

For Press Kit April 2020

### Sheila Silver Short Bio

Sheila Silver is an important and vital voice in American music today. She has written in a wide range of mediums, from solo instrumental to large orchestral works, from opera to feature film scores. Her music is performed internationally. “Only a few composers in any generation enliven the art form with their musical language and herald new directions in music. Sheila Silver is such a visionary.” (*Wetterauer Zeitung*, Germany)

Silver recently completed an opera based on Khaled Hosseini’s international best-selling novel, **A Thousand Splendid Suns**, which has been commissioned by the Seattle Opera. It will be premiered in Seattle’s McCaw Hall in October, 2022. In order to develop a musical vocabulary with which to evoke the color of Afghanistan in **A Thousand Splendid Suns**, Sheila has made several trips to India to study Hindustani music with Pandit Kedar Narayan Bodas. This Hindustani sound world has filtered into other recent compositions including her **Nocturne** for piano and **Being in Life**, *Concerto for French horn, Alpenhorn, 5 Tibetan singing bowls, and string orchestra*.

Her honors include a 2013 *Guggenheim Fellowship*, the *Sackler Prize in Opera*; two *Opera America Toulmin awards*; *Bunting Institute Fellowship*; *Rome Prize*; *Prix de Paris*, *American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters Composer Award* and numerous grants and commissions. Ms. Silver was invited to be the 2020 Elliot Carter Resident Composer at the American Academy in Rome. SongFest 2020 (now moved to 2021) in Los Angeles will devote an entire evening to her music including the complete **Beauty Intolerable**, *A Songbook based on the poetry of Edna St. Vincent Millay*, and a new work being composed for the occasion, **If Trees Could Talk** which will include 4 voices and video. Albany Records will be bringing out a 2-disc set of Silver’s vocal music with a host of singers and pianists including Dawn Upshaw, Stephanie Blythe, and Gilbert Kalish.

Silver is Professor Emeritas of Music at Stony Brook University. Her teachers have included Arthur Berger, Harold Shapero, Erhard Karkoschka, and Gyorgy Ligeti. She was born and raised in Seattle, Washington and began studying piano at the age of 5. Sheila and her husband, film-maker John Feldman, make their home in the mid-Hudson Valley, New York. Their son, Victor, is a senior at Brandeis University.

For more information: [www.sheilasilver.com](http://www.sheilasilver.com)

