



**PRESS CONTACT:**  
Alison Freebairn-Smith  
[afreebairnsmith@gmail.com](mailto:afreebairnsmith@gmail.com)  
(818) 304-2441

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ASMAC'S "FIRST WEDNESDAYS" EVENT, MAY 4TH, AT THE MUSICIANS UNION  
FEATURING MARIA NEWMAN, OF NEWMAN DYNASTY, A RESOUNDING SUCCESS**

LOS ANGELES (May 11, 2016) – The fifth in a series of open-to-the public music industry social and educational events dubbed “First Wednesdays” presented by **ASMAC (American Society of Music Arrangers and Composers)** was the most successful, thus far. “Celebrate Women Composers” hosted and curated by ASMAC board member, **Marlene Hajdu**, featured a remarkable performance by critically-acclaimed violinist, violist, pianist and composer, **Maria Newman, of the musical Newman Family dynasty**, as well as presentations by nine other composers who stunned attendees with impressive works in a variety of styles from music composed for animated features to pieces performed live at Carnegie Hall.

The evening began with **Elise Michelle's, *Prelude in C***, expressively conveyed by pianist **Bryan Pezzone**, with subtle and string tones woven meticulously through Mr. Pezzone's hands. The piece is the last in a series and was written 17 years later than the initial four. Next was **Asuko Ito's** music for animation, which gracefully added to the film entitled, ***Over***.

**Bonnie Janofsky** has long been associated with big band music (her father a big band player of note) and is a composer/arranger with a passion for musicals as was evident in her arrangement of two Bayou/Bluesy songs. **Marlene Hajdu**, host and curator of the evening, shared her new art song (poem set to music), ***In the Sunrise***. Joining her in poetic harmony were legendary session singer, Sally Stevens and Leslie Saultanian, both skilled in the voicing of jazz harmonies.

**Penka Kouneva** shared her passion for the colors of the orchestra as she shared her scores for a scene from video game, ***The Transformers***, for which she wrote additional music, (Steve Jablonsky, composer) and for, ***The Forest***, from her CD, ***Woman Astronaut***, which was animated. **Carolyn Yarnell**, a **Prix de Rome** winner, was a highlight with an orchestral piece funded by a **Fullbright Fellowship** and an **American Composers Grant**. Accompanying this massive piece, aptly titled, ***Living Mountains***, were images of her paintings and photographs from a year spent writing music in Iceland, reflecting the sharp volcanic geography.

**Mae Crosby** had the opportunity to score an animation piece, ***Head in the Clouds***, that was wall-to-wall music. Played by a small orchestra, she shaped the music to fit the twists and turns in the story. **Susan Hurley**, with a Doctorate of Music from Indiana State University, shared a recording of her song, ***Silver Moon***, from a main title credit, that established the retro mood for the film and shared an idea for her new opera.

After a short break, **Maria Newman** and husband, violist **Scott Hosfeld**, really stepped up the pace with her fast-moving original composition, ***Appalachian Duets***. The piece included music **Newman** wrote when asked to compose a score 1919 silent film, starring **Mary Pickford, *Heart of the Hills***. **Nan Schwartz' stunning arrangement of Dizzy Gillespie's *Con Alma*** featured **Michael Stever** on trumpet and a masterful string quartet including **Maria Newman, Ben Powell, Scott Hosfeld** and **Paula Hochhalter**. Schwartz' arrangement of ***Con Alma***, usually done as a fast Bebop tune, was written for Arturo Sandoval to perform at her upcoming concert at **Vibrato Jazz Grill**.

The evening ended with an impromptu interview of the 10 composers by **Hajdu** who skillfully drew the most fascinating stories from each of the featured composers. The next “First Wednesdays” event is June 1 when Jack Smalley and Perry Botkin speak about writing for television. This takes place at the Musicians Union Auditorium again at 7:30 pm, Wed. Then on June 11th, the theme is “How to Tell a Story with Music,” A master class at LA Valley College, 11:00AM with guests, Jack Van Zandt, Jeannie Pool, Raymond Torres-Santos and Marlene Hajdu. For more information on **ASMAC** and upcoming events, call (818) 994-4661 or visit **www.asmac.org**.

#####