



**Gena Branscombe**  
(1881-1977)  
*Composer, Conductor, Pianist*

*The Friends of Women Composers Society is pleased to present:*

*Life! Love! Song!* 

# *A Visit with Gena Branscombe*

Kathleen Shimeta, *Mezzo-Soprano*

Martin Hennessy, *Piano*

**Saturday, March 7**

**2:00 & 8:00 p.m. Shows**

**\$30 General \$20 for students, seniors & military**



Wilde Auditorium in the Harry Jack Gray Center, U. of Hartford  
200 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06117

Written by: Kathleen Shimeta and Evan Pappas  
Directed by: Norman Carlberg

Editorial Assistance: Janet Godsberg  
Additional Staging and Direction: Evan Pappas

**\* Following the performance, Shimeta will discuss the composer's life & music. \***

***Don't miss this exciting opportunity to learn more about an amazing woman & a talented musician while enjoying lyrical and glorious music! A unique experience awaits!***

***This one woman show***, created by mezzo-soprano Kathleen Shimeta and co-authored by Evan Pappas, showcases the life and works of Gena Branscombe, a pioneer among American women composers. In her 1980 doctoral dissertation, *Gena Branscombe, American Composer and Conductor: A Study of Her Life and Works*, Laurine Elkins-Marlow wrote: "The life of Gena Branscombe is an inspiring record of a woman of great ability who carved for herself a viable musical career at a time when American composers were just coming into their own in this country." In today's language, Branscombe was a woman who did it and had it all. She established a career in music while single and maintained it during her marriage, successfully balancing her work with actively raising her family.

Influenced early by the late German romantic style, Branscombe helped develop a twentieth-century musical voice that blended American and Victorian themes. She produced 150 art songs as well as choral, piano solo and chamber music, most of which was published within her lifetime. After her death, her richly melodic music seemed lost to history, despite its outstanding beauty.

This concert gives tribute to a woman ahead of her time, whose professional training and perseverance, contemporary associations, continuous support of American musical organizations, and European compositional influence helped lay an enduring foundation for modern women in music.

**Meet Shimeta** - *A popular oratorio soloist, Kathleen has enjoyed many appearances with orchestra. As a composer advocate she has premiered works by contemporary American composers and recorded a CD of songs by Gena Branscombe. Shimeta recently helped create the **Gena Branscombe Tribute Project** - exploring Branscombe's instrumental & choral works.*

**GENA BRANSCOMBE TRIBUTE 3:30 p.m. Sunday, March 8th**  
Sisters of Saint Joseph - 27 Park Rd. West Hartford, CT 06119 **\$15, \$10**  
**www.HeatherHouseProductions.com**

*Made possible through grants from The Women's Education & Leadership Fund, A Legacy of The Hartford College for Women, UNIVERSITY of HARTFORD & Sigma Alpha Iota Philanthropies Inc., with support from The President's Office, The Hartt School, the Recording Studio, the Hartford Art School, Connections Health Education & Wellness Center & the Women and Gender and Resource Center at the University of Hartford, Sigma Alpha Iota- Local Chapter, The Sisters of Saint Joseph, the Hartford Conservatory, the Unitarian Arts Sub-Council, the Riverwood Poetry Series and more...*  
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