

Mara Gibson

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Composer **Mara Gibson** is originally from Charlottesville, VA, graduated from **Bennington College** and completed her Ph.D. at **SUNY Buffalo**. She also attended London College of Music as well as L'École des Beaux-Arts in Fontainebleau, France and the International Music Institute at Darmstadt, Germany. She has earned grants and honors from the American Composer's Forum; the Banff Center; Louisiana Division of the Arts; Arts KC; Meet the Composer; the Kansas Arts Commission National Endowment for the Arts; the International Bass Society; ASCAP, the John Hendrick Memorial Foundation; Virginia Center for the Arts; and Yale University. Recently, she enjoyed a residency at the MacDowell Colony. Internationally renowned ensembles and soloists perform her music throughout the United States, Canada, South America, Australia, Asia, and Europe.

Gibson's music has been described as "shocking, gripping and thought-provoking... conjuring a flurry of emotions" (PARMA recordings). She is a regular cross-disciplinary collaborator, having worked with choreographers, visual artists, writers, film makers and musicians. In 2015, Gibson released her first compilation CD, *Artifacts*, with her second recording, *Sky-born*, following in November 2017 through Navona/Parma Recordings. The latest presents new works including "Blackbird," which features Cascade Quartet. The music draws inspiration from a variety of artistic mediums: "haunting and epic with visceral energy." Her piano preludes "Conundrums" are inspired by a series of paintings by Baltimore-based artist Jim Condron and performed by Holly Roadfedt. Pieces by long-time collaborators Michael Hall, UMKC colleagues and Megan Ihnen are also featured on the new album in "Spark" and "One Voice."

As *Gramophone* magazine describes, "repertoire on this recording was mostly inspired by poetry and paintings. What binds these pieces are Gibson's concise handling of musical materials and her spectrum of sonic approaches." *Sky-born* displays a compelling contemporary voice with a restless imagination, able to morph other forms of artistic expression into daring, musical odysseys."

In August 2017, Gibson was the first-annual commissioned composer for the Baroque on Beaver Orchestra led by Robert Nordling. The ensemble showcased her newest piece, *Secret Sky*, music inspired by the bird migration patterns on the island. Collaboration is integral to Gibson's process; whether through her music, collaborations or teaching, she hopes to achieve a relationship between the macro and micro.

Dr. Gibson taught as an Associate Teaching Professor at the **UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance** for over ten years, where she was founder of the **UMKC Composition Workshop** and co-director/founder of **ArtSounds**. From 2015-2017, she coordinated undergraduate composition, managing to triple the Conservatory's undergraduate composition enrollment. Gibson has also contributed to New Music Box and in fall 2017, she joined **Louisiana State University** as a Visiting Assistant Professor; fall 2018, Gibson became Associate Professor of Composition at LSU.

