NEIGHBORHOOD MUSIC SCHOOL
presents

THE 2021
Renée B. Fisher Piano Competition

Web and Wings
by Kari Cruver Medina

Elementary / Middle School Division Work
Commissioned by the Renée B. Fisher Foundation

To be premiered at the 2021 Winners' Concert
KARI CRUVER MEDINA

Kari Cruver Medina is a composer and pianist who lives in Seattle, Washington. She grew up just an hour away in the small town of Gig Harbor, in a house on the beach built by her parents. Here she and her younger brother and sister learned to appreciate the wonders of nature and the joy of music. Summer evenings were celebrated around a bonfire in the sand, harmonizing to folk songs and show tunes as their dad played a battered old guitar. Pods of Orca whales frequented the area and the shore teemed with all manner of sealife.

Kari was writing music from an early age. Piano lessons followed, and she eventually attended the University of Washington, majoring in composition and piano performance, completing her master’s degree at Washington State University. Along the way, she met her husband, John, and the two attended graduate school together, Kari in music composition and John in molecular biology. It was the perfect blend of arts and science. They have two sons.

Medina’s journey as a composer has included everything from work as a studio musician recording and scoring for TV and media, to serving as a church music director composing for choral and instrumental ensembles in weekly services. Her commissioned compositions span a broad palate of stylistic tradition, encompassing everything from solo vocal and instrumental pieces to chamber, choral and orchestral music.

Ms. Medina has never lost her love for nature, and when not in front of the computer or at the piano, she can be found out in her garden or tramping in the woods, a rake, a book of poetry and a cup of coffee in hand. She loves to travel, and her award-winning choral and orchestral works have been premiered in both Europe and Asia, so she has enjoyed wonderful opportunities to explore and share the joy of making music with friends across the globe.
PERFORMANCE NOTES

A NOTE ABOUT PEDALS:

*Web and Wings* uses all three pedals on the piano: sustain, sostenuto, and una corda. The most familiar of the three is the sustain pedal (also known as the damper pedal) located on the right. The soft pedal, or una corda, is located on the far left. The pedal in between these two is called the sostenuto, abbreviated as "S.P." (The pedal release is indicated with *) If you look down under your piano and see only two pedals, don’t worry; some pianos do not have this pedal. It was invented in the mid-19th century, so it was relatively late to piano literature, but you will find that Debussy, Ravel, and numerous modern composers use it to great effect.

The middle pedal has a selective sustain function. If you press a key and then press the sostenuto pedal and let go of that key, the note will be sustained. As long as you keep your foot down, the note you captured continues to ring out, but any additional notes you add will not get caught up in the sustain. This is very effective for creating multiple textures at the same time. It also allows your foot to work as a kind of third arm to free your hands. In *Web and Wings*, for example, it allows you to sustain some two-hand chords over which you can do staccato passages, such as those in measures 49-60.

This piece will give your feet a work-out on all three pedals, and there are a couple of places, such as measure 21-23, and 57-60, where you have to use both feet (in the first case, sustain and una corda, in the second, sostenuto and una corda). If your piano does not have this middle pedal, just hold the notes as long as you can and then substitute the sustain pedal, lifting it right before you get to the notes with the staccatos so they stay clean and don’t get swallowed up in the sustained effect. I would encourage you to experiment with each of these pedals and see how they impact the music you are playing. Pay special attention to how the various levels of depression on the una corda pedal change the quality of the sound, adding color and mystery to the timbre.

Additionally, please note that when voicing splits on a single staff (for example, measures 39-46) it indicates the importance of bringing out the melody and keeping accompanying figures in the background.

A NOTE ABOUT THE PIECE

This is a piece for the imagination. It is an invitation to watch for webs and what they catch, to ponder and to wonder. Have you ever seen a spider spinning its elaborate gossamer web, only to notice a fly buzz and struggle to free itself from that same sticky surface? Perhaps you have cheered as a moth or butterfly made a lucky escape and pulled free from those deadly threads? If you have not, consider this an encouragement to take the time to explore these amazing insects and their world. If you have, then such images will help inspire you in your interpretation of this piece.

The Andante section should be delicately mysterious and flowing, creating a sensation of rippling spider-silk and of winged insects hovering and gliding. The narrative is one of survival, so the high trilled figure in the treble clef represents the buzz and struggle to escape once trapped. These buzzing insects are portrayed in the Vivace section. It should be played as fast as possible with a sense of wild abandon. The arpeggiated motion of the spider’s web returns in the end, but who escapes and who doesn’t is anyone’s guess. Each web is a uniquely woven drama of catch and release!
Web and Wings
Winner of the 2021 Renée B. Fisher Composition Contest

misterioso, delicato
Andante $r = 106$

sost. ped (S.P.) *

*S.P. see notes on pedals
Vivace giocoso $ \downarrow $ (152-156)

_leggiero, but with intensity_