858 –1944)

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Credits:

Editing Technician – Leon Moore

Digital Camera – Michele Scofield, Tracie Higashi

Graduate Advisor – Donna Grace

Written and Directed by Tracie Higashi

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Credits:

Editing Technician – Leon Moore

Digital Camera – Michele Scofield, Tracie Higashi

Graduate Advisor – Donna Grace

Written and Directed by Tracie Higashi

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Credits:

- Editing Technician – Leon Moore
- Digital Camera – Michele Scofield, Tracie Higashi

Graduate Advisor – Donna Grace

Written and Directed by Tracie Higashi

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Credits:

Editing Technician – Tracie Higashi

Digital Camera – Tracie Higashi , Michele Scofield

Graduate Advisor – Donna Grace

Written and Directed by Tracie Higashi

