

Frank Richmond

Curriculum Vitae

Skills

- **Conducting and Directing**- Music Director, Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Church, 1999-2020; Directed and conducted production of my original opera, **The Living Ladder**, 2017; Directed and conducted concert versions of my opera, **Ahab's Wife**, with grants from Kentucky Arts Council and Spalding University, 2000, 2205; Music Director, Crestwood Christian Church, 1998; Music Director, First Unitarian Church, 1991-1998; Conductor, Symphony Orchestra of Guayaquil, Ecuador's largest city, summer 1989; Music Director, Bakersfield Melodrama and Vaudeville Theater, 1984; Directed Foothill High School band, 1985; Director of Duke's Men of Yale, 1979-1980
- **Teaching: College Level**- Taught Music History as Adjunct Professor at Jefferson Community College, Southwest Campus, 2005; Took over teaching music theory and orchestration classes at University of Louisville from department head, Dr. Steven Rouse, when he was on childcare leave after birth of his son; Taught Piano Proficiency class as Graduate Teaching Assistance at University of Louisville, 1990-1992
PK-12 Level- Emergency Substitute Teacher for Jefferson County Schools, mostly high school, in orchestra, band, choir, drama, English drama and literature, history, math and science 1919-present; Music Fundamentals teacher at Louisville Classical Academy, 2014-2019; General Music and Suzuki violin teacher at Waldorf School, 2006; Taught music, drama and English at Academia Cotopaxi, Quito, Ecuador, 1985-1990; Directed band at Foothill High School, Bakersfield, California, 1985

Frank Richmond began his music studies in Bakersfield, California at the age of seven, taking piano lessons from Rosalie Liggett, and soon after, violin lessons from Barbara Byers. His musical aptitude was so pronounced that at the age of nine he was given the unusual opportunity to conduct his elementary school orchestra on local television in a performance of an arrangement of Brahms' *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*. He had begun composing at the very outset of his music studies, and began winning prizes virtually every year in competitions sponsored by the Music Teachers Association of California (MTAC). As a pianist, he was singled out regularly in MTAC Bach Festivals, in which he was selected from among local participants to perform at the statewide level.

At age 11 Richmond was co-winner of the Kern Philharmonic Junior Auditions Competition, tying for first place as pianist with his older brother Robert. Thereafter, Frank was a frequently requested performer in the Southern California area, appearing while still a juvenile in events ranging from accompanying, on both piano and violin, community theater productions and individuals, to performing as piano soloist for a Kern Philharmonic social event for orchestra members, to performing a complete solo recital at University of California Bakersfield, the program including pieces by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Liszt and Khachaturian.

At age 15, Richmond composed a setting of Percy Shelley's sonnet "Ozymandias" for concert choir and piano, a piece which won California statewide recognition and a cash prize. At age 17 he won the Fresno Symphony orchestra's concerto competition with a performance of Khachaturian's Piano Concerto, and at 18 he performed Chopin's Concerto in E Minor with his high school orchestra, finished his high school career first in his class, and was valedictorian. As a child and teenager, Richmond developed a pronounced talent for visual art, winning local prizes for painting and sculpture.

He also won awards in drama and speech, earning a Double Ruby degree in the National Forensics League, winning many speech and drama competitions, and being named City Champion in dramatic interpretation.

Richmond then attended Yale University, where he played lead parts in drama, musical theater and opera productions, and directed *The Duke's Men*, an internationally renowned singing group. He studied piano privately with the head of the Piano Department, Ward Davenny, and composition with Eleanor Cory. He won a commission to illustrate a children's book, and after it was published, qualified to join a national illustrator's association. After graduation from Yale, Richmond moved back to California, and became Music Director of Bakersfield Melodrama and Vaudeville Theater. While in Bakersfield, he directed the band program, including the marching band, at Foothill High School.

In his mid-twenties Richmond moved to Quito, Ecuador, where he briefly played violin in the National Symphony Orchestra before joining the staff of Academia Cotopaxi, an international school funded by the United States State Department. There he taught drama, I. B. English Literature, and music. Under the auspices of U. S. embassies and bi-national centers, he began a series of international concert tours as solo and collaborative pianist. He played concerts to benefit a mental health organization, Centro de Desarrollo Integral, and for a summer season he conducted the Symphony Orchestra of Guayaquil, Ecuador's largest city.

Upon returning to the United States after having lived in South America for four years, Richmond became a graduate teaching assistant at University of Louisville in Louisville, Kentucky, teaching piano proficiency to music majors while earning his Masters Degree in Piano Performance, studying with the internationally celebrated pianist Lee Luvisi. Richmond won top awards in three separate categories of music studies, winning the concerto competition, composition award and the Hankins Prize for best essay in musicology. His paper "Cerebral Lateralization and the Development of Classical Keyboard Style," which was read at the annual conference of the American Musicological Society, was a synthesis of his studies of the neurological processing of music perception. Richmond continued these studies for several more years under a special research fellowship at University of Louisville.

A teacher who left an indelible impression on Richmond was Dr. Steven Rouse, eminent composer and professor at University of Louisville. At the time Richmond studied with him, Rouse was head of the Composition and Theory Department, and when he was granted childcare leave upon the birth of his first child, Rouse tapped Richmond to take over reaching his classes for him. Richmond credits him, along with his piano teacher Luvisi, with instilling in him the highest standards of craftsmanship, and the most serious striving toward moral and aesthetic purpose.

During the years of his graduate studies, Richmond continued to perform frequently as pianist, traveling through many of the countries of Latin America, and also performing in the region around Kentucky in several different genres. He toured with the famous Motown group The Platters, and was repeatedly featured both as soloist and accompanist in live broadcasts of WUOL, the Louisville classical public radio station.

Beginning in the early 1990s, Richmond served in numerous musical capacities in Louisville, Kentucky, working as section leader in church choirs, as Music Director at First Unitarian Church, Music Director at Crestwood Christian Church, and Music Director at Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Church. He also served as Assistant Music Director for Louisville Youth Choir, which commissioned him to compose a setting of a poem by internationally celebrated Kentucky poet Wendell Berry. The

resulting piece was performed at Kentucky Center for the Arts by an honor choir of over 150 students selected from all over the state.

In 2000 Richmond received a grant from Kentucky Arts Council, with matching funds from Spalding University, to compose a musical drama based on *Ahab's Wife*, a best-selling novel by Kentucky Poet Laureate Sena Jeter Naslund. The work was performed in concert form, and again in expanded form five years later. It eventually came to the attention of Garrett Sorenson, a Metropolitan Opera star tenor who won a Grammy Award in 2018 for Best Opera Recording. Sorenson and his wife Elizabeth Batton, winner of the 2000 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, persuaded Richmond to re-imagine the musical as an opera, and in 2013 they performed excerpts from it with Richmond as pianist in a live broadcast on WUOL. Also in 2013 Richmond was featured as piano soloist in a performance of Bach D Major Concerto as part of a series sponsored by the Suzuki Association of America, playing with an orchestra under the direction of Daniel Spurlock. In 2015 Richmond obtained a facsimile manuscript of *Matins for the Virgin of Guadalupe* by Mexican Baroque composer Ignacio de Jerusalem from the Cathedral of Mexico City, assembled a small orchestra and conducted the work at Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Church with his choir and Sorenson and Batton as soloists.

In June 2016, Richmond was selected by Jeffery Jamner, Director of Education for Kentucky Center for the Arts, to be a presenter in a weekend of master classes for Kentucky Arts teachers. The event, which took place in Danville, Kentucky, featured Richmond creating improvised piano interpretations of a story read in two languages by a professional storyteller, and illustrated by well-known painter Martin Rollins. The master class exemplified cross-disciplinary and multi-media work.

Richmond has worked as pianist with Kentucky Opera, most notably on a summer workshop of Gounod's *Faust* with Sorenson in the title role that also featured Louisville Ballet, and as rehearsal accompanist for a youth opera, *Robin Hood*, by Ben Moore and Kelley Rourke. In 2017 Richmond was himself commissioned to compose a youth opera, *The Living Ladder*, by Louisville Classical Academy to celebrate their 10th anniversary.

During his years as Music Director at Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Church, Richmond achieved nationwide recognition, being awarded a commission to compose a string quartet piece that was performed at the climactic service of the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly in 2013, and winning a full scholarship to the Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network annual conference in San Diego, California in 2014. As a composer, Richmond has collaborated with no less than three Kentucky Poets Laureate, Sena Jeter Naslund, Lee Pennington, and Frank X Walker, leader of the Affrilacian Poets.. With Walker, Richmond has embarked on an opera project, using Walker's poetry as libretto, to tell the story of York, the heroic slave of Lewis and Clark. An aria from that work-in-progress has been performed by the imminent opera singer, Gregory Rahming.

In October 2019 Richmond collaborated with Native American musicians of international renown at the Indigenous Peoples Day celebration on the stage of Fourth Street Live in Louisville, Kentucky. He first played keyboard with three-time Grammy Award winner Bill Miller, Mohican singer and master of the Native American flute, then directed his choir in combination with Navajo flute-player Fred Nez Keams and singer Elizabeth Burkey.

In addition to his musical activities, Richmond has continued to create visual art professionally over the years, and has portraits on permanent display at boardrooms of Northwestern Mutual in the Meidinger Tower in Louisville, Kentucky. He has taught art privately and in classrooms, has created

numerous commissioned artworks, worked as a caricaturist for the Louisville Zoo, and has painted stage sets and public murals.