

Landscape Music: Rivers & Trails

Quick facts:

1. Landscape Music Composers Network is a collective whose music engages with landscape, nature, and place—including both established and emerging artists, writing in diverse styles.
2. *Landscape Music: Rivers & Trails* was a nationwide concert series in Fall 2018, coordinated by the Landscape Music Composers Network to commemorate the 50th Anniversaries of the Wild & Scenic Rivers and National Trails System Acts.
3. These concerts had significant direct impact on audiences' familiarity with Wild & Scenic Rivers and National Trails.
4. These concerts attracted outdoor recreation-oriented audiences—the majority of whom were not experienced with listening to contemporary concert music. Yet audience members overwhelmingly reported that these concerts of all-new chamber music increased their interest in the rivers and trails featured on these programs.
5. This initiative catalyzed 12 new works for chamber ensembles, given co-premieres on multiple concerts across the country.
6. These concerts engaged 35 musicians across five different regions, leading to ongoing collaborations.
7. Women composers had equal representation in concert programming and in leadership roles.
8. Our project proposal garnered support and collaboration from partners including the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Sierra Club, and many other local and national-level organizations focusing on music and/or environment.

Continue reading for our full report!

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LandscapeMusic.org

Overview

Landscape Music: Rivers & Trails was planned and promoted in coordination with nationwide, yearlong celebrations of the 50th anniversaries of the **Wild & Scenic Rivers** and **National Trails System** acts.

Coordinated by the **Landscape Music Composers Network**, and presented in collaboration with organizations, venues, and performers across the country, this initiative highlighted and celebrated the significance of our national trails and rivers through the creation and presentation of new music.



The concerts included World Premieres of works by members of the Landscape Music Composers Network, scored for small chamber ensembles and created in direct response to the remarkable places protected under these two landmark acts. Highlighting a diversity of compositional voices and inspirations from nature, each event offered a different selection of works.

Featured Events

Vallejo, CA — Citywater
Sunday, September 23, 2018 on Visions of the Wild Festival at the Empress Theatre
Directed by Nell Shaw Cohen

Atlanta, GA — Atlanta Contemporary Ensemble
Saturday, September 29, 2018 at the First Existential Congregation of Atlanta
Directed by Stephen Wood

Houghton, MI — Michigan Technological University
Thursday, October 4, 2018 at McArdle Theatre
Directed by Libby Meyer

Portland, OR — Cascadia Composers
Sunday, October 7, 2018 at The Old Church
Directed by Christina Rusnak

Boston, MA — Juventas New Music Ensemble
Saturday, November 3, 2018 at First Church Boston
Directed by Oliver Caplan

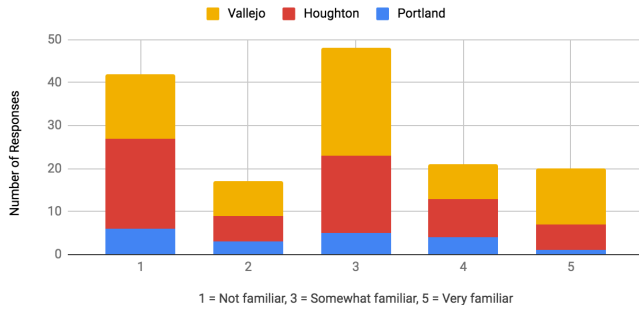
Related Events (outreach, preview programs, reprised programs, and partner concerts):

- Christina Rusnak, Oregon Trail Presentation, Oregon City, OR (9/25)
- Juventas New Music Ensemble outreach at Margaret Fuller House, Cambridge, MA (10/18)
- Citywater outreach at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Sacramento, CA (10/24)
- Citywater at Sacramento State Festival of New American Music, Sacramento, CA (11/02)
- Juventas New Music Ensemble at Boston New Music Festival Keynote, Boston, MA (10/27)
- Composing in the Wilderness partner concert at Federal Hall National Monument, New York, NY (11/16).

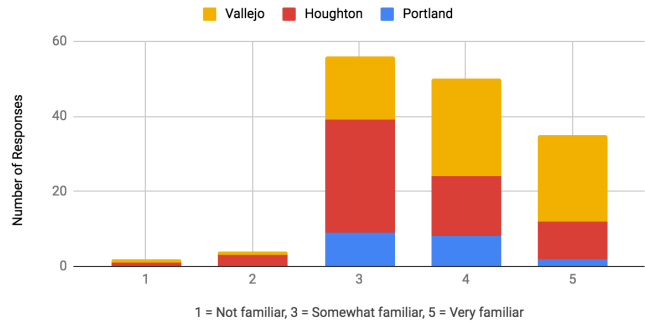
Engaging Audiences with Rivers & Trails through New Music

According to audience surveys collected at three events, these concerts had **significant direct impact on audiences’ overall familiarity with Wild & Scenic Rivers and National Trails.**

Before the concert, how familiar were you with Wild & Scenic Rivers and National Trails?

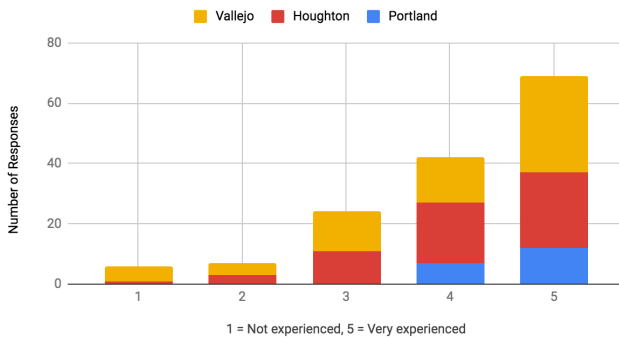


After the concert, how familiar are you with Wild & Scenic Rivers and National Trails?

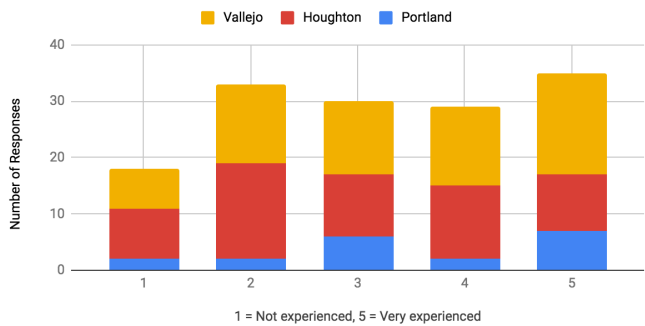


The concerts’ theme attracted an **outdoor recreation-oriented audience—the majority of whom were not highly experienced with listening to contemporary concert music.**

Experience with outdoor recreation

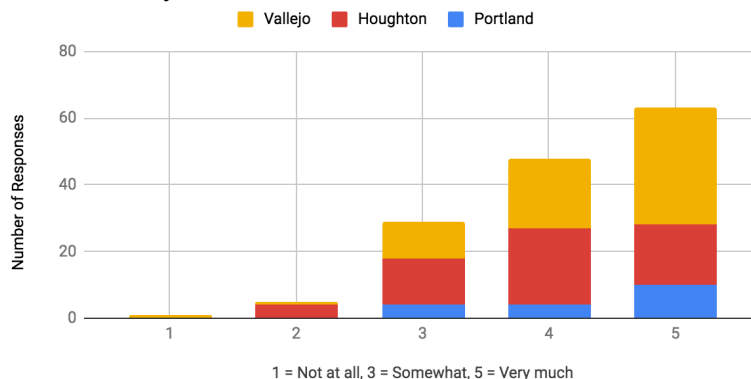


Experience with listening to new classical and chamber music by living composers



Yet audiences overwhelmingly reported that **our programs of all-contemporary chamber music increased their interest in the rivers and trails** featured on the programs.

Did the music increase your interest in the rivers and trails featured on the program?



Catalyzing New Works and Lifting Composers' Voices

Landscape Music: Rivers & Trails catalyzed the composition of **12 World Premieres**, performed alongside existing works by members of the Landscape Music Composers Network and guests.

There were **45 individual performances** of works composed by members of the Landscape Music Composers Network, across the five concerts and related events.

This series featured the voices of **women composers**, both as artists and in leadership positions. **7 out of 15 composers** featured on these concerts identify as women, and **3 out of 5 concerts were directed by women**.

Some composers had never had their music performed in the cities or venues where they were featured in this series; this initiative enabled composers' **regional debuts**.

Collaborating with Musicians in Multiple Regions

The concerts featured musicians local to their city and/or region, engaging **5 unique ensembles** of performers. Although *Rivers & Trails* was a nationwide initiative, each event was coordinated on a local level.

A combined total of **35 musicians** were featured, all as paid artists. These included established chamber ensembles Citywater, Atlanta Contemporary Ensemble, and Juventas New Music Ensemble, and groups comprised of freelance musicians.

Some musicians are **carrying this repertoire forward** with their ensembles. Citywater (California) has since performed two concerts featuring works from *Rivers & Trails*, with two additional performances planned for 2019.

Growing Our Organization

The individual events, and/or concerts series as a whole, attracted **press coverage** for the programs—and the Wild & Scenic Rivers and National Trails 50th anniversaries—in publications at national and local levels. These included *The Boston Globe*, *ABC7 News* (San Francisco Bay Area), *The Oregonian*, *ArtsATL*, *The Daily Mining Gazette* (Houghton, MI), *Brigham-Young University Radio* (“Constant Wonder” program), and *Journal of the International Alliance for Women in Music*, et al.

This was the **first concert series** coordinated by the Landscape Music Composers Network, following three standalone concerts presented in 2016 and 2017.

Nearly all collaborators were **newly established partners** of Landscape Music Composers Network through this initiative (see Appendix).

These were the **first Landscape Music-affiliated concerts presented in three of these areas** (Vallejo/San Francisco Bay Area, Atlanta, and Portland).

Three new members joined the Landscape Music Composers Network as a result of *Rivers & Trails* partnerships with Juventas New Music Ensemble and Citywater.

Appendix

Project Partners

The partners involved in the promotion, funding, fundraising, presentation, and/or performance of the five *Rivers & Trails* concerts (not including related events) were:

Vallejo, CA - Directed by Nell Shaw Cohen

- Visions of the Wild Festival
- Citywater
- U.S. Forest Service
- Empress Theatre
- National Park Service
- Vallejo Community Arts Foundation

Atlanta, GA - Directed by Stephen Wood

- Sierra Club Georgia Chapter
- Sierra Club Military Outdoors
- Atlanta Contemporary Ensemble
- Shambhala Meditation Center of Atlanta

Houghton, MI - Directed by Libby Meyer

- Michigan Technological University

Portland, OR - Directed by Christina Rusnak & Brent Lawrence

- Cascadia Composers (NACUSA)
- The Old Church, Portland

Boston, MA - Directed by Oliver Caplan

- Juventas New Music Ensemble
- Boston New Music Festival
- First Church Boston
- Massachusetts River Alliance

Series-wide

- Composing in the Wilderness (cross-promotional)
- Sustain Music and Nature (cross-promotional)

Survey Methodology

The combined estimated attendance for *Landscape Music: Rivers & Trails* concerts was 440. Estimated attendance for each concert (not including related events) was: Vallejo, CA: 100; Atlanta, GA: 60; Houghton, MI: 90; Portland, OR: 60; Boston, MA: 130.

Audiences at three of the *Rivers & Trails* concerts—Vallejo, CA (9/23); Houghton, MI (10/3); and Portland, OR (10/7)—completed written surveys, which were distributed to all audience members and collected following the event.

Survey results cited in this report are based on 149 total responses from these events (Vallejo, CA: 69 responses; Houghton, MI: 60 responses; Portland, OR: 19 responses).

List of Works

The works and composers included on the five *Landscape Music: Rivers & Trails* concerts—listed here with their related Wild & Scenic River and/or National Trail (if applicable)—are:

- **Oliver Caplan, *In the Direction of Dreams**** [movement III: V, A, H; all movements: B]
 - Inspired by Sudbury River
- **Linda Chase, *Wildfire Rages. River whispers, resilience.**** [V, P, B]
 - Inspired by Klamath River
- **Nell Shaw Cohen, *Retrace**** [V, H, P, B]
 - Inspired by Juan Bautista de Anza Trail
- **Nell Shaw Cohen, “In the Lupine Hills” from *Refuge*** [V]
- **Ben Cosgrove, *Trace**** [V, H]
 - Inspired by New England Trail
- **Heather Gilligan, *One Mountain*** + [B]
- **Michael Ippolito, *Big Sky, Low Horizon*** + [B]
- **Brent Lawrence, *Turquoise Waters**** [A, H, P]
 - Inspired by Owyhee River
- **Libby Meyer, *Wild Beauty**** [V, A, B]
 - Inspired by North Country Trail
- **Rachel Panitch, *The Edge of the Marsh**** [V, H, B]
 - Inspired by Carson Trail
- **Justin Ralls, *Rivers & Trails**** [H]
 - Inspired by Pacific Northwest rivers and trails
- **Christina Rusnak, *Oregon Trail**** [movement I: V, A, H; movement III: P]
 - Inspired by Oregon Trail
- **Ryan Suleiman, *Under Moonlight*** [V]
 - Inspired by American River
- **Ari Sussman, *Aurora*** [B]
- **Stephen Wood, *Apalachicola*** [A]
 - Inspired by Florida National Trail
- **Stephen Wood, *The Chattooga*** [A, H, P]
 - Inspired by Chattooga River
- **Linda Woody, *Deschutes River Riffles*** + [P]
 - Inspired by Deschutes River

* World Premiere composed exclusively for this series.

+ Guest composer (all others listed are members of the Landscape Music Composers Network).

V = Performed in Vallejo, CA

A = Performed in Atlanta, GA

H = Performed in Houghton, MI

P = Performed in Portland, OR

B = Performed in Boston, MA