

The Concert Hall That Fell Asleep and Woke Up as a Car Radio

LIBBY LARSEN

I've been looking forward to working with you today as I've been researching the topic of the concert hall in the United States of America. I knew I was going to give this talk, and I've taken the better part of four months working at the Library of Congress so that we could talk about some issues that I think affect all of us who have devoted part of our lives to communicating, communicating through musical language or communicating through the philosophical and spiritual epigrams of the day. All of us in this room are interested in communicating something of our spirit to the world in which we live. My particular interest is in communicating what it is like to be alive through the language of music, and to that end I have been a composer since I was about four years old. I want to tell you a little about myself so that you will know where I am coming from—I am going to talk about some things that I don't think we have talked about very often in the study of music in our culture.

People are just beginning to understand some of the implications of what it is like to live on such a large landmass, which we call the United States of America, with such a diverse population, which we insist on calling one. We are beginning to understand the implications of living on this large landmass, east to west, north to south: we wake up in the morning saying "Good morning, America," we say "America thinks this" and "America is that." My perspective is that of a composer who writes abstract music, sometimes with words, often without words, who makes an order of sound in time and space. My particular intent is to communicate something of what it is like to be alive in America—order, sound, time, space—to communicate something of what it is like to be alive in real time in our world.

Over the years I have studied many instruments. My principle instrument is piano; I took two years of voice, bel canto style voice; I sang in a rock band; I play harmonica. My seventh-grade teacher, Sister Telupia, decided that the way she would discipline our class was that we would all have to own a Marine Band C Harmonica. We would keep them in our desks, and whenever we got a little out of control she would say "It's harmonica time"—an extraordinary teaching device—and we would get out our harmonicas. She taught us how to play harmonica, and we put on shows for our school in Minneapolis, Minnesota, playing harmonica and singing Irish songs. So I play harmonica. I also play electric bass, which I taught myself about seven years ago. I decided that I wanted to learn electric bass, so I bought all the Beatles' albums, got an electric bass, and played along with the Beatles from their earliest album to their latest album. You really can learn how to play bass that way.

I have a particular belief that colors everything that I would like to talk with you about today: cultures evolve the instruments and ensembles they need. Cultures evolve instruments and ensembles in order to study themselves through music in real time. That is my belief, and that is why I think I can stand up here and talk about "the concert hall that fell asleep and woke up as a car radio." I started thinking about the question of the concert hall when I was working on my doctorate at the University of Minnesota in the late 1970s. At that time I did a self-study because I was faced with the question: now that I have my doctorate, what next? Since I had been schooled in all the academic languages, and the formal rigor of a classical music education, I was asking myself, What have I got to say, and to whom can I say it, and who will listen to what I have to say?

I was faced with the quandary that I think is still central to all music education students. When I entered the University of Minnesota as a freshman I entered with an enormous repertoire of music. My repertoire included all of the Gregorian chants that I had sung for eight years in grade school, all of the rock and roll I had learned in high school, television jingles, all the music my parents had played on our record player (it was a record player then) at home—the big bands my mother loved, piano music my mother loved, Dixieland my father loved—I don't know why but we always had Shostakovich and Prokofiev in that stack. But my repertoire had a big hole in it, the classical canon that we study when we begin to study formally and academically. I spent nine years of my life, from freshman year of college through the end of my doctoral work, learning the canon.

When I received my doctorate it seemed that I had two choices, to take a faculty position at a university or college, or to see how I could use my skills to communicate something of what it was like to be alive in the concert halls existing then outside the academy. That would be orchestras and opera companies. (In 1978 we did not have a healthy chamber music ecology in the country, though we had a very healthy choir ecology, as we still do.) I noticed that living composers were not part of the concert world outside of the academy, and I decided that what I wanted to do was to work in the concert world as a living American composer trying to create pieces that spoke through that tradition, the tradition of the orchestra, the tradition of the opera company, the tradition of what was becoming the chamber music business, and certainly through the choral tradition. That's what I decided to do.

I wondered what I could write about, and I decided that I could write only about what I knew in a language that was technically educated but instinctually informed. I began to write pieces right away for the Minnesota Orchestra and the Minnesota Opera. I would go in there and say, "Can I write you an opera?" (I was very young.) The answer always came back, "Yes," which was not unusual. That is actually part of the Midwestern ethic—you don't have to go through sixteen people to get to the conductor. In the Midwest you just call up the conductor and say, "I'd like to write a symphony. Can I write a symphony?" and the conductor will tell you yes or no. It's the Midwestern directness.

And so I began working with orchestras immediately. My first commission was from the Minnesota Orchestra to write a piece for their young people's concert. I was still working on my doctorate at that time. My second commission was from Garrison Keeler, and it was to write a piece for the Powder Milk Biscuit Band and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Yeah! I wrote a concerto grosso. (I also wrote several country western songs under an assumed name.) This took me into the orchestral world, and in 1983 I became one of two composers-in-residence along with my great friend Steve Paulus. The two of us took on the job of composer-in-residence with the Minnesota Orchestra where we worked with Neville Marriner from 1983-1987. I have never worked with anyone who had more genius in the recording studio than Neville Marriner. He is also a cultural anthropologist. Not many people know that about him. To work with Neville Marriner you had to be able to smoke Swisher Sweets and drink champagne at any hour of the day, and you had to be able to pub (a verb, "to pub"). What that meant was that after concerts we would go to a local bar, order a bottle of wine for whoever was there, drink the wine, and play corks. Has anybody ever played corks? It's wonderful. You bounce the cork and see if you can get it to stand on its end. We could while away hours trying to get it to do that! Neville Marriner actually wasn't too good at corks. Steve Paulus was the best, but I wasn't bad.

In the bar we would talk about music, and Neville Marriner asked every single time, "Where are the young people in the audience for my concerts?" He would say, "Libby, Steve, I want you to find out where are the young people." I have been thinking about that ever since. I asked him, "OK, you ask me where the young people are. I'm asking you, Neville, where are my colleagues in your programming repertoire. I don't see my colleagues with any kind of regularity in your programming for the orchestra." We also asked, many, many times, "What is classical music in America?" I've been thinking about those three questions ever since. Where are the young people? Where are my colleagues? What is classical music in America?

Two more things happened. Right after I finished being composer-in-residence with the orchestra I joined the American Symphony and Orchestra board of directors. That is the oversight organization for all of the orchestras in the country, and in their wisdom they usually have two or three composers on the board of directors; it is a very interesting position. I began to understand "what is classical music in America." I began to understand where my colleagues were, which was not there, not in the orchestras. And I took part in a study (that I actually helped to engineer) with the symphony orchestra, a self-study, so that they could begin to answer "what is classical music in America?"

We assembled a very small group: Pauline Oliveros, Charles Wuorinen, Leonard Slatkin, Don Toleen (from the American Symphony Orchestra League), and me. We talked about all of the issues, except for Pauline, who is wont to be very quiet at meetings. She tends to be very quiet, very serene, and when she says something it is the only thing that needs to be said for the entire meeting. When she was ready to speak we all quieted down, and she said, "Well, there's only one thing that matters these days," and we were all, well, you know, "What could it be?" And she said, "Sound." That's it. That's all she said. And do you know, she was absolutely right. That was all that needed to be said at that meeting.

Here is why. There has been a revolution in sound. It's happened over the past one hundred fourteen years or so. It's happened thoroughly. It's happened worldwide, and it's the biggest thing to happen to music in two thousand years. Sound, the revolution in sound. She said "sound," and I said to myself, "And the classical music world hasn't got a clue about it, about what it means." The quality of sound has changed radically, ultra-radically, supernova-radically, in the past one hundred fourteen years or so, and it effects how we think of ourselves as classical musicians, how we think about classical music in the world in which we live, and it is terribly complicated. So I began to think about sound, where are the young people, where are my colleagues, what's going on here?

Two years ago I wrote an opera about P. T. Barnum's tour of Jenny Lind in America. I wrote the opera because I wanted to study the intersection between art and entertainment. I decided to blame the confusion between art and entertainment on P. T. Barnum, who was a marketing genius. He really was the first person in our culture to articulate that you could sell something to the mass of people. Barnum was the guy who defined the market place as an undefined mass of people and began to practice selling to the masses. We still use his model today. He's the person who thought up celebrity licensing, and he did it with Jenny Lind.

Jenny Lind was the biggest thing going in Europe at the time, but nobody in America knew who she was. And so he decided that he needed to sell her if he was going to recover his money from the tour. He licensed her name to everything—pin cushions, carriages, furniture, tongue

depressors, anything he could think of. So well did he sell her name (without telling her, by the way) that he made seven times the amount of money from the tour that she did. He set up a model, a paradigm, for marketing art as entertainment.

At that same time I read a study by the McKnight Foundation, a study of arts in the suburbs (someone said today that that's an oxymoron). They asked who lives in the suburbs, how do they get there, do they appreciate the arts, what kinds of arts do they appreciate? One of the things they found out is that there is a great deal of artistic activity in the suburbs, and that, interestingly enough, a suburbanite's transportation habit gives that person thirteen car trips a day. A day! Those thirteen car trips do not follow the old model, to the center of the city, like the spokes in a wheel. Those thirteen car trips go in concentric circles, from suburb to suburb, and not to the center of the city.

What the McKnight Foundation is suggesting is that when we are trying to bring people into our concert halls we are really trying to lure them back into their cars for their fourteenth trip, at night or on a Sunday morning, to come to a centralized ritual hall, whether a concert hall, a large church, or an auditorium. The model of a centralized ritual place, and people who live around it and come to the ritual place for their ritual, is disintegrating if not already disintegrated. In fact the transportation habits of a culture are evolved by the culture as needed.

And so I thought, OK, I'm going to study transportation and classical music because I think the two of them are inextricably intertwined. I am going to spend my time, while I have all the resources at the Library of Congress, researching this to see whether it is true and what it means to my colleagues, to those of us who bring large groups of people together in congregations, whether to listen to music or for worship. If cultures evolve transportation habits and patterns in the ways that they need to, then those of us who spend our lives in congregational activities need to understand that, and realign the way we deliver our—I don't want to call it product, because it certainly is not a product—the way we speak to them.

And so I set off. I began to wonder if more people listen to music in cars or on personal sound systems than in concert halls. I began to wonder if we have enough places in our culture to practice abstract listening alone. Where can we practice just listening to music in our culture? I began to wonder if the concert itself can be looked at not as a single event but as a multi-venued modular experience. In fact, we may be talking about a whole different definition of concert. Let's say you are interested in a piece of music, or in a reading, or in a sermon. You could listen to the King's Singers live in an acoustically perfect hall, which is really just a big speaker you sit inside of. Then you could get into your car and put their CD in your sound system. That car is a wrap-around concert hall which gives you the best seat in the house. Is the car then part of a multi-venued concert experience? You could then listen to the King's Singers broadcast through the sound system of public radio, which can be a very different sound depending on who is on the mixing board and what their preference is for the mix of sound. Is it possible that we are now evolving a culture that allows us to listen to a single event in a multi-venued modular way? I think that the answer is yes.

I began to wonder if the definition of classical music has morphed, meaning that classical music now is more the sound of certain instruments than a particular repertoire. I wondered about it so much that I decided to put it to the test at Interlochen last summer. I was a composer-in-residence for a week, and I took myself over to the local public radio station and had lunch with Tom Paulson, who is their program director. I said, "What's classical music, Tom? What is your

definition of classical music?" He really couldn't give me a definition. I said, "Well, is it Mozart?" and he said, "Yes." I said, "Is it Beethoven?" and he said "Yes." I said, "Is it Samuel Barber?" and he said "I don't know." I said, "Is it the Beatles?" and he said "That's not classical music, although the Beatles are classic."

There you have it. Now we have a teaching point. A point of learning. So I said, "May I ask you an experimental question?" and he said "Sure, go ahead." So I said, "OK, you have a programming slot, you have the Beatles performing 'Yesterday,' and you also have the Canadian Brass performing 'Yesterday.' Which do you play?" And without batting an eye he said "The Canadian Brass." And I said, "So you wouldn't program the Beatles playing their own music?" and he said, "No, I wouldn't, and I couldn't." So I said, "Why can you program the Canadian Brass and not the Beatles?" and he said "Because the Canadian brass are classical players." And I wanted to jump up on the table and say "See, I told you I told you!" But I didn't. I said, "Is it possible that the definition of classical music is changing from repertoire-based to sound-and-instrument based?" and he said, "Well, it could be possible." People like Glen Branca and Steve Mackie, who work with electric instruments, are not programmed on public radio because theirs is not classical music even though it is entirely classical in how the music is formed, and the thinking behind the notating, and the counterpoint, and the form, and the structure. It's the sound of the instruments. There are no electric instruments in classical music.

I also began to wonder if the development of electricity and portable sound over the past eighty years might signal the eclipse of a larger musical period and the beginning of another music period. Might we consider rethinking what we call the classical, and the romantic, and the early modern period of music? Might we take the classical, and the romantic, and the first thirty years of the 1900s, and think about that as an era in music, as a period in itself? It might make sense if we did. I began to think that maybe we are in a fudge period of time, between eras. There are always fudge periods between eras, when it seems to me that five things happen. The first of these things is that the instruments begin to change. Old ones are adapted and new ones are invented. Then the ensembles and the makeup of the ensembles change to reflect the sounds of the instruments combined. Then music changes, bringing secondary and tertiary parameters to the foreground, and eclipsing parameters that have dominated the music of the previous period. Time signatures, key signatures, the dominants of beat, stress patterns, are eclipsed, and new parameters begin to take the foreground, timbre, flow, pulse. The notation system adapts to reflect the new instruments, the adapted old ones, and the evolving musical language. (We are also in the middle of a sea change in our notation system. I think that we are at the beginning of a tsunami, and that's digital notation. It may be that we will come to a point where digital notation replaces the Guidonian hand system. It may look like the Guidonian hand system, but if you are notating on a computer you are not notating the Guidonian hand system, you are notating a digital notation. It is translating what you are doing. And its actually quite rudimentary. So don't be fooled that you are actually notating for yourself when you are punching notation into a computer. It's not precise.)

Fifth and last, and this is what is essential to the rest of the talk, the performing venues change, and with them the essential and intensely private relationship of the listener to the music itself. It seems to me that in our efforts to feel one in our country we've given ourselves quite a dilemma, and that is, how do we feel one through music? How can I feel that I can communicate with you in a microsecond? We try to find ways for our culture to help us to feel one. We have franchise hotels, we've invented transportation systems, we have Burger Kings and McDonalds.

Trying to feel our unity, trying to pull together as one, is actually beginning to cause severe cultural problems in the rest of the world as we translate our need to become one into other cultures that don't need our brand of oneness. It's posing some interesting problems.

To study waves of transportation I divided up the years from about 1750 to about 1956 into four major periods, and I went to the map division at the Library of Congress. (I had no idea how much fun maps are. Have you spent time with maps? Maps are emotional, they're just amazing!) I needed to find maps that gave me transportation and communication patterns. I constructed four time periods, and chose colored dots to represent the kinds of concert halls, performance venues, and gathering halls that were put in place during those time periods. The first map was drawn up in 1883. That was the year that the railroads gave us standardized time. Before 1883 we did not have the time zones that we have now; we had fifty different time zones in the United States, calculated by high noon. Because the railroads had become connected, and they needed to have a schedule, we have standardized times.

The first period that I worked on was the period 1750 to 1869 using that particular map. Working with a couple of assistants I researched the performance halls in America and we put red dots wherever we could find a documented performance hall. There were some red dots along the Ohio River, some in what would become Illinois, a couple up in what would become northern Illinois and Wisconsin. These performance venues were anything from small churches to mining tents, to large tents, to hurdy-gurdy houses—these I had never heard of before; they were dance halls in which you paid to dance with a female. These females were not prostitutes; their job was to dance with you in places where the proportion of male to female was low because these people were going out building the country. From 1750 up until 1869 we saw what the country looked like in terms of congregant spaces. We did not count small churches in each community. The red dots represented discrete gathering places other than churches.

1869 was when the transcontinental railroads were joined in Utah, and people began to be able to transport interesting things—lots of lumber, mud from Arizona, building supplies, people, and big instruments. After 1869 we saw an explosion of spaces. We used green dots to represent 1869-1903. (1903 represents the first transcontinental car trip.) In areas around Denver, St. Louis, in Illinois, we had about five red dots. Between 1869 and 1903 it's just an explosion.

And then between 1903 and 1926 an explosion of blue dots. What happened to the green dots? They became movie houses. The blue dots represent discrete spaces, spaces that were built for the purposes of music, or theater, or dance, spaces that were built in the way that we build spaces now. The sound was appropriate for music but not for speech. And so we had a refinement in the kinds of halls that we built between 1869 and 1903.

At the end of the 1800s life became very interesting for classical music. Up until 1870 or so classical music in this country was not European. It was American classical music—camp songs, minstrel songs, the singing of psalms. Music began from the voice. After about 1860 a switch began, from voice to instruments. The opening of the conservatory at Leipzig had a tremendous effect on music in the United States. We began to send our potential music teachers not to singing schools but to Leipzig, to learn about music, how to teach it, what to teach. In the United States the music that was to be studied was the music that was brought back from Leipzig, played on those instruments, by the immigrant wave that began to arrive in the 1850s, 60s, and 70s.

At the same time people began to experiment with telegraphy and sound. Morse code was invented in 1844. People began to want to communicate by radio telegraphy. From about 1844 to 1900 was the big period of the formation of what would become radio and television. Guglielmo Marconi is extraordinarily important in what will happen in the next fifty years in classical music and the concert hall in America. He is the fellow who made telegraphy practical. He made radio possible. He made ship-to-ship experiments and ship-to-shore experiments, and he formed the Marconi Company that was one of the first radio companies. And the rest is history.

At this period—the 1890s to 1910—there was an extraordinary convergence of personalities germane to this talk today. Four people's paths crossed. Marconi was one of them. Then there was Walter Damrosch. He was born in Berlin in 1862, came to the United States, and founded the Oratorio Society of New York, the New York Symphony Society. Damrosch was the conductor of the day. He conducted Bruckner, Tchaikovsky, Berlioz. He was really the first well-known conductor. Then there was Edward Krehbiel. Edward Krehbiel was the foremost arbiter of musical taste of his time. He wrote books about music, how to listen to music, and what to listen for. These two men knew each other. Edward Krehbiel wrote *How to Listen to Music: Hints and Suggestions to Untaught Lovers of the Art* (1897), and in that book he talked about the oratorio, the symphony, the opera, how to listen to a piano concert. He laid out what became the fundamental structure of how we approach music education and the definition of classical music in our country. He talked about choir, but choir was not so important. Whereas choral music had once been the vehicle for studying music it now became less important. He listed the instruments of the orchestra, told us about each instrument, and solidified the structure of the orchestra by saying "This is the symphony orchestra."

Who knows the name Francis Clarke Elliot? I didn't know the name either until I began my research. I stumbled across Francis Clarke Elliot, and I stumbled across the NBC Music Education Program.

These four people began to work not only with each other but with the Marconi Company, which bought out the Victor Company. Now the Victor Company is the fifth participant preparing the concert hall to become a car radio. The Victor Company, which had been developing ways of recording in the late 1890s, began seriously producing discs and records in the early 1900s. 1901 was when they began to record the voice, and they had an entire repertoire of records by 1910. The idea was that they would invent a portable gramophone, that they would sell a bazillion of them, and that people all over the country would be able to have music with them wherever they went. You took your gramophone with you, and you also had to take the music with you. You took music with you because Victor had sold you a set of records, and those records were repertoire, and that repertoire was set by Damrosch and Krehbiel and Elliot and those who were forming what was the basis of a contemporary music education at the time.

Now comes the car. This car is a Winton. In 1903 the first transcontinental car trip was made by Dr. Horatio Nelson Jackson who made a bet of \$50 that he could drive from San Francisco to New York. At that time there were only one hundred fifty miles of paved road in the country—everything else was dirt and mud. Dr. Jackson got in his car and made it to New York—it took him a long time. I tried to see if he could take a Gramophone in this car, and he couldn't.

In 1910 Francis Clarke Elliot joined the Victor and Marconi companies, and was developing the Victor Redseal record music curriculum, which was used over the radio until 1943. I went through the Victor Redseal catalog index just to see what I could see, and I saw in the index 1638 separate subject headings. It is comprehensive. There are 704 pages. It is biased toward instrumental, German, French, European, and folk music. Four people in the book are mentioned by last name only, Beethoven, Charlemagne, Napoleon, and Shakespeare. Everybody else gets a first name. I don't know what that means but I think it is kind of interesting.

Then I laboriously went through and listed the number of references given for each of the subject headings. The group with between thirteen and sixty references—forty-two entries, twelve composers, no Americans. So I thought, OK, I'll trudge on and keep counting. Headings mentioned eight to twelve times (remember this was used until 1943)—seventy-two entries, fifteen composers, no Americans. I thought, well, I'm still looking for my colleagues. Subject headings with four to seven references—we are doing better here—six Americans referenced. Edward McDowell had the most references, and that's interesting because we don't hear much McDowell; he's not studied very much now. The rest of the references were mentioned one to three times, and there were a few more Americans.

I did a little checking to see if the way we were studying music was reflected here, and so I looked for jazz. You know that jazz has had a hard time making its way into the academy. There were three references to jazz. I looked up the woman composers, and in fact women composers are listed in this book, all in one paragraph on page 196 as a list. About fourteen woman composers are mentioned, but only four examples of their music were recorded. I looked under African American composers—nothing. I looked under "black," nothing. I looked under "negro," and there were nine references to negro. In the index there are tree types of negro music: the work song, the spiritual, and sorry, senior moment, one other. I looked for William Grant Still, not mentioned. I looked for Florence L. Price, not mentioned. I looked for Henry Burleigh, who was mentioned as an arranger of spirituals. George Gershwin was mentioned under "negro" because of Rhapsody in Blue. And folk music—many references, and the way folk music was approached was by country, so Irish music, Spanish music, everything except German and French and English music. And usually under a sign like an emotion, so happy Irish music.

What's so astounding to me is that such a boxed set of music was used until 1943 in the schools. It formed music education. From it we derived our approach to the elements of music, beat, rhythm, harmonic function; they are all derived from this core repertoire, which went along with the gramophone. Eventually because of transcontinental road races, after Horatio Nelson Jackson made it across the country, all the car companies got interested, because they wanted everybody to buy cars. In 1903 one in eight thousand Americans owned a car. The population was something like eighty million. They wanted a car in every garage. Now we have two plus cars for every family in America.

Between 1903–1913 amateur radio stations increased megafold. In 1901 there were five hundred amateur radio stations, by 1908 there were ten thousand stations, with lots of patents being registered. By World War I radio telegraphy was a very important means of communication. When the war began the Navy took over all the radio stations; all the amateur radio stations were put out of business so that the Navy could control the war communications. At the end of World War I the Navy would not give up control of the radio stations; the government and the Navy decided that they would run the radio stations, and that's what

happened. They schemed to create what would become NBC in 1926. The National Broadcasting Corporation was a combination of Westinghouse, AT&T, RCA, and the United Fruit Company, a radio company created so that we could communicate from South America, even from a banana tree. These companies combined to create NBC, and NBC was a government-controlled network of radio stations.

What happened to radio sales is quite amazing. The Marconi Company predicted in 1916 that by 1922 they would be able to sell one hundred thousand radio music boxes, basically radios that you could plug into your wall, and in 1922 they sold eleven million; in 1923 twenty-two million; in 1924 fifty million. People just bought radios. And what was being broadcast over those radios? They broadcast sports, and they found that they could broadcast music. KDKA in Pittsburg put a gramophone in front of the transmitter and transmitted music out of the air; people received it, and liked it, and so music began to be transmitted over the air, first through records, and then live music began to be broadcast over the air. And eventually opera. People wanted to take the music with them, and so they began to put radios in their cars. You basically just bolted your receiver to your car and set up your own antenna. People began to listen to radio all over the world. And then politicians got interested. Once politicians got involved the government and radio came together, NBC was formed, the whole canon that was developed by the Victor Record became the education canon for NBC, the canon that then informed the way we developed our music education system, and the way that we developed our concert system in the country.

Where are my colleagues? They were never there. All of my work on behalf of American composers in the orchestral world is pioneering work. All of us who worked so long to place the American composer in an American orchestra now know what it is. We thought we were there and then we got thrown out. We were never part of the canon.

Where are the young people? In their cars. I'm in my car. I listen to music in my car. It's one of the only quiet private spaces for listening to music. Can I listen in the same span of time that I would listen in a concert hall? Only if I pull off to the side of the road. Does that affect the way that I listen to classical music? Yes, it does. Does the sound of produce music, music that is mixed on a sound board, affect how we think of classical music? Yes, it does. Are orchestra halls building sound systems to remix the music? Yes, they are. They won't tell you, but they are. Is there a difference in the way we perceive classical music because of sound and transportation? Yes, there is. And that is the end of this speech.

Libby Larsen is one of Americas most performed living composers. She has created a catalogue of over 220 works spanning virtually every genre from intimate vocal and chamber music to massive orchestral and choral scores. Grammy Award winning and widely recorded, including over 50 CDs of her work, she is constantly sought after for commissions and premieres by major artists, ensembles, and orchestras around the world, and has established a permanent place for her works in the concert repertory. She is currently completing a book, The Concert Hall That Fell Asleep and Woke Up as a Car Radio and her next major opera work, Every Man Jack.