

Barbra Bailey Bradley Biography

Barbra Bailey Bradley began piano instruction at age 5, and has been a professional musician all her life - touring as a supporting artist for various singers and instrumentalists, adjudicating music festivals, concertizing, and teaching.

She studied harp in Graduate School at Indiana University, and then had a long hiatus before returning to it. Barbra now lives in Rockville, Maryland, and freelances in Washington, DC, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia, including performing annually in Harpers Ferry [WVA] during the Olde Tyme Christmas festivities; playing for weddings, receptions, parties, luncheons, dinners, teas, open houses, funerals, memorial services, and area concerts; and teaching piano and harp at the National Cathedral School in Washington, DC.

She recorded her first CD of her own harp arrangements – Straight from the Harp – in 2004, and published two books of harp solos, duos, and trios - Straight from the Harp, Volumes 1 and 2 - with fellow harpist Mimi McNeel in July 2005. Together she and Mimi are McBrad Publishing. Barbra's second CD – Harp-Felt – was completed in the fall of 2006, and contains her own harp compositions in addition to her arrangements of traditional tunes and music from the Baroque and Classic periods. Selections from Harp-Felt, a collection of solo works for harp from the CD of the same name, was published in 2007. Fantasy for Lever Harp and Chamber Orchestra – a seven minute work for harp and wind and string ensemble composed by Barbra Bailey Bradley - and Harpists Three – a book of six trios arranged by Barbra Bailey Bradley – were published in 2008. Vignettes – a book of five original harp trios by Barbra Bailey Bradley – was also published in October 2008.

As well as performing as a solo harpist, she plays with the Heatherwood Harp Ensemble; and has created several well-received arrangements for their concerts. Two ensemble arrangements were premiered at the 2006 Washington Area Folk Harp Society Benefit Concert – one by Sue Richard's Unsemble, and the other in the Grand Finale Ensemble. Another was premiered by the Grand Finale Ensemble at the 2007 Washington Area Folk Harp Society Benefit Concert. A Medley for Sue was performed by the Somerset Harp Ensemble at the 2007 Somerset Folk Harp Festival. The Fantasy for Lever Harp and Chamber Orchestra was premiered at the 2008 Washington Area Folk Harp Society Annual Concert [formerly the Benefit Concert], and had an encore performance at the 2008 Somerset-on-the-Potomac Folk Harp Festival.

In addition to her arrangements of traditional music and her own compositions – including the Sonata for solo Harp and the Harp Fantasy - she enjoys taking keyboard music from the Baroque and Classic periods and making it harp friendly.

Barbra has given workshops and ensemble sessions geared to beginners at the Somerset Folk Harp Festival, Somerset-on-the-Potomac Folk Harp Festival, and the WAFHS Annual Getaway at Harpers Ferry

Her workshops include: You, Too, Can Arrange - I do; Harp for Beginners; Stress-Free Ensemble for Beginners, Ensemble for Beginners – How To Do It; Trios from the Ground Up [How to arrange music for harp trios and make it look good on the page] and Introduction to Finale – How to Make Your Music Look Good [in conjunction with Mimi McNeel.]