

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT ENDOWMENT FUNDS

Faculty Research Fund

Award Date: Spring 2018

Proposal Title: Recording *Mathias and the Storm* for Commercial Release on Ablaze Records
Orchestral Masters Vol. 7

Principal Investigator: Derek Jenkins

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ABSTRACT

The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra examined twenty-one professional orchestras' 2014-2015 concert seasons. Of the more than 1,000 pieces programmed by those ensembles, ninety-five had been written since 2000. Of those ninety-five pieces, the vast majority had been written by one of six living composers and/or were premiere performances. All of this is to say that if today's composers want to write for an orchestra, they will only receive the one-time performance of the piece, if they are lucky. Additionally, musician unions prohibit the use of any recording from these performances. Therefore the composer is left afterwards with a single performance, no recording with which to promote the piece and/or their ability to write for orchestra, no way to disseminate their work, and a new composition, painstakingly conceived and scrupulously notated, that is destined to reside forevermore in a drawer.

To counter this, Ablaze Records selects six to seven pieces every year to record with the Brno Philharmonic Orchestra in the Czech Republic and release on a commercial CD as part of their Orchestral Masters Series. My composition *Mathias and the Storm* was chosen for inclusion on their 2019 release. Since making orchestral recordings is an expensive enterprise for all parties involved, Ablaze Records and the selected composers jointly fund the project. Ablaze Records partially subsidizes the endeavor and manages the recording process from start to finish, while the selected composers pay the remaining balance, based on duration of each piece, and are invited to work directly with the Brno Philharmonic Orchestra to create this best possible rendition of the piece.

In lieu of the Baltimore Symphony's research, this is a way my piece will be heard again and it will help lead to future collaborations with other orchestras around the country and abroad.