

## Amy Wurtz— January 2021

### Long Bio --450 words

A fervent advocate for new music and the community that surrounds and supports it, Amy Wurtz is a staunch performer, composer, and curator of new music based in Chicago. Her recent album, *Cello Dances at Night*, with the Wurtz-Berger Duo, a cello-piano collaboration with Alyson Berger, features Amy's work *Songs and Dances* and was commissioned by the 2016 Ear Taxi Festival. Originally from California, Amy has lived and worked in the Bay Area, Southern California, throughout the Midwest, South America and Europe. In addition to composing and curation, she is in demand as a solo pianist, chamber and choral musician, teacher, and collaborative pianist.

As a composer, Amy has won various prizes and commissions for her work, including the National Federation of Music Clubs, Illinois Arts Council Grant, and the American Music Project. Her works have been performed by Zeitgeist, the Chicago Composers' Orchestra, and Access Contemporary Music; and her first album, *Amy Wurtz String Quartets*, was recorded by the Chicago Q Ensemble. Amy's composition projects have taken her to Germany, where she lived and worked for over two years as she produced, directed, conducted and rehearsed her own 75-minute work, *Message from the Soul*, for chorus, orchestra, narrator and soloists, with performances in Gothenburg, London, and Düsseldorf.

Currently President of New Music Chicago, Amy has been a board member for a decade and has held various roles within the organization, including Vice President and Membership Chair. In 2018 Amy curated and produced the Impromptu Fest, a festival celebrating the membership of New Music Chicago with 8 performances at the Chopin Theater. Amy again curated and produced the second Impromptu Fest in 2019, with 8 more performances, this time at Guarneri Hall, showcasing the broad membership of New Music Chicago's artists and ensembles. Amy also curates the New Music at the Green Mill series each Spring, where local performers and audience members gather in this iconic Chicago venue to hear new and experimental music.

Graduating summa cum laude from the University of Redlands with degrees in Piano Performance and Creative Writing, she then went on to earn dual Masters Degrees from the University of Minnesota in Piano Performance and Music Composition. She studied piano with Alexander Braginsky and Louanne Long and composition with Judith Lang Zaimont and Alexandra Pierce. Her study of piano has taken her twice to Argentina, where she spent a year of intensive study with master teacher Inés Gómez-Carrillo.

Amy currently works in a variety of capacities, running an independent piano studio, serving as Music Director for Hemenway United Methodist Church, and working as lead accompanist for the Sounds Good! and Good Memories choirs, which serve older adults and those with early-onset memory loss. [www.amywurtz.com](http://www.amywurtz.com)