

Music Alive: New Partnerships
A Residency Program of
Meet The Composer and the League of American Orchestras

Ruby Fulton
Residency Proposal

As a composer, I believe strongly in inviting listeners into my sound world. One way is simply by being present at the performance and dispelling the "composers are dead people" myth, bringing the music into the realm of current events. Another way to invite a listener in is by communicating some ideas about what I was thinking about when I composed the music, hopefully ideas with which a listener could connect. Every community is unique, and I would welcome the challenge to design a specific residency based on the particular demographics of any given situation.

One possibility is to use *Road Ranger Cowboy* as an entry point into a composition workshop for students. Since the piece is based on a simple pop tune, it would work well as a pedagogical starting point for an original group composition. In addition to working together with me to compose a new short piece, the students could be invited to an open rehearsal of my piece. Pending availability of the orchestra, I could create parts for a reading or performance of the newly composed workshop piece. We could also write and perform with our voices and simple percussion.

Another idea is to offer a lecture to the community about music for the orchestra which features the "American hero." *Road Ranger Cowboy* tells the somewhat twisted story of a narcissistic cowboy whom I encountered in a truck stop in Waterloo, Iowa. I researched the way the brain is affected by a severe narcissistic disorder and used this data as a starting point for my music. I believe this non-musical background information could serve as an invitation for intellectually curious listeners from all walks of life. In tandem with the lecture on my own portrait piece, I could also speak about a variety of established landmark orchestral works which feature an "American hero" of sorts, including Michael Daugherty's *Metropolis Symphony* (about Superman), Aaron Copland's *Lincoln Portrait*, Joan Tower's *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman*, and Joseph Schwanter's *New Morning for the World* (about Martin Luther King, Jr.), among others.

A third way to involve the community is through a demonstration of the influence of popular music (specifically drum beats) on the traditional symphony orchestra. I am especially interested in translating simple drum beats into large orchestral textures, and *Road Ranger Cowboy* is based on a tune with a simple country western beat. As is illustrated by the piece, a simple drumbeat can be broken down into layers and orchestrated. There are many different ways to express the various layers in a large ensemble. Pending availability of the orchestra, the audience could hear many different beats orchestrated in different ways, played by the orchestra right there on the spot. It would also be possible for the audience to perform the various beats with voices and simple percussion.

To inquire about a residency, please contact:
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