

MARILYN SHRUDE, COMPOSER

The music of composer Marilyn Shrude is characterized by its warmth and lyricism, rich timbre, multi-layered constructions, and complex blend of tonality and atonality. The result is a bright, shimmering and delicately wrought sound world that is at once both powerful and fragile (Natvig – New Grove). Her concentration on color and the natural resonance of spaces, as well as her strong background in Pre-Vatican II liturgical music, give the music its linear, spiritual, and quasi-improvisational qualities.

Shrude earned degrees from Alverno College and Northwestern University, and has served on the faculty of Bowling Green State University since 1977. Among her more prestigious honors are those from the Guggenheim Foundation, American Academy of Arts and Letters, Rockefeller Foundation, Chamber Music America/ASCAP, Meet the Composer, Sorel Foundation (Medallion Winner for Choral Music 2011), and the National Endowment for the Arts. She was the first woman to receive the Kennedy Center Friedheim Award for Orchestral Music and the Cleveland Arts Prize for Music. She was named a Distinguished Artist Professor in 2001 and received BGSU's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2014. Most recently, Shrude received an Honorary Doctorate from the West University of Timisoara, Romania (November 2024).

Active as a composer, pianist, teacher, and contemporary music advocate, Shrude has consistently promoted American music through her many years as founder and director of the MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music (1987-99), as chair of the Department of Musicology/Composition/Theory at BGSU (1998-2011) and as coordinator of the doctoral program in contemporary music (2006-2024). Together with saxophonist, John Sampen, she has premiered, recorded and presented hundreds of works by living composers both in the United States and abroad. Guest appearances as a pianist and composer include tours to the Soviet Union, China, Japan, Belgium, South America, the Netherlands, France, and Armenia, as well as numerous performances in the United States.

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