

## Notes on Today's Music – 3/1/26

### “Starlight” by Margaret Ruthven Lang

Biographer Juliana Yap remarked that "Margaret Ruthven Lang was groomed at an early age to become one of the most prolific and accomplished women composers in the United States." Lang was taught piano and composition by her father who was a well-known choral conductor and organist in Boston. She began playing the violin at age twelve and lived in Munich for several years with her mother to further her studies. When her *Dramatic Overture*, Op. 12 was performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1893, she became the first woman in the United States to have a work performed by a major orchestra. None of her orchestral works, however, remain in existence. It is thought that Lang may have destroyed the copies herself as she was very critical of her works and often destroyed those she didn't think were good enough. I'm glad "Starlight" survived!

Lang was raised in a Unitarian Universalist household although she became a devout Episcopalian late in her life. She lived to the age of 104, and in 1967 the Boston Symphony Orchestra gave a concert in honor of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. She died in 1972 in her home in Jamaica Plains, MA.

## Notes on Today's Music – 3/1/26

### “Starlight” by Margaret Ruthven Lang

Biographer Juliana Yap remarked that "Margaret Ruthven Lang was groomed at an early age to become one of the most prolific and accomplished women composers in the United States." Lang was taught piano and composition by her father who was a well-known choral conductor and organist in Boston. She began playing the violin at age twelve and lived in Munich for several years with her mother to further her studies. When her *Dramatic Overture*, Op. 12 was performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1893, she became the first woman in the United States to have a work performed by a major orchestra. None of her orchestral works, however, remain in existence. It is thought that Lang may have destroyed the copies herself as she was very critical of her works and often destroyed those she didn't think were good enough. I'm glad "Starlight" survived!

Lang was raised in a Unitarian Universalist household although she became a devout Episcopalian late in her life. She lived to the age of 104, and in 1967 the Boston Symphony Orchestra gave a concert in honor of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. She died in 1972 in her home in Jamaica Plains, MA.