

AMY SCURRIA

Composer • Educator • Community Organizer

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PROFILE

Award-winning composer and educator with four music degrees (including a PhD from Duke University) and a substantial background in litigation support as a paralegal. A lifelong advocate for youth education and community equity, with a 30-year record of building music programs, mentoring young artists, and organizing community initiatives. Published by Theodore Presser Company. Music performed at Carnegie Hall, the Kimmel Center, and by major orchestras nationwide.

Recipient of six competitive grants and fellowships over the course of her career, including university, state arts council, and program-specific awards, reflecting a sustained track record of writing successful funding proposals.

EDUCATION

Duke University, Durham, NC

2007–2015

PhD in Music Composition

- Dissertation: “Pearl”, an Opera Based on Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*; libretto by Carol Gilligan and Jonathan Gilligan; Article: “Gender and Modern Opera: A Survey of the Literature on Gender and Music and its Application on Paula Kimper's opera, *Patience and Sarah*”
- Awarded three competitive Duke University research fellowships during doctoral study (see Grants & Fellowships)

Peabody Conservatory at the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD 1996–1998

Master of Music Composition

Rice University (Shepherd School of Music), Houston, TX

1991–1995

Bachelor of Music Composition

La Schola Cantorum (EAMA), Paris, France

1999

Aspen Music Festival Composition Program, Aspen, CO

1994

Westminster Choir College Composition Program, Princeton, NJ

1990

EDUCATION & YOUTH WORK

1996–Present

- Composition, theory, and piano instruction to students of all ages including college level for nearly 30 years
- Regular presenter and guest composer at local and regional schools and universities throughout NC, PA, VA, WV, IN, MN, and others.
- Mentored numerous emerging composers throughout career, providing guidance on craft, career development, and artistic identity

Philadelphia, PA 1999–2003

Music Education Partnership Coordinator

- Founded and built a city-wide music outreach program from the ground up, placing music instruction in more than 20 Philadelphia public schools — serving hundreds of children ages 7–13 — in schools that had no existing music programming
- Designed the program model, recruited and hired a network of music instructors, and coordinated all logistics across a dispersed, multi-school system
- Built the program in formal partnership with the Philadelphia Orchestra's Education Department, whose Director of Education served as lead collaborator and mentor
- Prepared financial reports and collated grant application materials for private and government funding to sustain and grow the program
- Grew the program into a functioning citywide infrastructure connecting schools, teaching artists, and a major cultural institution; the Philadelphia Orchestra's Director of Education described Amy as “a natural educator”

Chapel Hill, NC 2009

Composer-in-Residence, Frank Porter Graham Elementary School

- Commissioned to create *Esperanza Rising*, a chamber opera developed in direct collaboration with elementary school students
- Led workshops, rehearsals, and the full production process with student participants; one of the most formative projects of her career

Shepherdstown, WV 2013

Composer-in-Residence, Shepherd College

- Commissioned to compose a new SATB choral work
- Participated in a university round table discussion
- Conducted two master classes, attended rehearsals, spoke about the work as part of a pre- and post-concert series

Philadelphia, PA 2002–2003

Guest Composer, We Are Met at Gettysburg

- Visited classrooms throughout Philadelphia to engage students with the work prior to its world premiere
- Produced a CD distributed to Philadelphia public school children; participated in post-concert Meet the Composer events

Houston, TX / VA / NC 2000–2001

Volunteer Program Developer, Women's Centers

- Designed and led workshops for young people exploring music, identity, and self-expression at Women's Centers in multiple states

Chapel Hill, NC 2017–2019

- Led a regional nonprofit community organization centered on collaborative, child-directed learning outside conventional school structures
- Organized co-ops, learning groups, community programs, and events; built partnerships with local educators and institutions

NC 2019–2022

- Supported troop programming and community-building activities for youth

Durham, NC Ongoing

Volunteer

- Active volunteer and community advocate; home frequently serves as a gathering space and safe haven for trans youth

Santa Fe, NM 2025

- Tea Party Scene from *ALICE* performed as part of the Young Voices Program

New York, NY

- *The Music We Build Together* (2026) – performed by Aliso Niguel High School String Orchestra; including collaborations with students
- *What Lies Within Us* (2025) – performed by Santa Rosa High School Concert Band; including collaborations with students

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1994–Present

- Concert commissions from major orchestras, choral organizations, and ensembles nationally and internationally
- Founder and owner, Adamo Press (music publishing), 2000–present
- Music copyist for independent composers and major projects, 1994–present
- Music published by Theodore Presser Company and Adamo Press

Durham, NC 2007–2015

Professor, Teaching and Research Assistant

- Courses taught: Introduction to Music Theory, Theoretical Practice of Tonal Music
- Teaching Assistant for courses such as *Composers of Influence*, *Music and Modernism*, *Jazz*, *Hip-Hop/Rap Music Appreciation*, *Music Sound and Style*, *Jazz History*, and others

Richmond, VA 2006–2007*Education, Marketing, Advertising & Service Director*

- Developed and administered education program; created and maintained company website
- Designed marketing and advertising materials; managed piano sales and service department; piano sales

Richmond, VA 2004–2006*Tort Litigation Paralegal*

- Medical malpractice defense; legal research, discovery, case file management

Philadelphia, PA 2003–2004*Paralegal*

- Workers' compensation, employment, and insurance defense litigation

Havertown, PA 1998–1999*Music Publisher Assistant to the President***SELECTED COMMISSIONS & PREMIERES**

2025

- “The Music We Build Together” – World Premiere: April 2026, Carnegie Hall – Aliso Niguel High School String Orchestra, Jonathan Chen, Conductor

2024

- “What Lies Within Us” – World Premiere: April 2025, Carnegie Hall – Santa Rosa High School Concert Band, Timothy Decker, Conductor

2025

- “Thou Who Art Over Us” Included in the Opening Ceremony of the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag), 2025

2009

- “Esperanza Rising” Commissioned by NC Arts Council and LongLeaf Opera; created in collaboration with students at Frank Porter Graham Elementary School, Chapel Hill, NC

2003

- “We Are Met at Gettysburg” – Co-composed with Steve Heitzeg; commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra & Minnesota Orchestra
- Premiere: January 4, 2003 – Philadelphia Orchestra, Giancarlo Guerrero, Conductor; Kimmel Center, Philadelphia, PA
- Nine subsequent performances by the Philadelphia and Minnesota Orchestras

2009

- “What the Soul Remembers” – Commissioned by Fort Wayne Philharmonic and Sigma Alpha Iota

2001

- “Blessings of Liberty” – Commissioned by Vermont Youth Orchestra

2021–Present

- American Prize in Opera, Third Place (2024); American Prize in Opera Production, Finalist (2025); N.O.A. Production Award, Third Place (2025)
- Scene and full productions of newest opera (ALICE) at Red River Lyric Opera Festival, Duke University, University of Utah, Lawrence University, University of Nevada, Santa Fe Opera Young Voices Program, and others

CURRENT PROJECTS

- ALICE, A New Wonderland Opera – ongoing revision and orchestration, supported by two 2024 grants (see Grants & Fellowships), Personally raised \$8,500 (more than half the total budget) for a 2023 ALICE workshop production, through a mix of individual donor cultivation and grant/institutional funding
- ADAMO PRESS – various publishing projects

GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

- NC Arts Council Artist Development Grant (2024)
- Dee Endowment Grant (2024)
- Meet the Composer Grant (2003)
- Evan Frankel Fellowship, Duke University (2012–2013)
- Aleane Webb Dissertation Research Award, Duke University (2012)
- Summer Research Fellowship, Duke University (2011)

HONORS & AWARDS

- American Prize in Opera Production, Finalist (2025)
- N.O.A. Production Award, Third Place (2025)
- American Prize in Opera, Third Place (2024)
- Inducted as Sigma Alpha Iota Honorary Member (2009)
- ASCAPPlus Award Recipient, 1999–present
- Winner, Haddonfield Young Composers' Competition (1998)
- NPR highlights and interviews: Philadelphia, Richmond, New England Public Radio, Minneapolis, Fort Wayne, and others

PUBLICATIONS

- Published by Theodore Presser Company: A Prayer, And He Shall Be Like a Tree, Beyond All Walking
- Founder, Adamo Press – publisher of over 40 original works including operas, orchestral works, choral music, and chamber music (2000–present)
- Children's album Beyond A Lullaby – worldwide sales (2016)

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