2017
KRESGE EMINENT ARTIST
Patricia Terry-Ross
The Kresge Eminent Artist Award honors an exceptional artist in the visual, performing or literary arts for lifelong professional achievements and contributions to metropolitan Detroit’s cultural community. Patricia Terry-Ross is the 2017 Kresge Eminent Artist. This monograph commemorates her life and work.
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President and CEO  
The Kresge Foundation

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As our 2017 Kresge Eminent Artist, Patricia Terry-Ross reminds us of the depth of artistry in our community, and of the passion and commitment of our artists. Her story, as you will read in these pages, reminds us, too, of how we all benefit from the power of art as a kind of cultural connective tissue, binding us to what’s beautiful, to what’s true – and to one another.

Artistic traditions connect, likewise, the past and the future. Pat is clear about the debt she owes to her grandparents – particularly the grandmother who explained the terms of her musical “gift” – and to her encouraging parents. She is likewise clear about the importance of the teachers who shaped her as an artist, those whose shoulders she stands on. Her own students, many of whom have gone on to exceptional careers – clearly see her in the same light of greatness.

Throughout her career as an educator, Pat’s commitment to outstanding service has been recognized, particularly her three decades directing the Harp & Vocal Ensemble at Detroit’s Cass Technical High School. It was at that unique institution where Pat was introduced to the instrument as a student herself. In a wonderful example of cultural baton-passing, her high school instructor, at retirement, tapped Pat for the position; at her own retirement, Pat left the program in the hands of an exceptional student and mentee.

To highlight Pat’s contributions as a teacher, however, is not to diminish her stature as an artist. She has given her all to both the small stage of the classroom and the grand stage of the concert hall.

But she has been well heard for decades by audiences of the Michigan Opera Theatre and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. In the world of pop music, Pat is even more widely heard – and rarely heard of. Only the most ardent students of the Motown sound recognize the name of a harpist who added glissandi to the shimmering strings behind Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder and the Temptations.

We’re proud to be able to sing the praises of this largely unsung hero.

Among our core beliefs at Kresge is that a thriving arts and cultural community enriches our quality of life in numerous ways. We believe that a key way to support that community is by directly supporting its artists. We do that annually through Gilda Awards for emerging artists, through Kresge Artist Fellowships and through the Eminent Artist, who is chosen on our behalf by the Kresge Arts in Detroit Advisory Council.

In Patricia Terry-Ross, the council has recognized an artist whose artistry, conviction and generosity have made her a role model for those who have come into her sphere. Her life of quiet inspiration can serve as a model for more of us still.

RIP RAPSON
President and CEO
The Kresge Foundation
The importance of the arts and their contribution to a humane society begins with education.

It is not enough for us to lament the loss of arts education in so many schools. We must strive to preserve those which we can and create alternate pathways to expose our children to this very necessary part of life.

When I am asked which do I enjoy more, performing or teaching, my answer is “both!”

For me, they are inseparable.

I must practice what I teach and teach what I practice. Both disciplines require problem-solving, which has always been extremely important to me.

I stand on the shoulders of many giants, both family and teachers, and I continue to learn from my students. They all have inspired me to be my best.

As I have often said to every interviewer who would listen, my maternal grandmother told me, sometime after I began formal piano lessons at age five, “You have been given a gift but it’s not a gift unless you can give it away.”

And that is just what I continue to strive to do.

PATRICIA TERRY-ROSS, 2017
PATRICIA TERRY-ROSS, THE 2017 KRESE EMINENT ARTIST, TAKES CENTER STAGE IN RECOGNITION OF HER LIFELONG CONTRIBUTIONS TO DETROIT AS BOTH MUSICAL PERFORMER AND MUSIC EDUCATOR.
“It’s Not a Gift Unless You Give It Away.” It is unusual that a child of six years old should take such advice to heart.

But the preciously talented Patricia Terry-Ross found her grandmother’s words profound and somehow understood they would ultimately shape her destiny.

“It was a pivotal moment for me,” acknowledges the renowned harpist and educator.

Terry-Ross would grow up to honor her grandmother’s directive and bequeath Detroit and its cultural, artistic and educational communities with a unique legacy spanning more than four decades of music education and harp performance.

Through her work as an educator, Terry-Ross has empowered generations of Detroit’s students to become influential artists and educators in their own right, among them jazz violinist and MacArthur “Genius Grant” winner Regina Carter and American soprano Janet Williams.

She is especially proud of her 31 years as music teacher and director of the legendary harp and vocal programs at Cass Technical High School and 37 years as adjunct associate professor of harp, choral conducting and vocal music education at Wayne State University.

She has been a teacher, conductor and consultant for the University of California’s Young Musicians Program, where she established a harp program in 2006 and remains an adviser for the Young Musicians Choral Orchestra in Berkeley, California.

Terry-Ross has shared her extraordinary talents with Detroit’s classical music audience through performance with its major orchestras, and more recently with her chamber group, the Eason Trio. In 2017, she began her 40th year as a substitute harpist with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

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Terry-Ross has played for presidents, cabinet members, foreign ministers and diplomats. She has played with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and 39th year as a substitute harpist with the Queen of Motown Soul, Aretha Franklin, at DTE Energy Music Theatre in metro Detroit.

Patricia Terry-Ross was one of the orchestra members accompanying Luciano Pavarotti and The Three Tenors during their concert at Detroit’s Tiger Stadium, 1998.

And she has played under the stars, accompanying Luciano Pavarotti and The Three Tenors during their concert at Detroit’s Tiger Stadium, 1999.

The anecdote brings home how much Terry-Ross attributes her success to her family for laying the groundwork for an estimable career. Prodigies, which Pat clearly was, tend to evoke strong support from their parents – and the Terrys were no exception.

“The piano lessons began after my mother realized I could sing exactly – note for note – songs I heard on the radio. Here I was a young child, and somehow, I was matching what the notes should sound like,” says Terry-Ross.

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“Never in my life did I have a baby sitter,” says Terry-Ross. Her parents continued working, her mother at Michigan Bell Telephone (now AT&T), her father for the US Army Corps of Engineers. But her grandmother retired from the Detroit Athletic Club so “I always had someone to come home to,” says Terry-Ross. “That’s how I was raised.”

Abaco, Patricia Terry-Ross, front center, with mother Elizabet Terry, left, maternal grandmother Bimma Williams, center, and paternal grandmother Norma (Terry) Obanyoun. Detroit, early 1950s.


Above: Patricia Terry-Ross was one of the orchestra members accompanying Luciano Pavarotti and The Three Tenors during their concert at Detroit’s Tiger Stadium, 1998.

Making her debut television appearance on “Auntie Dee Show.”

Edison neighborhood, to share a two-family home on Gunn Court. (They lived across the street from the home of Bill Harris, who would also become an educator and a Kresge Eminent Artist in 2011.)

The arrangement allowed for a family member to be home with the young girl at all times.

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“My dad was the person who really taught me how to practice and how to work,” says Terry-Ross. “I’d be playing my songs and he would say, ‘Come and get me when you can play this song without stopping. Because if you stop, I will throw a tomato at you.’ He didn’t say when you can play it perfectly but when you can play it without stopping.”

His attitude encouraged her to work through the difficult parts in her music, an important and valuable lesson for any young musician.

The piano lessons began after my mother realized I could sing exactly – note for note – songs I heard on the radio. Here I was a young child, and somehow, I was matching what the notes should sound like,” says Terry-Ross.
"He didn’t say I had to be perfect, just that I had to play the whole thing through. I didn’t want the tomato so I learned I might make a mistake but I could keep going and that’s what performers have to do. To this day, I practice the same way – work through the tough spots first."

EARLY MUSIC EDUCATION

Terry-Ross began her formal music education at the Detroit Conservatory of Music in 1954, advancing rapidly. At age 12, she was placed in the conservatory’s college-level music theory classes, where, she recalls, “I’m a girl, I’m black and everyone else is older and white.”

She was not intimidated, however, but highly confident in her talent. In part that was because of Maxine Zeitz, who was her private piano teacher for nine years. Zeitz realized Terry-Ross had perfect pitch – the ability to identify the pitch of a note or to produce any given note – and, says Terry-Ross, “she was the first person to let me know that I had musical talent. I loved my lessons because she made the subject matter come alive. Her positive qualities later became a part of my teaching philosophy.”

Along with her ability to learn easily, Pat was obsessed with music, a combination which brews high achievement. “I knew from age 7 that I was going to go into music,” she says. Her proficiency and passion for music were additionally stimulated through what she describes as “the phenomenal music education program” available to students in Detroit’s public schools during the 1950s and ’60s, a period when the city served as a national model for music and arts education.

While formally studying choral music education at the University of Michigan, Patricia also found time to play the timpani in the university’s concert band. She is shown here in rehearsal by photographer Alfred Eisenstaedt.

Terry-Ross fully acknowledges she wouldn’t be playing the harp if it were not for the harp program at Cass Tech. She entered the high school in 1961 as a music major – Cass Tech was then (as it is now), a curriculum-based, highly selective four-year public school that requires entrance exams.

The school’s music programs in particular were famous wellsprings of talent – the harp department alone boasted graduates Dorothy Ashby, Alice Coltrane, Clara Walker, Velma Froude and the contemporary experimentalist Zeena Parkins.

Froude was the director of the harp program when Terry-Ross decided to try the instrument. “When I went to Cass, I played timpani in the band and the orchestra, I sang in the choir, and I was still taking piano lessons at the Detroit Conservatory of Music,” says Terry-Ross. “I was a music major and I could take harp – it was an elective in my curriculum.”

She remembers being smitten by what she describes as a “gorgeous looking instrument” and her fate was sealed when she touched the harp. “I heard that sound. I didn’t know what it was I was looking for but I wanted to keep playing.”

Terry-Ross played harp throughout the following three years at Cass Tech, as part of the Harp Ensemble, and she sang and played celeste and percussion in the Harper & Vocal Ensemble. She would return 12 years later to direct both programs professionally.
Terry-Ross graduated from high school in 1964 and immediately enrolled in the University of Michigan School of Music in Ann Arbor, where she continued her harp studies with Ruth Dean Clark and vocal studies with Rosemary Russell.

Fellow Cass Tech alumna and celebrated harpist Dorothy Ashby played an important role in Terry-Ross’s development as a harpist, opening her home and offering her own harp to Pat for practice during summers away from university. “I didn’t own a harp yet and Dorothy, who lived five blocks from me, told me I could practice at her house every day,” says Terry-Ross in a February 2017 interview with Harp Column magazine. “Ruth Dean Clark would send me home with music, and I would walk over to Ms. Ashby’s house and practice on her harp.”

HER MUSICAL EDUCATION TAKES OFF

In 1976, Terry-Ross pursued additional graduate studies at the University of Michigan School of Music, all expenses covered. She had a double major, receiving a Bachelor of Music in choral music education and in harp performance, and graduated in 1969.

In 1976, Terry-Ross pursued additional graduate studies at the Tanglewood Institute in Lenox, Massachusetts, with renowned harpist Lucille Lawrence. Lawrence was an associate of the influential harpist and educator Carlos Salzedo, whose method for harp instruction was taught by Froude at Cass Tech.

“A letter from Velma Froude secured my spot as a student with Lucille Lawrence. It was a life-changing experience for me because Lucille took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level. Velda was an incredible influence on my experience for me because Lucile took my technique to another level.

Terry-Ross found fulfilling and exhilarating.

She began her career as a music teacher in 1969 at Patterson Elementary on Detroit’s west side. The first year was challenging—she wasn’t sure if she was capable of honoring the children with her finest efforts. “The kids really taught me how to be a better teacher. They always win if you listen to them,” says Terry-Ross. “But you must take them from where they are to where you want them to go.”

One of her early innovations was the introduction of opera scores into her lesson plans. She began with Puccini’s Madama Butterfly.

“I would prepare them with the story of the Japanese geisha girl, how she marries the American military officer, who comes back to Japan with his real wife. I explain, ‘Listen, she is singing the last aria, and you’re going to hear where the knife falls on the floor as she kills herself.’ The kids heard the knife drop, ‘wow!’ From then on, I could sell them on any piece of opera or classical music,” laughs Terry-Ross, remembering the attentive faces of her fourth graders.

MOTOWN NIGHTS

While teaching at Patterson, Terry-Ross also started gigging for Motown as a studio musician, thanks to a chance meeting with Ruth Dean Clark and vocal studies with music Education William Kooper, who told her Velma Froude was retiring and that Terry-Ross was Froude’s sole choice as successor to direct Cass Tech’s renowned harp program and Harp & Vocal Ensemble.

BECOMING A LEGEND AT CASS TECH

Accepting Kooper’s offer—and fulfilling Froude’s wish—Terry-Ross began her highly distinguished tenure at Cass Tech in January 1976, where she taught harp, voice, piano, harmony, theory and directed the renowned Harp & Vocal Ensemble as Cass for 31 years, retiring in 2007.

During that time, Terry-Ross was recognized regionally and nationally on numerous occasions for her excellence as an educator: In 2004, she received the prestigious Maynard Klein Award, the highest honor given by the Michigan Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association, in recognition of her outstanding career as a choral conductor. In October 1999, she was one of 40 music teachers across the United States—at the only Michigan school—“to receive the “Music of the Heart” Award” for her unwavering commitment to music education. Double honors came her way in 1993, when she was named Detroit Public Schools Teacher of the Year and as a finalist for the state of Michigan Teacher of the Year award.

For many of Pat’s students, the accolades only confirmed what they knew to be true: Terry-Ross was no ordinary teacher. She was a role model.

“She was this mythical creature, exuding grace and quality,” remembers award-winning harpist Calvin Stokes. “Pat was the African-American person I looked at and went, ‘Whoa! That’s what I’m supposed to be!’ She emitted the strong message that you can be black, you can like orchestra, you can like classical music, you can aspire to be something greater than what society says you can be.”

 Integrity was ingrained in her curriculum.

“She never gave anything short of her very best with her students,” says Lydia Cleaver, a Cass Tech harp program alum and now director of the renowned program. “When you were performing with her, we had to have something to contribute. It was a ton of responsibility, you had to own the process.”

She believed in her students.

“One of the great things about the harp program under Pat, it’s very intense training! I was glad she saw something in me to push me forward to be able to audition for college music programs, which is unusual for someone who started harp studies in high school,” says Maurice Draugn, now a professional harpist and choral director.

Following in Froude’s tradition, Terry-Ross chose Cleaver, one of her most advanced students, as her successor. Cleaver is now in her 10th year leading the program.

The Cass Tech Harp & Vocal Ensemble celebrates its 90th anniversary in November 2016. Terry-Ross was there, alongside current and former students, celebrating the oldest ongoing public school harp program in the country.

Joining her to celebrate the harp was the other great love of her life, her husband, Frank Ross, whom she also discovered at Cass Tech.

They met during a parent-teacher conference to review a poor grade earned by Frank’s son, Franky, in the piano class he was taking with Terry-Ross. Franky, a chemistry major, improved his grades and became an anesthesiologist who today loves to play the piano.
to play instrument,” says DiChiera. “Her musicianship is “Hers is the most exquisite playing on that most difficult opera. Margaret Garner preemires of Richard Danielpour and Toni Morrison’s House in 1996 with Dame Joan Sutherland and the world with Cleo Laine, the opening of the Detroit Opera Music performances with MOT have included A Little Night marriage anniversary in 2017. The couple celebrate their 35th part of the wedding party. The Eason Trio: cellist Nadine Deleury, harpist Patricia Terry-Ross and violinist Velda Kelly. Photo by Doug Coombe.

The Eason Trio particularly enjoys playing in chamber with two MOT colleagues, violinst Velda Kelly and cellist Nadine Deleury, as part of the Eason Trio. The group is interested in contributing new music to the harp repertoire. In 2006, it commissioned and premiered Naïades, by University of Michigan professor Erik Santos and more recently, in 2016, Water Music by Sally Lamb McCune. McCune was a Cass Tech student of Terry-Ross in the Harp & Vocal Ensemble and is now a lecturer on music theory, history and composition at Ithaca College in New York state.

Terry-Ross remains in demand as a studio musician and NEW RECORDINGS Terry-Ross remains in demand as a studio musician and still performs on recording projects for Paul Riser. Riser continues to love working with “Terry-Ross for her discipline and her willingness to create.” In recent years, she has added sparkle to Kent’s 2014 CD Promise to Love and to several songs for a gospel compilation featuring artist Derrick “Doc” Pearson, slated for release in 2017.

BRINGING THE GIFT FULL CIRCLE Terry-Ross introduced the harp to Detroit’s children through after-school harp programs at Brady, Angell, Clippert and McGraw Elementary Schools throughout the 1970s. Administered by the Detroit Public Schools, the programs were funded by the federal government and became a feeder program for Cass Tech’s Harp and Harp & Vocal ensembles.

A similar program has been recently introduced through a privately funded effort by two Cass Tech harp alums, Maurice Draughn and Lydia Cleaver. Dubbed HIPP (Harp Instruction and Performance Program), it seeks to expose middle-school-age children to the instrument and prepare them for later harp studies at Cass Tech.

Terry-Ross, upon being named the 2017 Kresge Eminent Artist, expressed her pride in this effort and pledged to donate part of her Eminent Artist Award prize to HIPP.

Terry-Ross remains a mentor and colleague to many of her students, a role that gives her great satisfaction and pleasure. Many of her former students stay in touch, often calling to “talk about integrity – to your craft, to those you deal with and to yourself.”

“Patricia’s help and her support have been a mainstay in my entire life. She’s one of the most influential people in my life. That she’s being honored in such a way means so much to all of us who received so much from her,” says the internationally lauded soprano Janet Williams, a former Cass Tech vocal student of Terry-Ross.

“I feel my time at Cass Tech was invaluable,” says Terry-Ross. “Because music makes you humane. All the arts make you more humane. If you get to focus on something beautiful, like music, life improves.”
Harp 101
The plucked string attached to a resonating box appears in many cultures throughout history. Harps have been known since antiquity in Asia, Africa and Europe, dating back at least as early as 3500 B.C., with several harps found in the burial pits and royal tombs of Ur, the ancient Mesopotamian city-state in what is now southern Iraq.

A descendent of such ancient harps, the instrument played by Patricia Terry-Ross is a concert pedal harp, also known as the double action harp, invented around 1810 by French instrument maker Sébastien Érard. Pedal harps use the mechanical action of pedals to change the pitches of the strings. The addition of pedals broadened the harp’s capabilities, allowing its gradual entry into the classical orchestra in the 19th century.

Patricia Terry-Ross plays a large and mechanically modern pedal harp – the Lyon & Healy Style 23 Concert Grand harp. Seven layers of stainless steel linkage and more than 1,500 parts make up the instrument. The highly embellished floral carving found at the crown, top of the column, base and feet and a fleur-de-lis pattern at the bottom of the column exemplify the ornate Victorian style popular at the time of its design in 1890.

Considered both a string instrument and a percussion instrument as its sound originates in a “percussed” and a nasal, guitar-like sound at the very bottom of the string. Tone is also affected by the skin of the harpist, i.e., its dampness, the amount of callous formation and callous surface texture.

**THE SALZEDO METHOD**

Patricia Terry-Ross is acknowledged as an exceptionally strong player with extraordinary control. She learned how to play the harp using the Salzedo method, a technical approach to harp playing developed by Carlos Salzedo (1885-1961), one of the influential figures of harp history in the 20th century. Born in France, Salzedo graduated from the Paris Conservatoire in his teens and moved to New York in 1909, where he was the first harpist of the Metropolitan Opera under conductor Arturo Toscanini. He established the harp department at Philadelphia’s Curtis Institute of Music in 1924 and founded the Salzedo Harp Colony in Camden, Maine, in 1931.

Distinguishing characteristics of the Salzedo method include the encouragement of expressive gestures, with the elbows remaining parallel to the ground and comparatively stiff wrists. Neither arm ever touches the soundboard. The French method as taught in the United States by Marcel Grandjany advocated lowered elbows, fluid wrists and the right arm resting on the soundboard.

**TECHNIQUE**

Technically and physically demanding, the harp is among the most difficult of musical instruments to master due to the required hand positions, fingering techniques and coordination demanded between the harpist’s hands and feet on the strings and pedals. A harpist must be able to read and play both the bass and treble clefs.

The pedal harp is played with the fingertips of the first four fingers (thumb, index, middle and ring) of both hands. Plucking with varying degrees of force creates dynamics. Depending on the finger position on a string, different tones may be produced: a full sound in the middle of the string, and a nasal, guitar-like sound at the very bottom of the string.

**Strings:** There are 47 strings. The strings are initially (before any pedals are activated) tuned to the scale of C flat major. The notes range from three octaves below middle C (or the D above that) to 3 1/2 octaves above, usually ending on G – a range of 6 1/2 octaves. The D, E, G, A, and B strings are colored red and the F strings are colored either black or blue. The lowest strings are typically made of copper or steel-wound nylon, the middle-lower strings of nylon, and the middle to highest of nylon or gut. The tension of the strings on the soundboard is roughly equal to 2,000 pounds.

**Body:** Made of hard maple.

**Soundboard:** Known as the voice of the harp, the soundboard is known as the most important part of the instrument. The 21 1/2-inch-wide soundboard of the Lyon & Healy Style 23 Concert Grand is handmade of Sitka spruce and features a double resonewood inlay along its edge. Sitka spruce not only has one of the highest strengths-to-weight ratios of any wood but is also responsive to the slightest vibrations of sound. It has been used for centuries by the world’s finest instrument makers.

**Knee:** The harpist rests the knee on the right shoulder when playing the harp.

**Pedals:** Crucial to the playing of the instrument, the pedal is a foot-controlled device which alternates the pitch of each string between flat, natural and sharp by moving between three individual positions. There are seven pedals – one for each note of the scale – which can alter the tuning of all strings in one-pitch-class (i.e., all the C’s), making the instrument fully chromatic and thus able to play a wide selection of classical repertories. Each pedal is attached to a rod or cable within the column of the harp, which then connects to a mechanism within the neck.

**Strings:**

- Tuning Key
- Tuning Pins: Tightened to adjust the distances between the tuning peg and the soundboard, as well as the tension and weight of the string, tuning pins are used to set the pitch of the string.

**Foot:** The foot braces the pedal mechanism.

**Tuning:** The harp is an extremely sensitive instrument and must be tuned whenever it’s moved, and before every performance.

**Column:** The longest side of the harp, the column (also known as the pillar) is made of hard maple and holds up the neck against the strain of the strings.

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- The D, E, G, A, and B strings are colored red and the F strings are colored either black or blue.
- The lowest strings are typically made of copper or steel-wound nylon, the middle-lower strings of nylon, and the middle to highest of nylon or gut.
- The tension of the strings on the soundboard is roughly equal to 2,000 pounds.

**Body:**

- Made of hard maple.

**Soundboard:**

- Known as the voice of the harp.
- The 21 1/2-inch-wide soundboard of the Lyon & Healy Style 23 Concert Grand is handmade of Sitka spruce and features a double resonewood inlay along its edge.
- Sitka spruce not only has one of the highest strengths-to-weight ratios of any wood but is also responsive to the slightest vibrations of sound. It has been used for centuries by the world’s finest instrument makers.

**Knee:**

- The harpist rests the knee on the right shoulder when playing the harp.

**Pedals:**

- Crucial to the playing of the instrument, the pedal is a foot-controlled device which alternates the pitch of each string between flat, natural and sharp by moving between three individual positions.
- There are seven pedals – one for each note of the scale – which can alter the tuning of all strings in one-pitch-class (i.e., all the C’s), making the instrument fully chromatic and thus able to play a wide selection of classical repertories.
- Each pedal is attached to a rod or cable within the column of the harp, which then connects to a mechanism within the neck.

**Strings:**

- There are 47 strings.
- The strings are initially (before any pedals are activated) tuned to the scale of C flat major.
- The notes range from three octaves below middle C (or the D above that) to 3 1/2 octaves above, usually ending on G – a range of 6 1/2 octaves.
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- Each pedal is attached to a rod or cable within the column of the harp, which then connects to a mechanism within the neck.
Patricia Terry-Ross
Songlist

Notable Compositions for the Harp Showcasing the Instrument’s History, Versatility and Beauty.
Concerto for Flute, Harp and Orchestra in C Major WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
When Mozart wrote this concerto in 1778, the harp was not considered a standard orchestral instrument and the combination of flute and harp was extremely unusual. While it is Mozart’s only composition for the harp, it has gone on to become one of the most popular concertos in the classical repertoire. Terry-Ross performed the piece to critical acclaim with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in March 1997 with flutist Marilyn Jones and conductor Robert Crisp.

Impromptu for Harp in D-flat major, Op. 86 GABRIEL FAURE
Composed in 1904, this piece is considered a classic within the harp solo repertoire, epitomizing the romantic and post-romantic period in which Faure was composing. Terry-Ross considers the Faure to be one of the most important harp solo works. “It’s a large work, typically playing to a length of almost nine minutes. It’s a grand piece with which to finish a concert,” she says.

Introduction and Allegro MAURICE RAVEL
Considered by many critics to be the first piece to explore and exploit the full resources of the harp as a solo instrument, Ravel’s introduction and Allegro, written in 1905 for harp, flute, clarinet and strings, is sometimes described as a miniature concerto but it is more typically classified as a genuine chamber music work. Although written as one long movement, it is an episodic composition that includes an extended harp cadenza. “It’s a beautiful piece,” says Terry-Ross, “one of the most significant and popular works ever composed for the harp.”

Divertissements a la Française, a l’Espagnole ANDRÉ CAPLET
By the late 19th century, French composition had come to the fore in European music in much the same way French impressionist painting was blossoming. French composer and conductor André Caplet was a close friend and collaborator of Claude Debussy, who was associated with impressionist music. Debussy’s influence is clearly heard in these technically challenging solo pieces, composed in 1904. Terry-Ross feels the compositions are “very idiomatic and represent the harp very well. Half-step pedal slides can only be done on the harp, so it’s a great demonstration of the harp’s unique capabilities.”

Dance sacrée et danse profane CLAUDE DEBUSSY
Debussy wrote Sacred and Profane Dances for harp and strings in 1904 on commission from the Royal firm of instrument builders, which wanted a composition to showcase its newly designed chromatic harp. Debussy’s composition eventually became among the most frequently performed and best known works for harp in the concert repertory. The two portions of Danses sacrée et danse profane are connected to form a single piece. In the initial dance, Debussy conjures an atmosphere of ancient religiosity. The second dance is much faster and takes the form of a waltz. “Both are beautiful movements,” says Terry-Ross, “this whole a wonderful work that grew in popularity when it was heard on the double-action pedal harp.”

Lyra Angelica WILLIAM ALWYN
Written in 1954 by the English composer William Alwyn, the composition’s title translates to Angel’s Son, a reference to the harp and its depiction as the traditional instrument of angels. This lyrical concerto with harp and string orchestra features four movements and is considered a full-length work of symphonic proportions. Terry-Ross was introduced to Alwyn through a mutual friend, who sent the composer a recording of her performance on Naiades, Alwyn’s work for flute and harp. Praising Patricia’s playing, Alwyn wrote to his friend, “Please congratulate the harpist, a very fine player with good strong fingers, essential for playing the harp, with a splendid technique. As I don’t know whether Pat is Pat or short for Patricia, please use your diplomacy in shaking him firmly by the hand or kissing her firmly on the cheek. But by the chromatic-like strength of his fingers, I should think ‘she’ is a man.”

Sonata for Harp PAUL HINDEMITH
Hindemith composed his solo sonata in 1939, beautifully capturing the spirit of the harp. Terry-Ross considers it one of her absolute favorites for the individuality of its three movements, the first “moderately fast” and the second “lively.” In the final movement – Lied – Hindemith creates a song based on a poem by Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Höft. “Lied

O my friends, when I am dead
Hang the little harp there behind the altar
Where on the wall the shimmering half-light catches
The funeral wreaths of many a departed maiden.

Then the good sexton will show the little harp
To visitors, stirring it to sound
As he touches the red ribbon that hangs from the harp
And floats beneath the golden strings.

“Often,” he says in wonder, “at sunset,
The strings unladen murmur like humming bees;
The children called hither from the churchyard
Have heard it, and seen the wreaths a-quiver.”

Ennanga WILLIAM GRANT STILL
“Ennanga” is an African word for harp, indicating the significance of the instrument in this 1956 work for harp, piano and string quartet by William Grant Still, the dean of African-American composers. Still’s piece is one of the “most significant ever written for harp by an African-American composer,” says Terry-Ross. Ennanga is in three movements: in the first, the harp and piano are more percutive in texture, offsetting the rhythmically charged statements from the strings; in the second, the harp’s melancholy song is accompanied by the other instruments, and the third features the harp’s characteristic glissandi.

Scintillation CARLOS SALZEDO
Carlos Salzedo was one of the two greatest French harpists, teachers and composers of the 20th century, along with Marcel Grandjany, to come from America from France. Until his death in 1961, he was chairman of the harp department at the Curtis Institute of Music. Salzedo wrote the solo piece Scintillation in 1936 after a trip to Mexico. “This is a brilliantly composed piece,” says Terry-Ross. “It shows many of the effects the harp is capable of – lots of textures and colors – with the pedals making harmonic changes. I have often used a section of this piece to demonstrate the harp for young audiences because you can see and hear how the pedals can make the notes change.”

Variations on a Theme in Ancient Style CARLOS SALZEDO
Written by Salzedo in 1911, Terry-Ross counts this solo among her favorite pieces for teaching. “When you play it, it’s a set of variations, all of which make you have to master a different point of technique. Something is trickled, chords jump around. The theme is first, and each variation does something different with the theme. I’ve always told my students, ‘When you play this piece, there’s not much you won’t know how to do.’

Praising Patricia’s playing, Alwyn wrote to his friend, “Please congratulate the harpist, a very fine player with good strong fingers, essential for playing the harp, with a splendid technique. As I don’t know whether Pat is Pat or short for Patricia, please use your diplomacy in shaking him firmly by the hand or kissing her firmly on the cheek. But by the chromatic-like strength of ‘his’ fingers, I should think ‘she’ is a man.” – William Alwyn

L I S T E N
Hear many of these selections on “Harp 101: A Listening Guide Curated for Patricia Terry-Ross”. Search under “thekresgefoundation” on Spotify account.

Aria in Classic Style MARCEL GRANDJANY
The Franco-American harpist and composer Marcel Grandjany, along with his colleague Carlos Salzedo, was considered one of the most influential harp teachers and performers of the 20th century. Grandjany was chairman of the harp department at the Juilliard School of Music until his death in 1975 and was also a member of the faculty at the Manhattan School of Music. “Grandjany taught the traditional French method of harp,” says Terry-Ross. “He was a graduate of the Paris Conservatoire, which produced the finest harpists. This piece is just gorgeous and I’ve played it so many times. It was originally written for organ and harp but it’s since been arranged for strings and harp. It is a very significant piece.” The composition is now considered a classic for chamber orchestra.
Classical Motown

By Susan Whitall
As played by top Detroit musicians, the strings added dimension and richness to that funk.

David Ruffin and the Temptations weren’t sure they liked Smokey Robinson’s song “My Girl” when they first heard it. Founded member Otis Williams said it was only after they heard the cascading banks of strings arranged by Paul Riser, soaring above their voices and James Jamerson’s bassline, that they knew it was a hit.

But Riser discovered dealing with the rhythm section would be rough. The young musician found himself in “at least four” beefs with that rhythm section, better known as the Funk Brothers. “If I had any good sense about me, I would have been calmer,” Riser says, laughing. “The Funk Brothers, they packed guns.”

The classical musicians didn’t get into fights or flash guns, and Riser quickly figured out that he preferred arranging for them.

On “Papa,” Riser composed the string parts as if he were making a movie, as if the entire narrative was being expressed by violins, cellos and harp.

Terry-Ross and Riser knew each other at Cass Tech, although he was three years ahead of her, and he knew her as a percussionist. When she told him she’d gone through the school’s famed harp program, he had a degree from the University of Michigan in harp performance and was looking for gigs, he invited her to Motown. With two studios running sessions 24/7, they had a constant need for professional musicians.

With the help of two husky Motown employees, Terry-Ross would lug her 80-pound Lyon & Healy harp up the steep steps in front of “Hitsville,” at 2648 W. Grand Blvd., through the main floor and then down the back stairs to the “Snakepit,” the musicians’ nickname for Motown’s Studio A, which was always a lyrical underpinning to what the voices were doing,” she said. The strings could explore and amplify those voices, or in many cases, act as a melodic counterpoint, offering another texture of meaning.

Most of the Motown string section musicians came from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and were brought in by the gregarious, sharply dressed DSO concertmaster Gordon Staples. They quickly found out how different Motown was from the DSO.

Some would grumble about the pop music. Staples had played with the U.S. Navy Band in New Orleans, and he wasn’t a snob about jazz or R&B, so he soon put a stop to that.

“Gordon was amazing, he could keep the symphony guys in line,” said guitarist Dennis Coffey. “They sometimes resisted what they had to play, but they knew they’d have to deal with Gordon at symphony rehearsal the next day. That was his strategy, and it worked well!”

Some of the DSO’s top musicians, such as violinist Felix Resnick, played regularly at Motown, and they enjoyed the side money.

The string players were paid but they didn’t get credit. Gordy’s policy was that individual musicians, whether the core rhythm group or session players, weren’t named on Motown recordings. Coffey was surprised when producer Valerie Simpson of Ashford & Simpson credited him for a guitar solo – it was the first time.

Marvin Gaye was one of the first at Motown to insist that the individual musicians who played on his tracks be credited. Terry-Ross is among the many who still receive checks from playing on his What’s Going On album sessions, thanks to its enduring popularity and frequent reuse on TV and in film.

Riser enjoyed working with the string players, who came to Motown with a more disciplined attitude than the rhythm players. And they were getting something important in return – a creative outlet.

“They would come into our sessions at Motown and they could let their hair down and...
I’m sitting across from Marvin Gaye, this genius person, and he’s talking, like, this esoteric stuff and I’m eating eggs,” said Terry-Ross. “And then back to the recording studio we go.”

The string players were used to watching a conductor, but at Motown they were expected to play to a rhythm track they heard through headphones, recorded by the Funk Brothers.

Riser would be in the studio offering direction, but “I’m the worst conductor,” he says with a laugh. “I’d just let the rhythm carry me. When the rhythm is really strong, they don’t need a conductor.”

That kind of looseness was not always comfortable for orchestral players. Thus Staples tended to call the same musicians back for sessions, those he could count on to be flexible about late nights, “creative” personalities and rhythmic challenges.

Even Riser had a period of adjustment. Until he started working at Motown, he “hated” R&B, he said with a laugh.

Terry-Ross had an advantage. Having grown up in Detroit dancing to R&B and Motown at parties, she understood the music and its rhythms. And she understood jazz and improvisation from hearing these musical genres, her father’s favorite music.

“She had the personality of a real Detroiter,” Riser said. “She was brought up in the heart of a city. Her parents were really down to earth. I used to go by and visit them.”

Coffey remembers a cellist, one of the DSO’s top musicians, as being “too rigid” for pop sessions. “He had no feel,” the guitarist complained.

Most classical musicians were most comfortable reading music, Terry-Ross points out, rather than listening and getting a feel for the rhythm.

“They’d look at the rhythm literally, and not think of it in terms of the genre,” she said. “So it would be ‘a-one and a-two and a-...’ They’d say, ‘Well, that is the way it’s written.’ So there were times that the string people were instructed to take it a little looser.”

The string musicians had to think on their feet, and tell the arranger if something might not work for their instrument.

“Harp is one of the most difficult instruments to write for in the orchestra,” Riser said. “What I do is, I give them a sketch of what I want, but they mark their own parts.”

And so it was that a classically trained harpist found herself sitting in a soul food restaurant on Detroit’s west side with Motown’s moody crown prince, Marvin Gaye, in 1970. It was in the wee hours before dawn, and they were taking a break from recording album tracks for What’s Going On.

“I’m sitting across from Marvin Gaye, this genius person, and he’s talking, like, this esoteric stuff and I’m eating eggs,” said Terry-Ross. “And then back to the recording studio we go.”

Susan Whitall is a longtime Detroit music journalist, and the author of “Women of Motown” (Avon) and “Fever: Little Willie John’s Fast Life, Mysterious Death and the Birth of Soul” (Titan).
THE LEGACY OF CASS TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL’S HARP PROGRAM HAS FLOWED FROM ONE GENERATION OF HAND-SELECTED, ILLUSTRIOUS TEACHERS TO THE NEXT, FLOURISHING FOR MORE THAN 90 YEARS.

Harp to Harp
DETROIT'S CASS TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

is recognized internationally as the wellspring of many of America's finest musical artists. The school's famous alumni include jazz harpist and composer Dorothy Ashby; violinist and conductor Joseph Silverstein; trumpeter Donald Byrd; jazz artist and harpist Alice Coltrane; rapper and Grammy-winning rocker Jack White.

Founded in 1919, the school's music department would grow under the direction of its department head, Clarence Byrn, whose philosophy held that Cass Tech should offer instruction and education in every musical instrument known to mankind, including the harp. In 1925, the school purchased five pedal harps from harp manufacturer Lyon & Healy, made them available to students who had studied piano, and introduced the harp program. It is the oldest harp program in a public school in the United States and serves as the model for many high school harp programs throughout the country.

PROGRAMES AND DIRECTORS

The Cass Tech Harp Program has been shepherded by only four directors over the course of its 92-year existence. The first, Laurietta Kenk, became ill early in her tenure and directed the program for only 1928 by Kenk's most advanced student, Velma Froude. The program would grow in reputation and regard under Froude, who was introduced to the harp at age 14 when she first enrolled at Cass Tech.

VELMA FROUDE, LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

Froude – a harp prodigy who had performed at Carnegie Hall by age 17 – would go on to great renown as a harpist and teacher, her impact upon her harp students echoing through the decades. Her impressive student performance resume – she played harp in an all-state and a national high school orchestra in addition to her studies at Cass Tech – and clear gifts as a harpist led Bryn, the head of Cass Tech's music department, to request she assume the position of director of the harp program from Kenk.

The Cass Tech harp program regularly placed a high percentage of its students into the best music schools in the country, with many becoming professional harpists. The famous harpist Lucile Lawrence remembered the superb preparation of Froude's students in a 1986 Detroit Free Press article, where she related the story of two of Froude's students studying with her at Tanglewood, the summer home of the Boston Symphony: “Leonard Bernstein came in for an appearance with his World Youth Orchestra, which tours Europe. He had a piece of music the harpist in his orchestra couldn't do. Both of Velma's students jumped in and played it to his great satisfaction.”

Froude's students were instructed according to the methods of Carlos Salzedo, one of the most influential harpists and harp teachers of the 20th century. (Froude herself had studied periodically with Salzedo from 1934 until his death in 1961.) Salzedo's technique, which emphasizes aesthetically pleasing dramatic hand and arm gestures and a freer use of the hands to achieve a richer sound, was introduced to Cass Tech by Froude in the mid-1930s.

Froude had a remarkable career and was one of the foremost harp teachers in the United States. In addition to teaching at Cass Tech during the day, she found time to teach Cass evening school and became the harp instructor for Michigan State University in 1947. Froude studied harp with Madame Djini Ostrowski and Helen Burr-Brand of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. She graduated from Wayne State University in 1947.

Kenk founded Cass Tech's Harp & Vocal Ensemble in 1926. Froude headed direction of the ensemble early in her tenure and would instruct the group for more than four decades. The ensemble – a unique blend of female voices noted for its high caliber of musicianship and performance. Its alumni, who include the soprano Janet Williams, have performed in concert halls and opera houses around the world.

Velma Froude teaching a piano class at Cass Tech, 1954-1956, Detroit, Michigan. Photo courtesy of the Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.

Auditions remain required for entry into the prestigious group and rehearsals are still held daily, an unwavering requisite for students who plan to appear in the ensemble's many local, regional and national concert appearances.

The values taught in the Harp & Vocal Ensemble have become character traits that are embedded in the everyday lives of alumni. “Velma was old school, very strict,” said Janet Williams in a recent interview. “If you missed one performance, you failed! There was no excuse. She taught us the meaning of professionalism through lots of tough love and discipline.”

The Cass Tech Harp program is the oldest harp program in a public school in the United States and serves as the model for many high school harp programs throughout the country.

CASS TECH PAST AND PRESENT

HARP DIRECTORS

Laurietta Kenk (1925-1938)

Velma Froude (1938-1976)

Patricia Terry-Ross (1976-2007)

Lydia Cleaver (2007-Present)


When Velma Froude retired in January of 1976, she requested that the Supervisor of Music for the Detroit Public Schools, William Koerper, appoint Patricia Terry-Ross (then Patricia Terry) to assume the leadership of the Cass Tech harp program.

Terry-Ross, who earned her Bachelor of Music degree in choral music education and Master of Music degree in choral music education and harp performance at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, was contemplating a move to Los Angeles at the time. While teaching music at Detroit's Pattengill Elementary School, Terry-Ross was also a frequent performer on Motown recordings, often working with her former classmate and friend, Motown arranger Paul Riser. Motown had moved its operations to the West Coast by the mid-1970s and Terry-Ross was tempted to follow suit and pursue her teaching and performing career in California.

But there was no thought of turning down Froude's request. Terry-Ross had become a harpist because of the harp program at Cass Tech and was honored to follow in the footsteps of giants. “I felt like I was following in Velma's mother when I was offered the director's position,” Terry-Ross says. “How will I follow in Velma's footsteps, how can I possibly fill her shoes?”

And mother said, “You'll
take your own steps, in your own shoes.”

And that is what she did for 31 years, until her retirement in 2007, teaching harp, voice, piano and harmony and directing the Harp & Vocal Ensemble to great professional acclaim.

Terry-Ross’s style of teaching was different from Froude’s—“like a breath of fresh air,” says Janet Williams. “We wanted Ms. Terry to be proud of us! She made us feel we could do anything. The love and the excitement for singing and being at a rehearsal came from a commitment to being our best, to this particular group, to this form of music. We learned our talent really deserves time and dedication.”

“For me, it was always about the ‘I’ word: integrity,” says Terry-Ross today. “Integrity in your life, integrity in your work.”

LYDIA CLEAVER, CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

Upon her retirement, Terry-Ross passed the baton of leadership to Lydia Cleaver, also a Harp & Vocal alumna, in 2007.

Cleaver was inspired to pursue a musical career that resembled that of Terry-Ross, her beloved instructor and mentor. From Cass Tech, she too went on to graduate from the University of Michigan, where she earned an undergraduate degree in music education, a graduate degree in music and a specialist degree in harp performance.

Today, Cleaver is in her 10th year as director and finds that while the standards of the Cass Tech programs remain high, incoming music students often require more foundational preparation than those of previous generations.

Speaking to WDET’s Jerome Vaughn in 2016 on the occasion of the program’s 90th anniversary, Cleaver said, “Students that come now are often times not familiar with the process of learning music. When I was a student in Detroit public schools, we were one of the leaders in the field. The entire country looked to Detroit public schools as a model for music education. Changes have taken place in the district and we haven’t had the same support. Therefore, we haven’t had the caliber of musicians coming up through the feeder system.”

Cleaver intends to change this dynamic through the Harp Instruction and Performance Program (HIPP), a small-group program for middle school students in the metropolitan Detroit area. Cleaver’s fellow Cass Tech harp alum Maurice Draughn is her partner in the effort. Their hope is that HIPP will serve as a feeder for the harp program at Cass Tech.

“Both are representative of public school arts education at its finest, capable of inspiring the highest levels of personal achievement and professional success among its students.”

“This program is so important that every day since 1925, people have come to learn to play the harp at Cass Tech High School. There’s no other public school in the United States that I know of that has had a harp program that long,” says Terry-Ross.

“...and the expectation is high,” said Cleaver, in a 2008 feature article in Harp Column. “You see people around you who you expect to hold to a certain standard letting go, but you know that you have been entrusted with something that is big, something you cannot compromise.”

Today, after 92 years, Cass Tech’s harp program and its attendant Harp & Vocal Ensemble remain the vaunted music education programs they were intended to be.
Celebrated Harpists of Cass Tech

**DOROTHY ASHBY**
The critically acclaimed jazz harpist and composer Dorothy Ashby studied harp at Cass Tech under Velma Froude and piano and music education at Wayne State University. She entered Detroit’s jazz scene in the early 1950s and soon became one of the most influential jazz harpists in America, helping to establish the harp as an improvisational jazz instrument. Her recordings are primarily of the jazz genre, but she also played R&B, world music and other styles. Among her more noteworthy performances in contemporary pop music was playing the harp on “If It’s Magic” on Stevie Wonder’s 1976 album *Songs in the Key of Life*. Her music continues to be popular and is often sampled by major hip hop artists and avant-pop art bands.

**ALICE COLTRANE**
Internationally recognized jazz icon and spiritual jazz master Alice Coltrane first studied harp under Velma Froude at Cass Tech. Coltrane (née McLeod)—also known by her adopted Sanskrit name Turiyasangitananda or Turiya Alice Coltrane—was the second wife of legendary jazz saxophonist and composer John Coltrane. She is primarily known as a jazz harpist but was also a jazz pianist, organist, singer, and composer. Coltrane recorded many albums as a bandleader, beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s for Impulse! Records. Her compositions featured a highly unusual blend of jazz, blues and Indian instruments and tonalities, a reflection of her life as a spiritual leader. The adventurous nature and spiritual import of Coltrane’s recordings continue to influence generations of musicians, ranging from Björk to her great nephew, Stephen Ellison, also known as Flying Lotus.

**ARCOLA CLARK**
Arcola Clark studied with Velma Froude at Cass Tech and continued her music studies at Michigan State University. She later went on to successfully audition for the Vienna Symphony Broadcasting Orchestra in Austria, where she was the sole African-American member of the orchestra. She recently retired as the orchestra’s principal harpist. She is also a former professor of harp studies at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz in Graz, Austria. Clark resides in Vienna, where she continues to teach privately.
VELMA FROUDE

Velma Froude was the director of the renowned harp and Harp & Vocal Ensemble programs at Cass Tech for more than 49 years. She transformed the little-known harp curriculum into a nationally celebrated program. During her tenure, she mentored scores of later famous harpists, including Patricia Terry-Ross, Susan Mazer and Zeena Parkins. She also taught at Wayne State University, Michigan State University, Ferndale High School and Fordson High School in Dearborn. Froude studied privately with Carlos Salzedo and was a student of Madame Djini Ostrowski, RIZPAH LOWE

Jazz harpist Rizpah Lowe studied harp, piano and voice at Cass Tech with Patricia Terry-Ross and supplemented her school year classes with summer study at Interlochen Arts Camp and Tanglewood. Lowe received her Bachelor of Music in music education from the University of North Texas. She was the winner of the 2007 Lyon & Healy HarpFest Competition in the pedal harp division and performed as part of the 2009 Young Artists Concert at Carnegie Hall in New York. Lowe often cites fellow Cass Tech harp alum Susan Mazer as the inspiration for her continued study of the instrument.

ELLEN GRAFIUS

Ellen Grafius began her harp studies with Velma Froude at Cass Tech and continued her music studies at the Honor's College at Michigan State University, where she received a Bachelor of Music in music education. She has additionally studied with Patricia Terry-Ross at Wayne State University and Alice Chialitou at the Salzedo Harp Colony in Maine. Grafius is on the faculty at Albion and Kalamazoo Colleges. She has also taught at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp and Michigan State University.

HARVI GRIFFIN

Detroit native Harvi Griffin graduated from Cass Tech, where he studied harp with Velma Froude. Griffin continued his music studies at Wayne State University, where he received Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees. He went on to further study with Lucile Lawrence at the Mannes School of Music in New York and later to the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with Eileen Malena. A revered and popular teacher, Griffin was a master of every type of music on the harp, from classical to country and western. A popular jazz harp performer, Griffin was also known as a vocalist.

NADIA MARKS

Harpist and private music instructor Nadia Marks began her harp studies at Cass Tech under Velma Froude. She is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia where she studied harp performance with Carlos Salzedo.

SUSAN MAZER

Electro-acoustic harpist Susan Mazer is a pioneer in both developing the electro-acoustic harp and moving the harp into the jazz genre. A student of Velma Froude while at Cass Tech, Susan graduated from Wayne State University and completed her Master of Arts in musicology at Stanford University. She enjoyed a full-time career as a jazz harpist, performing with her husband, woodwind musician Dallas Smith, and such notables as Ahmad Jamal, Frank Sinatra and Julio Iglesias before turning to working in health care. She and her husband have been innovators in the intentional use of music in institutional and health care environments - Mazer is a popular speaker and blogger on the subject. Mazer and Smith’s music has been featured on NPR, the Discovery Channel, and NOVA.

CLARA WALKER

Clara Walker studied harp under Velma Froude at Cass Tech and is primarily recognized for her formation, along with several Cass Tech African-American vocalists, of The Coleridge-Taylor Harp & Vocal Ensemble, also referred to as The Black Harp & Vocal Ensemble. The ensemble performed at many African-American churches and social organizations in metropolitan Detroit in the early and mid-1940s. The group was named for Afro-British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, who is sometimes referred to as “The Black Mahler.”

RIZPAH LOWE

Jazz harpist Rizpah Lowe studied harp, piano and voice at Cass Tech with Patricia Terry-Ross and supplemented her school year classes with summer study at Interlochen Arts Camp and Tanglewood. Lowe received her Bachelor of Music in music education from the University of North Texas. She was the winner of the 2007 Lyon & Healy HarpFest Competition in the pedal harp division and performed as part of the 2009 Young Artists Concert at Carnegie Hall in New York. Lowe often cites fellow Cass Tech harp alum Susan Mazer as the inspiration for her continued study of the instrument.

VINCENT FREDERICK

Vincent Frederick is a harpist of international prominence. He has performed in all the major venues of the world including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center and the Royal Albert Hall in London. Frederick received his Bachelor of Music degree from Michigan State University and his Master of Music degree from the Juilliard School of Music. He is the founder and director of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra Harp Ensemble.

CLARA WALKER

Clara Walker was an accomplished harpist and vocalist known for her work with the Coleridge-Taylor Harp & Vocal Ensemble. She studied harp with Velma Froude at Cass Tech and later pursued her music at Wayne State University. Walker is primarily recognized for her formation, along with several Cass Tech African-American vocalists, of The Coleridge-Taylor Harp & Vocal Ensemble, also referred to as The Black Harp & Vocal Ensemble. The ensemble performed at many African-American churches and social organizations in metropolitan Detroit in the early and mid-1940s. The group was named for Afro-British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, who is sometimes referred to as “The Black Mahler.”

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LESSONS LEARNED IN THE CASS TECH CLASSROOM OF ACCLAIMED EDUCATOR PATRICIA TERRY-ROSS RESONATE IN THE LIVES OF HER FORMER STUDENTS, MANY OF WHOM HAVE GONE ON TO MUSICAL GREATNESS THEMSELVES. TEN OF HER MOST PROLIFIC FORMER STUDENTS ARE PROFILED HERE, ALONG WITH THEIR STATEMENTS ABOUT TERRY-ROSS’ IMPACT ON THEIR LIVES AND CAREERS.
**Regina Carter**

A 2006 recipient of a MacArthur Foundation “Genius Grant,” Regina Carter is considered the foremost harpist of her generation. Carter has released 10 albums as a bandleader and worked with many renowned musical artists including Wynton Marsalis, Max Roach and Dolly Parton. Carter pursued her classical violin studies at the New England Conservatory of Music and graduated in 1985 from Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan, where she studied jazz with 2009 Kessig Eminent Artist Marcus Belgrave.

*Pat Terry-Ross was my Harp & Vocal director and keyboard harmony teacher at Cass Tech in the 1970s. She was no-nonsense and expected her students to deliver on a very high level. She pushed us past our comfort zones, instilling many valuable lessons that have become an integral part of my life. For instance, ‘no time’ meant arriving and being set up at least 30 minutes prior to the actual scheduled time; the performance starts as soon as we arrive and the way we carry ourselves is sets the stage right off the bat. Today, when I’m working on a program, I incorporate and rely on many of the tools Ms. Terry-Ross taught us. She is a true gift to so many.*

**Lydia Cleaver**

Lydia Cleaver continues in the tradition of Verna Frobule and Patricia Terry-Ross as the director of the harp program and Harp & Vocal Ensemble at Cass Tech High School, where she succeeded Terry-Ross upon her retirement in 2007. She earned a Bachelor of Music degree in music education as well as a Master of Music and a Doctorate in Music in harp performance from the University of Michigan School of Music.

Cleaver has performed as a soloist with orchestras and choral ensembles throughout the Midwest. A member of Detroit’s Modern Harp Ensemble along with fellow Cass Tech harp studio alumni Maurice Draughn and Ann Brege Owens, Cleaver is also a co-founder of HIPP (Harp Instruction Program), a harp-preparation program for middle school students in metro Detroit.

*Pat was hard on us at times because of her expectations, but it was fine because it was driven by passion for the music. You need to develop discipline. There was so much wrapped up in her approach and discipline. There was so much wrapped up in her approach. Pat was hard on us at times because of her expectations, but it was fine because it was driven by passion for the music. You need to develop discipline. Pat was hard on us at times because of her expectations, but it was fine because it was driven by passion for the music. You need to develop discipline. Pat was hard on us at times because of her expectations, but it was fine because it was driven by passion for the music. You need to develop discipline. Pat was hard on us at times because of her expectations, but it was fine because it was driven by passion for the music. You need to develop discipline.*

**Maurice Draughn**

Harpist, choral director and organist Maurice Draughn is an active performer with several orchestras in the metropolitan Detroit area. He earned a Bachelor of Music in harp performance at Wayne State University. Draughn has taught vocal music at schools throughout Detroit and is an academic advisor at WSU. He is an arranger and member of Detroit’s Modern Harp Quartet and a co-founder of HIPP with Lydia Cleaver.

*Pat always taught us the value of integrity in musicianship and personal character and she was our role model in this. She set a very high bar for performance and inspired me to focus on a career as a professional harpist. She was also very influential in terms of her investment in me as a student and musician. She raised funds so I could attend Boston University’s Tanglewood Institute where I studied with my former teacher, Lucile Lawrence, who helped create the Suzuki Method. The experience was transformative – it changed my life.*

**Anne Brege Owens**

An alum of the harp programs at Cass Tech and Wayne State University under the tutelage of Patricia Terry-Ross, Ann Brege Owens is one of the founding members of the Modern Harp Quartet, along with Lydia Cleaver, Maurice Draughn and John Wickoy. Owens performs as a soloist, in ensembles and with orchestras throughout the Midwest and Canada.

*What makes Pat such a fantastic teacher is not just her musical instruction, it’s how she’s able to guide you to find your own sense of musical interpretation and to help you master the technical aspect of playing. She showed me that if you practice diligently, you can achieve really great technical stuff with the best sort of musicianship and it makes you feel so good about yourself. Pat always taught us the value of integrity in musicianship and personal character and she was our role model in this. She set a very high bar for performance and inspired me to focus on a career as a professional harpist. She was also very influential in terms of her investment in me as a student and musician. She raised funds so I could attend Boston University’s Tanglewood Institute where I studied with my former teacher, Lucile Lawrence, who helped create the Suzuki Method. The experience was transformative – it changed my life.*

**Carlos Mckinney**

A member of one of Detroit’s pre-eminent jazz families, the musical polymath Carlos McKinney began studying piano at age four with his uncle, pianist Harold McKinney. McKinney went on to study harp at Cass Tech with Patricia Terry-Ross, where he was the only male harpist in the Harp & Vocal Ensemble. He later graduated from The New School in New York. McKinney also studied jazz with 2009 Kessig Eminent Artist trumpeter Marcus Belgrave. The acclaimed producer, musician and musical director was a 2013 Grammy Award winner for his credits and production on Rihanna’s Unapologetic album.

*I have had many wonderful music teachers, but Mrs. Terry-Ross was just the greatest motivator. She is a very skillful psychologist, one who understands how to get into your mind and encourage you to be your best in everything you do. As a musician, one of the most important lessons I learned from her was how to tackle the music. She taught me to take it one section at a time, one day at a time, and before I knew it, I was doing it.*

**Sally Lamb McCune**

A native of Detroit, Sally Lamb McCune is a composer and educator. McCune has received many awards, including honors from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the New York Foundation for the Arts. She has taught at Cornell and Syracuse Universities and is presently a lecturer at Ithaca College in New York state.

*Pat Terry-Ross is one of those teachers who stays in a person’s heart and mind well beyond the classroom years. She’s one of those teachers who was always willing to go that extra mile or two to bring out the best in her students. It can’t be easy working with the 14- to 18-age group, but somehow, she always managed to do it with integrity and grace.*

**Calvin Stokes**

Calvin Stokes began playing the harp when his friend, Lydia Cleaver, dared him to study harp with Patricia Terry-Ross at Cass Tech. Stokes went on to earn a Bachelor of Music degree and a Master of Music degree in music performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music and the renowned harpist Alice Chafoux. The winner of the 1995 Lyon & Healy Harpsichord International Jazz/Pop Harp Competition, Stokes has performed with major orchestras across the United States in concerts ranging from classical to jazz and has also made several television appearances both as a harpist and an actor.

*As an educator, Pat taught us standards and we learned there is a level where music is not perfect. If you’re not performing perfectly, you’re letting yourself down. If you’re going to do something, do it well. We all started harp in high school and were able to later walk in and work with others who had been playing much, much longer at some of the finest conservatories in the world. There’s no reason to many of my former students have become successful harpists. She drove home what it meant to be prepared.*

**Erica Watson**

Writer/director and harpist Erica Watson was introduced to the harp at Cass Tech, where her experience as a student of Patricia Terry-Ross has helped her to create her documentary film Moving Strings: The Legacy of the Cass Tech Harp Program. Watson is a 2014 graduate of the University of Southern California’s School of Cinematic Arts, with a Master of Fine Art degree in film and television production. She also holds a Bachelor of Art degree from Wayne State University. She is a 2014-2015 directing fellow for Film Independent’s Project Involve. She is also a Sundance Knight Fellow and was an artist-in-residence at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival. She has directed more than 15 short films and has been a participant in the annual US/Mexico Day of the Dead short film, Roubado, which has been featured in more than 50 film festivals internationally. Watson is a part-time professor at Loyola Marymount University’s School of Film and Television in Los Angeles, California.

*As a writer/director, I can say that the greatest film education I received was not during my graduate courses at USC but as a constant student of Patricia Terry-Ross. Her unique approach to interpreting songs and understanding the emotional and musical progression of each piece is deeply embedded in my creative process. She has gifted me with a unique perspective and insight on storytelling.*
JOHN ALAN WICKEY

Harpist, composer and teacher John Alan Wickey began his professional music career as a child with the Michigan Opera Theatre Children’s Chorus. He became enamored of the harp after seeing a performance of Cass Tech’s Harp & Vocal Ensemble and went on to study harp first with Terry-Ross, and later at Boston University with Lucille Lawrence, one of the preeminent harp teachers and co-author of the Salzedo method book. Wickey has performed with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic and the New World Symphony under a host of world-class conductors including Neemi Järvi, Simon Rattle, John Williams and Michael Tilson Thomas, and alongside soloists ranging from James Galway to Mel Tormé, Joe Williams, and Cab Calloway.

“Pat is one of those educators who leaves a mark on her students that lasts a lifetime. Everything about her, from her polished presentation, precise and careful reasoning, her skills and talent – she’s in a class by herself. Students at Cass were naturally drawn to her and she has made a gigantic contribution to the harp. I really can’t find words to say how grateful I am for her patience, wisdom and guidance in all parts of my life and career.”

JANET WILLIAMS

The American soprano Janet Williams is renowned internationally for performances in leading roles at the Metropolitan Opera, Berlin Staatsoper, Paris Opera and others. She has also appeared with the Israel Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, the Mostly Mozart Festival in New York and Tokyo, the New World Symphony, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the New York, Los Angeles and Santa Fe Chamber Orchestras, and with orchestras throughout Europe. Her repertoire ranges from Bach and Mozart to contemporary works of living composers.

Williams holds Bachelor of Music degrees in both music education and vocal performance from Michigan State University and a Master of Music degree in vocal performance from Indiana University.

“Pat taught me how to love the music, how to enjoy and respect the process and the journey. That was the biggest lesson I learned from Pat and it’s kept me in good stead for over 30 years in the business. I have incorporated a lot of her teaching style in my own studio. In particular, I emphasize self-responsibility and try to build a sense of partnership with my students, something I always felt with Pat, who would challenge us with questions – ‘What do you think about that phrase? How would you make it better?’ – allowing us to bring our own individuality to our performances.”

LISTEN

Listen to “3 Students of Patricia Terry-Ross: Sally Lamb McCune, Janet Williams and Regina Carter” under “thekresgefoundation” Spotify account.
WHAT’S YOUR IMAGE OF A HIGH SCHOOL WITH A SERIOUS HARP PROGRAM?
SUBURBAN? EXPENSIVE? NOT DETROIT’S CASS TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL.

“Listen, when you’re in Detroit you’ve got to come to this school. This is a great place. You won’t believe what goes on in this high school.” — Patricia Terry-Ross

Technique
By Kimberly Rowe
IMAGINE A PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL WHERE electives are offered to students to take harp as an elective – where 30 to 40 students each year sign up for harp, receive one-on-one instruction, and practice each day on one of eight pedal harps (one of them electric) that the school owns. The program has been alive and well since its initiation in 1925 and shows no signs of slowing down.

Most harpists who are familiar with the Cass Tech program think of Velma Froude, the department’s backbone from the late 1920s through her retirement in 1976. Froude passed away in 1993, just one week after she attended a day on one of eight pedal harps (one of them electric) that the school owns. The program has been alive and well since its initiation in 1925 and shows no signs of slowing down. Most harpists who are familiar with the Cass Tech program think of Velma Froude, the department’s backbone from the late 1920s through her retirement in 1976. Froude passed away in 1993, just one week after she attended a day at Cass Tech High School in 2007 after 31 years. Following in the tradition of Velma Froude, Terry-Ross chose one of her best students, Lydia Cleaver, as her successor. Cleaver is now in her 10th year leading the program. The Cass Tech Harp & Vocal Ensemble celebrated its 90th anniversary in November 2016.

**Harp Column:** Can you tell us a little about Cass Tech High School? How does it differ from other high schools?

**Patricia Terry-Ross:** Well, Cass Tech uses the “magnet school” concept. It’s a public high school, and therefore no one has to pay money to come. But they do have to qualify to enter. They have to take a test. If they pass the test, and their test scores and their former grades are high enough, they may be accepted. Consequently, it’s a school that’s in demand. Everyone wants to come, but not everyone can get in.

**HC:** Earlier, you said about 30 students each year sign up for harp?

**PTR:** Usually, it’s somewhere between 30 and 40. This year it’s 30.

**HC:** Do you have room for all these students?

**PTR:** Well, they come in four different classes. There are eight harps available and some classes may have up to 10 people. In each class, you will find people who are taking Harp 1, Harp 2, Harp 3 or Harp 4. What I do is work with each student individually. They practice whatever is their own lesson in the larger studio. I assign lessons to people according to their levels – they work at their level on their music, and then they come into the lesson room to play whatever their assignment was.

**HC:** Of all the different choices a student has at Cass Tech, what motivates them to take harp lessons?

**PTR:** People come into the harp room at the beginning of the semester who’ve never seen a harp before and don’t know it from Adam. I usually ask them, “What made you come?” Sometimes you hear people say, “Oh well, I needed an extra class, and my counselor said I should take harp.” Or “I’m a music major and I need to schedule another instrument.” Because the music majors have to study more instruments than just their primary one. One little girl came in and said, “You know, I saw you play with the Detroit Symphony. I figured if you could do it, I could do it.” Well, now to me that’s a pretty good kind of role model to be – since I’m out there as a performer, and there are kids who’ve had a chance to see me do that, it becomes sort of a reality for them … a reachable, realistic kind of reality. I know that I have a lot of kids who will play all the way through high school, and then will go into something else, but they’re audiences.

**HC:** And then she came back to Detroit?

**PTR:** That’s when she came back here. What she learned she would give to the kids, and then she’d go back again. Salzedo had tremendous respect for Velma – in fact, she left me a lot of the letters he wrote to her over the course of her life.

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**HC:** Can you tell us about how Velma Froude first got hooked up with Carlos Salzedo?

**PTR:** Yes – the students choose a curriculum – they have to declare a major. We offer 22 different curricula including music. But they still have to take the same basic college prep courses so that they can leave here and become a science major in college if they want to.

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**HC:** Have you gone back and read them?

**PTR:** Oh, Yes! I mean, it’s… it’s really pretty special. He had great respect for her. At one point, she organized a Michigan harp ensemble that had 50 harpists from all over Michigan playing, and she brought him to conduct. And then of course he would see her students and what they were doing and he would say, “Send this kid to Curtis.” (Salzedo taught at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.) But basically, it was Clarence Byrn, the department head in the ‘20s, who decided that there wasn’t an instrument on the face of the earth that this school was not going to teach.

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HC: What kind of performing does the Harp & Vocal Ensemble do?

PTR: We perform in school twice a year. But we usually do 10 to 20 outside performances a year. In 1993, we were invited to perform for the American Harp Society National Convention. And we’ve performed for the Music Educators National Conference and other major conventions. The word gets out – the group has such a history and there are so many alumnae who will invite us to perform. Most of the time it’s in the Detroit area, but we’ve traveled to Chicago, Milwaukee, Washington, D.C. – all over the place.

HC: How do you get the harps around when you travel?

PTR: The board of education truckers will crate them up and move them. When we go out of town we hire a big bus and find a way to remove seats and bungee cord the harps in. If it weren’t for bungee cords we wouldn’t be able to travel!

HC: Where did all these harps come from?

HC: Cass Tech owns eight harps – where did they all come from?

PTR: Well, they came from a variety of places. Now there are only two that were here when I was a student, which was back in the ‘60s. We have five Style 15s, an 85S and an 85E. On the front of each harp is a plaque so you know who the principal donor was. When I was a student here we had five harps and Velma knew that eventually these harps would have to be replaced. Most of them at that point had been here since the ‘70s. In a public school? It’s amazing that they lasted that long. But little by little a soundboard would start to go. So, when the Harp & Vocal Ensemble was out performing somewhere, and someone says, “Oh, this group is wonderful, Cass Tech is a great school, is there anything I could ever do?” Velma would say, “Well, you know we do have harps that need work.” Before Velma retired she started a new harp fund – honorariums that came in from performances would be stockpiled away in this fund.

HC: So most of the harps come about through donations?

PTR: Yes. When I began teaching here I knew that I would have to carry on this kind of work. There was a woman who worked for the board of education who had my group go out and perform. They were very impressed and she said, “Is there anything we can do to help you?” I said, “Well, we have a harp that’s really on its last legs,” and it was true. The soundboard was really going. I said, “If you guys ever take on some kind of philanthropic project, maybe think about us.” Velma would say, “Well, you know we do have harps that need work.” Before Velma retired she started a new harp fund – honorariums that came in from performances would be stockpiled away in this fund.

HC: Why was it important for you to have an electric harp here at Cass Tech?

PTR: Because it’s the latest technology. Coming into the 21st century we have to become as versatile as everyone else. You can’t count on an orchestral job to take you through the rest of your life. A lot of people are making their living playing in restaurants, weddings, bar mitzvahs, whatever they can. And very often you play in a setting where you have to have some kind of amplification.

HC: How do you use the electric harp in a teaching situation?

PTR: One of the best applications as a teaching tool is that everything a student does is magnified, including buzzes. So, they hear something and say, “Oh, wow, I really need to clean this up. I don’t like the way this sounds.” It’s interesting to watch the kids who gravitate towards it, and those who gravitate to regular acoustic instruments. We have a new orchestra director who wants to start a jazz orchestra. I’ve got a little girl who is hungry to do something like that.

HC: Why do you do a lot for the students here, like bringing in alumni and other outside artists to come in and present workshops? You recently brought Lucile Lawrence in for a master class. Has that always been a tradition since Velma was here?

PTR: Yes – but the tradition is not just with the harp department, it’s with the whole music department. When Percy Grainger was in Detroit, he always came to Cass Tech. Always. When John Philip Sousa was in Detroit, he always came to Cass Tech. People who were in Detroit as performers would hear about this gorgeous music department. The High School of Performing Arts in New York was modeled after Cass Tech. The whole school, in every area, has a rich tradition of bringing in experts in every field. And they would spread the word to people and say, “Listen, when you’re in Detroit you’ve got to come to this school. This is a great place. You won’t believe what goes on in this high school.”

HC: In light of all the budget cutting going on in the arts today, are you worried about the program being cut?

PTR: It’s secure – the instruments are here. People say, “How in the devil is this thing going on there?” I’m not really sure how it all keeps happening. But it just does. The only thing that will ever threaten this program is if for some reason children just didn’t come any more. But I don’t have any magic except a concern – because had it not been for this program, I would not be doing what I do. I don’t know a stronger thing to make me more committed to this program. And to know that the school has never ever thought about wanting to wipe it out.

HC: Many of the Cass Tech alumni – Harvi Griffin, Susan Mazer, Calvin Stokes – are jazz players. Did they learn that here?

PTR: No. Most people learn their classical chops first. When you think about the great jazz keyboard musicians, or Wynton Marsalis, anyone who is a good technician generally started with some kind of classical training.

The Expert Tradition

HC: What kind of performing does the Harp & Vocal Ensemble do?

PTR: We perform in school twice a year. But we usually do 10 to 20 outside performances a year. In 1993, we were invited to perform for the American Harp Society National Convention. And we’ve performed for the Music Educators National Conference and other major conventions. The word gets out – the group has such a history and there are so many alumnae who will invite us to perform. Most of the time it’s in the Detroit area, but we’ve traveled to Chicago, Milwaukee, Washington, D.C. – all over the place.

HC: How do you get the harps around when you travel?

PTR: The board of education truckers will crate them up and move them. When we go out of town we hire a big bus and find a way to remove seats and bungee cord the harps in. If it weren’t for bungee cords we wouldn’t be able to travel!

HC: Where did all these harps come from?

HC: Cass Tech owns eight harps – where did they all come from?

PTR: Well, they came from a variety of places. Now there are only two that were here when I was a student, which was back in the ‘60s. We have five Style 15s, an 85S and an 85E. On the front of each harp is a plaque so you know who the principal donor was. When I was a student here we had five harps and Velma knew that eventually these harps would have to be replaced. Most of them at that point had been here since the ‘70s. In a public school? It’s amazing that they lasted that long. But little by little a soundboard would start to go. So, when the Harp & Vocal Ensemble was out performing somewhere, and someone says, “Oh, this group is wonderful, Cass Tech is a great school, is there anything I could ever do?” Velma would say, “Well, you know we do have harps that need work.” Before Velma retired she started a new harp fund – honorariums that came in from performances would be stockpiled away in this fund.

HC: Why was it important for you to have an electric harp here at Cass Tech?

PTR: Because it’s the latest technology. Coming into the 21st century we have to become as versatile as everyone else. You can’t count on an orchestral job to take you through the rest of your life. A lot of people are making their living playing in restaurants, weddings, bar mitzvahs, whatever they can. And very often you play in a setting where you have to have some kind of amplification.

HC: How do you use the electric harp in a teaching situation?

PTR: One of the best applications as a teaching tool is that everything a student does is magnified, including buzzes. So, they hear something and say, “Oh, wow, I really need to clean this up. I don’t like the way this sounds.” It’s interesting to watch the kids who gravitate towards it, and those who gravitate to regular acoustic instruments. We have a new orchestra director who wants to start a jazz orchestra. I’ve got a little girl who is hungry to do something like that.
I AM SO HONORED TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY to pay homage to Patricia Terry-Ross. As the longest serving member of the Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra, she has consistently provided exquisite playing on an instrument that is not only challenging to play but demands beauty of sound on almost all occasions. Over these many years, she has performed for some of the world’s greatest artists, including Luciano Pavarotti, Joan Sutherland, Cleo Laine and Andrea Bocelli. She is without a doubt a wonderful tribute to the superb music program at Cass Tech High School. However, this tribute is not only for an outstanding artist but for one of the finest human beings I have been privileged to know. Congratulations, Pat, on receiving The Kresge Foundation’s Eminent Artist Award.

David DiChiera, 2013 Kresge Eminent Artist, Artistic Director Emeritus, Michigan Opera Theatre

Longtime friends and Michigan Opera Theatre colleagues Patricia Terry-Ross and David DiChiera were both named Kresge Eminent Artist; she in 2017 and he in 2013. Photo by Julie Ploch.
Kudos also to Kresge Arts in Detroit for its deeply penetrating gaze, and its wily and wise choice of this year’s worthy awardee. In a note for an earlier Kresge Eminent Artist monograph I asked what kind of city was receptive to the notion of a built-from-the-ground up opera house? The answer was a wondrous place that allowed for the widely varying dreams of a broad variety of cultural visionaries to take root and blossom. In that instance, I was speaking of 2013 winner David DiChiera, founder of the Michigan Opera Theatre. In passing, I mentioned the orchestra pit. Flash forward to 2017. As if to show just how deep the still waters run beneath the gritty, rough-and-tumble landscape where David could realize his dream, who plays in the house that David built. Though they began from two very different points of origin, they flowered in common soil. Pat’s selection reaffirms the no-pretentions place with an unapologetic sophistication that is Detroit.

I have known Pat since she was the little girl across the street on Glynn Court. She was much younger than I, and the daughter of the Terrys, both of whom I deeply respected. To me they were the Ozzie and Harriet, or “Father Knows Best” of the block. Our mothers, in their 90s, still communicate frequently by telephone.

If the goal of the current Detroit movers, shakers, administrators and future makers is to have culture continue to thrive in the laboratory that is the developing Detroit, and if they wish to produce many more quiet educators and masters of their genre such as Pat Terry-Ross, then they would do well to consider the model on which the current honoree was formed: stable neighborhood and supportive parents that encourage the supposedly impractical pursuit of a career in the arts. A public school system with knowledgeable, dedicated teachers of core curriculum including the humanities and technical training, whose intention is to prepare its students for the world into which they will be graduated (think Cass Tech). A supportive, philanthropic, and informed arts community as a foundation for all of the above will help. Simple.

Congratulations again, Pat, to you and Frank and your mother and the memory of your father.

Bill Harris, 2011 Kresge Eminent Artist, playwright, author

WITH PAT, NOTHING IS TOO HARD to be dealt with. With Pat, we never feared that a piece might be too tricky. She is stubborn about difficulties – nothing can resist her tenacity. This gives us, her partners, a sense of comfort when we perform; it is the same in the orchestra, she is solid as a rock. Velda (Kelly) and I are right across from each other in the Michigan Opera Theatre pit and when Pat has a solo, we look at each other and smile, agreeing that our Pat has once more delivered her best.

Nadine Deleury, principal cellist, Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra, cellist, Eason Trio

PATRICIA TERRY-ROSS is undoubtedly one who might be considered a “Renaissance” woman. She is an extraordinarily gifted musician whose musical talents encompass several areas of expertise. She is a harpist, pianist, conductor, choral trainer and an amazing and inspiring teacher whose students, past and present, reverence her counsel, pedagogical excellence, personal concern, and her impeccable taste and love for music.

In life, and especially when involved in a profession such as music, one encounters countless performers, conductors, composers, scholars and teachers, some of whom you remember well while others only marginally. Then there is that time when you meet a special and unique musician and you immediately sense this meeting is not fortuitous. You discern that you have encountered a person whose very essence attests to the realization that someone extraordinary has entered your life, and you never, ever want to lose them. Thus, you feel certain that meeting them was not happenstance but rather destiny and there is no doubt you have embarked upon a friendship that the word itself cannot begin to explain or support. This is what I feel about my enduring professional and personal relationship with Patricia.

As concert-goers, Patricia and I have shared countless performances. We continuously marvel as to how we have mutual instincts and responses to the performances we are attending. The ensemble performances I have witnessed under her direction have always been stellar: professional, thoroughly prepared, musical, sensitive and inspired. As a composer, I have had the privilege of hearing her perform my music with her excellent Cass Tech Harp & Vocal Ensemble, and have often thought “she understands this piece as well, if not better than I” – her musical instincts are exceptional.

Patricia is indeed a remarkable and gifted musician and a truly wonderful person. May she continue to share the totality of her immeasurable talents with our world.

Dr. Robert Harris, composer, conductor, retired director of Choral Organizations, Northwestern University

PAT’S APPROACH TO TEACHING was a balancing act between being very demanding and expecting a lot from each student, and simultaneously making it possible for students to achieve what they were capable of achieving. She would do whatever was needed, from making sure they had a harp to practice on to making sure that things were OK for them at home – she was just always there for her students. Pat was able to get her students to work as hard as they possibly could – she would set the standard for them. She knew how far to go into their lives: she would listen to what they were saying and come to understand what they really needed, what was going to help them become better students and better people. I find that really inspiring. It’s Pat’s magic at work. Pat’s a special person. And I say that from knowing her from many different perspectives.

Velda Kelly, Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra violinist, Eason Trio violinist, Detroit Symphony Orchestra substitute violinist

Patricia Terry-Ross at her home in Highland Park, Michigan. Photo by Cybelle Codish.
LIKE PAT, I STUDIED WITH VELMA

I’ve talked with Pat about Velma’s influence and it’s there in Pat’s style – she’s very precise in her playing. It’s very easy to play with her to play with Pat because she’s so dependable. She’s also very easygoing but at the same time she has very, very high standards. She has a very rare combination of traits that make her such a great teacher and performer.

Laura Larson, Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra flutist, Wayne State University professor

FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD, IT WAS apparent that Patricia Terry-Ross was destined for greatness. Her genius as a musician of instrument and voice could not be hidden. She was blessed with parents who nurtured her God-given abilities and provided her with excellent educational opportunities. But her musical performance, spectacular as it has been, is surpassed by the influence she has had on others through her teaching in elementary school, high school and college. Many of her former students have themselves become outstanding musicians. I can think of no one who is more deserving of the honor of being named the 2017 Kresge Eminent Artist than Patricia Terry-Ross. She belongs to the world, but Detroit is proud to embrace her as a Detroit Poet Laureate.

Naomi Long Madgett, 2012 Kresge Eminent Artist, Detroit Poet Laureate

WHEN I THINK OF PAT, I THINK MOST of her wonderful smile which represents to me – JOY! She is joyful in her teaching both at Wayne State University and as my daughter’s harp teacher. In both instances, she is kind but firm – demanding that her students reach their promise. She often sees and honors the students’ potential before they realize what they are capable of achieving. She cares for each of her students, giving countless hours over to working with them. She is a joyful colleague. We have had great conversations on teaching and learning, both in the context of our own self-reflection and our students’ growth. She is a joyful performer who connects with her audience through sublime technique and musicianship. Her harp playing touches your soul. She is an inspiring artist and teacher.

Dr. Wendy K. Matthews, Assistant Professor, Music Education, Department of Music, Wayne State University

I CAME TO “MISS TERRY” AS A freshman at Cass Tech in 1980. My primary instrument was piano but, as a music major, I was required to take a secondary “string” instrument. (Technically, the harp is considered a percussion instrument like the piano, but I took advantage of this loophole as I did not want to play the violin!) My initial plan of checking the string requirement off my list gave way to a true love of the instrument, of Pat’s teaching, and of the wonderful and connecting ensemble playing that I experienced with the Harp Ensemble and the Harp & Vocal Ensemble. Under Pat’s leadership, these groups became my community, my Cass Tech family. The outstanding pedal gowns and gold shoes we were required to wear, all while singing “To Music, Noble Art” somehow made sense in the context of the great music department legacy, which produced the likes of Joseph Silverstein, Warren Benson, Ron Carter and Alice Coltrane.

When I graduated from Cass in 1984, I attended the University of Toronto, then California Institute of the Arts, and eventually Cornell University where I pursued my ultimate musical love – composition.

Pat and I lost touch for some years. Then, in 2013, I received the loveliest email from Pat, who was interested in commissioning me to write a piece for the Eason Trio. Our communications resulted in Water Music, which premiered at the Detroit Scarab Club Chamber Series in June 2016. Coming home to visit family and friends had always been a joy, but coming home as a professional composer and now colleague of a former teacher was very, very special. Our collaboration has meant so much to me. I look forward to staying connected to Pat and her wonderfully supportive husband, Frank Ross, for years to come. Music is, indeed, a noble and powerful art, and Pat is one of its great champions. Thanks for sharing your wonderful life with us, Pat!

Sally Lamb McCune, composer, lecturer at Ithaca College

IN ADDITION TO BEING OVERLY qualified in her subject matter, the critical ingredient that Pat brings to every music student is love. Love is an action. And she knows how to act. Pat is a teacher who holds you accountable. She’s a lifelong friend and I’m so happy for her in being named as the 2017 Kresge Eminent Artist.

Daisy Newman, soprano, Director, Youth Musicians Choral Orchestra (YMCO), former Director of Education, Detroit Symphony Orchestra

PAT’S PEDAGOGY REPRESENTS THE absolutely perfect synthesis of technique and expression; one is not more important than the other, and each is an entire part of her work. For her students, I always felt she had a strong and healthy relationship with her ensemble members. She was a mentor and a wonderful influence on these young ladies and occasional gentlemen who studied harp. That’s one of the reasons she was so effective as a teacher – her students trusted her, they believed in her, they gave her what she asked for, which was always a little more than they thought they could do.

Dr. Milton Olsson, Head of Choral Activities, Michigan Technological University

CONGRATULATIONS TO PATRICIA Terry-Ross, harpist, vocalist and educator as she is being celebrated by The Kresge Foundation. While the usual accolades go to a violinist, a cellist or a pianist, the fact that we are honoring a harpist speaks to her virtuosity, passion and integrity. On a personal note, I am delighted to learn that Patricia spent years at the helm of Cass Tech High School’s harp program within the music department. Two of my grown children graduated from the music department, and the art department helped me to receive a four-year scholarship to the Rhode Island School of Design in 1942. It is this contribution to the cultural community and dedication to Detroit and its residents which makes Patricia’s contribution and the Kresge Eminent Artist award so important to our hometown.

Ruth Adler-Schnee, 2015 Kresge Eminent Artist, textile designer

MS. TERRY-ROSS HAS BEEN MY teacher, mentor and role model since the day I met her in 2013. I was a student at Wayne State University to take a harp lesson with her before making my final college decision. In the year that followed, our connection grew and I was a part of what she does because she is so effective as a teacher – her students are loved by her and her students love her. I felt she had a strong and healthy relationship with her ensemble members.

Becca Self, Wayne State University harp student

CAREER and CONTRIBUTIONS TO PATRICIA Terry-Ross, harpist, vocalist and educator as she is being celebrated by The Kresge Foundation. While the usual accolades go to a violinist, a cellist or a pianist, the fact that we are honoring a harpist speaks to her virtuosity, passion and integrity. On a personal note, I am delighted to learn that Patricia spent years at the helm of Cass Tech High School’s harp program within the music department. Two of my grown children graduated from the music department, and the art department helped me to receive a four-year scholarship to the Rhode Island School of Design in 1942. It is this contribution to the cultural community and dedication to Detroit and its residents which makes Patricia’s contribution and the Kresge Eminent Artist award so important to our hometown.

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Becca Self, Wayne State University harp student
I WAS FIRST INTRODUCED TO THE harp at Cass Tech, where I was one of Ms. Terry-Ross’ students during her final year teaching at the school. I went on to continue my harp studies with her at Wayne State University, which I attended on full scholarship, graduating in 2014 with a Bachelor of Music in harp performance. I presently freelance in a number of artistic disciplines and continue with harp performance, recently appearing at the Detroit Institute of Arts during Sunday Music Bar and in October 2016 at Tramway & The Art School in Glasgow, Scotland. I have also composed the score for the documentary: From Tragedy to Trans Justice Mapping – A Detroit Story by Natasha T. Miller and dream hampton and appeared in Bruce Weber’s short film for Barneys, Brothers, Sisters, Sons and Daughters. I learned many valuable life lessons from Ms. Terry-Ross but especially that one’s work is really important and integrity lies at the base of all of our successful relationships. During what were very difficult personal times for me in college, she constantly reminded me of my potential, my specialness and my worth as a musician and an artist. I took away even more from her support and came to realize I should be as authentic and genuine as possible in all I do.

Ahya Simone, harpist, composer, model, activist

PAT AND I HAVE BEEN FRIENDS FOR more than 50 years. We met when we were both taking piano lessons at the Michigan Conservatory of Music, waiting out in the lobby for our lessons. We had the same music teacher, Lawrence LaGore. LaGore was the premier pianist in the Detroit area at the time and I remember him saying that Pat Terry was one of the few students who could approach the piano and get any kind of tone that she wanted to get out of it. She had “the touch.” The same thing happens when she plays the harp. The touch is muscle control in the hands and in the arms, but it’s also a mind process in terms of interpreting what you’re playing. You can teach muscle control but not the interpretation. That’s a God-given gift and Pat’s got it.

As an educator, Pat is a terrific teacher because she gets to know her students and she allows her students to get to know her. She teaches more than music, she teaches life skills. She gives of herself. Pat has provided private harp lessons for students without charge on the weekends if they didn’t have a harp at their own home, allowing them to come to her home to practice. Pat works with her students at every level of their lives, not just the musical.

Stanley Waldon, pianist, vocal music educator, vocal choral director

“...her students trusted her, they believed in her, they gave her what she asked for, which was always a little more than they thought they could do.” – Dr. Milton Olsson
Biography

Portraits of the artist, from top left: 18 mos., 9 mos., age 5 on Easter Sunday, age 7 after performing on the “Auntie Dee Show,” age 17 Cass Tech graduation photo, age 10, after Sunday church services, with her portrait by uncle Edison Terry, with husband, Frank Ross, 1962.
Patricia Terry Ross
Born: January 2, 1947
Detroit, Michigan

EDUCATION
1964
Cass Technical High School
Detroit, Michigan
1968
B.M.
Choral Music Education
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan
1969
M.M.
Choral Music Education/Harp Performance
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan
1976
Post-graduate harp studies
Tanglewood Institute
Lenox, Massachusetts

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES
1969-1976
Vocal Music Teacher
Pattengill Elementary School
Detroit, Michigan
1969-1975
Studio Musician
Motown Records
Detroit, Michigan
1976-2007
Director
Harp & Vocal Ensemble
Teacher
Harp/Voice/Piano/Harmony
Cass Technical High School
Detroit, Michigan
1976-Present
Principal Harpist
Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra
Detroit, Michigan
1977-Present
Harpist (substitute)
Detroit Symphony Orchestra
Detroit, Michigan
1980-Present
Adjunct Associate Professor
Harp/Choral Conducting/Vocal Music Education
Wayne State University
Detroit, Michigan
2006
Clinician/Conductor
Young Musicians Choral Orchestra
University of California/Berkeley
Berkeley, California

APPOINTMENTS
1990s
Board of Governors
Two two-year terms
School of Music Alumni Society
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan
1990-1998
Metropolitan Detroit Representative
American Choral Directions Association-Michigan
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
1998
Facilities Chair
American Choral Directions Association-Michigan
Central Division Convention
Detroit, Michigan
2006
Development Consultant
Young Musicians Program-Harp Instruction
University of California/ Berkeley
Berkeley, California

COMMISSIONS
2006
Naïades
Erik Santos
Commissioned by Patricia Terry-Ross for The Eason Trio
and received its world premiere May 7, 2006, in Detroit
for Chamber Music at the Scarab Club.
2016
Water Music
Sally Lamb McCune
Commissioned by Patricia Terry-Ross for The Eason Trio
and received its world premiere June 5, 2016 in Detroit
for Chamber Music at the Scarab Club.

SELECTED AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS
1988
Spirit of Detroit Award
City of Detroit City Council
Detroit, Michigan
DISCOGRAPHY

Rite of Spring/Firebird
Igor Stravinsky
Detroit Symphony Orchestra
Decca Music Group

The Land Where Dreams Are Made
Martin Scot Kosins
Open Sky Records
Huntington Woods, Michigan, 1984

Dreamer - A Portrait of Langston Hughes
Erik Santos
Naxos Classical Music
Franklin, Tennessee, 2002

Strung Out
Paul Riser
Gordon Staples and The String Thing
Motown Record Corporation
Detroit, Michigan, 1970

Reel Music
Universal Music Special Markets
Hyannis, Massachusetts, 2009

SELECTED DISTINCTIONS

1980
Harpist
Detroit Symphony Orchestra performances
Camegie Hall
New York, New York
Kennedy Center
Washington, DC

1981/1987
Soloist
School Educational Concert Series
Detroit Symphony Orchestra
Detroit, Michigan

1993
Teacher of the Year
Detroit Public Schools
Detroit, Michigan

1999
“Music of the Heart” Award
Music Educators National Conference
Michigan Music Education Association
Jackson, Michigan

2000
Accomplished Music Educator
Michigan Music Educators Association
Jackson, Michigan

2004
Maynard Klein Award
American Choral Directors Association-Michigan
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

SELECTED REFERENCES

1996
“Technique”
Kimberly Rowe
January/February 1996
Volume 3, Issue 4
Harp Column
Kalamazoo, Michigan

1998
Black Women in American Bands and Orchestras
D. Antoniette Handy
2nd Edition
Scarecrow Press
Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group
Lanham, Maryland

2008
“Matriarch of Motown”
Allison Reese
Vol. 16, Special Issue
Harp Column
Kalamazoo, Michigan

2009
Moving Strings: The Legacy of the Cass Tech Harp Program
Director: Erica Watson
Hyphenation National Productions
Detroit, Michigan
vimeo.com/14882164

2014
“Harp Quartet hits high notes”
Birmingham Eccentric
Sharon Dargay, (April 3, 2014)

2016
The Detroit Symphony Orchestra:
Grace, Grit and Glory
Laure, Lauren Harris, Paul Ganson
Wayne State University Press
Detroit, Michigan

2016
CasTech Celebrates 90 Years of Teaching Students to Play the Harp
WDOT
Nov. 11, 2016
wdot.org/posts/2016/11/18/84213-cass-tech-celebrates-90-years-of-teaching-students-to-play-the-harp/

AFFILIATIONS

American Choral Directors Association
American Harp Society
American String Teachers Association
Delta Kappa Gamma (Leading Women Educators)
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
My Phi Epsilon (International Music Fraternity)
P kappa Lambda (Music Honor Society)
Tuesday Musciale of Detroit

1953
Teacher of the Year
Detroit Public Schools
Detroit, Michigan

1993
Finalist
Michigan Teacher of the Year
Lansing, Michigan

1997
Dr. Alain Locke Award
Detroit Institute of Arts
Founders Society
Detroit, Michigan

2001
Accomplished Music Educator
Michigan Music Educators Association
Jackson, Michigan

2009
Teacher of the Year
Detroit Public Schools
Detroit, Michigan

2013
Finalist
Michigan Teacher of the Year
Lansing, Michigan

2015
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Detroit, Michigan

1993
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Music Educators National Conference
Michigan Music Education Association
Jackson, Michigan

2001
Accomplished Music Educator
Michigan Music Educators Association
Jackson, Michigan

2004
Maynard Klein Award
American Choral Directors Association-Michigan
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

2010
Exemplary Leadership in Music Education
Detroit Musicians Association
The National Association of Negro Musicians, Inc. (NANM)
Ann Arbor, Michigan

2016
“Pears of Wisdom” Award
90th Anniversary
Harp & Vocal Ensemble
Cass Technical High School
Detroit, Michigan

2017
Kresge Eminent Artist Award
The Kresge Foundation
Troy, Michigan

A gift box of memorabilia and student treasures, assembled by Terry-Ross’ Cass Tech students for her retirement gift in 2007.

Harp, also known as “The best cat in the world,” was a 1993 Christmas gift to Terry-Ross from her music students.

Teaching awards displayed at the Highland Park home of Terry-Ross.

A gift box of memorabilia and student treasures, assembled by Terry-Ross’ Cass Tech students for her retirement gift in 2007.

Patricia Terry-Ross, center, with mother, Elizabeth Terry, and husband, Frank Ross, at the Detroit Opera House at a reception in her honor as she was named the 2017 Kresge Eminent Artist. She is transported by the playing of Lydia Cleaver, who led several members of the Cass Tech Vocal Ensemble in a performance to celebrate the occasion.

Photo by Julie Pincus.
PATRICIA TERRY-ROSS PERSONIFIES THE ARTIST WHO PRACTICES HER CRAFT AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL AND SUPPORTS THE CREATIVE EXPRESSION OF OTHERS.

As her grandmother admonished her to do, she has given away her gift wholeheartedly and selflessly by performing in a wide range of genres and venues, always making a connection with her fellow musicians and audiences; and by helping countless students to discover their own gifts, love music and be contributing, caring members of society. She has devoted her life to bringing people together through art.

Though she is a performing artist and the College for Creative Studies is a school for visual artists, Patricia Terry-Ross is just the kind of artist we hope our students will become. Administering the Kresge Arts in Detroit program allows CCS to join in recognizing such inspirational creative practitioners, to hold them up as models for our students, and to reinforce the college’s mission of nurturing creativity and promoting it as a force for strengthening our community. We are proud to partner with The Kresge Foundation in this important endeavor.

PATRICIA TERRY-ROSS EXEMPLIFIES THE ARTIST WHOSE PERSONAL ASPIRATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS NEVER DETRACT FROM HER COMMITMENT TO NURTURE THE CREATIVE TALENTS OF OTHERS.

Pat’s innate musical ability manifested itself at a tender age – she performed a solo piece on television at age seven soon after beginning formal piano lessons. Even then, she was clearly a unique talent.

From the Detroit Conservatory of Music to the University of Michigan, Pat’s virtuosity offered her many choices as an artist. She performed on renowned stages across the country – the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall – and collaborated with such iconic artists as Luciano Pavarotti, Sammy Davis Jr. and Marvin Gaye. She has been the principal harpist at the Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra for 40 years, and continues to perform with her chamber music group, the Eason Trio. While reaching exceptional heights as a musician, Pat continued to call Detroit home, leading Cass Technical High School’s legendary harp program and Harp & Vocal Ensemble for over 30 years.

The Kresge Eminent Artist Award, administered for The Kresge Foundation by the College for Creative Studies, acknowledges exceptional artistic talent and unmistakable impact. The Eminent Artist Award recipient is selected by the Kresge Arts in Detroit Advisory Council, a volunteer group of leaders in the metropolitan Detroit cultural community.

According to Patricia Terry-Ross, “If you just do honor to your gift, things will happen.” With this award, we are pleased to recognize the generosity with which Pat honored her gift – from the stage to the classroom – leaving an indelible mark on the legacy of music in Detroit and beyond.

CHRISTINA DEROOS
Director, Kresge Arts in Detroit

“If you just do honor to your gift, things will happen.” – Patricia Terry-Ross
2016-2017 Kresge Arts In Detroit

THE KRESGE EMINENT ARTIST AWARD AND WINNERS

Established in 2008, the Kresge Eminent Artist Award honors an exceptional literary, fine, film or performing artist whose influential body of work, lifelong professional achievements and proven, continued commitment to the Detroit cultural community are evident. The Kresge Eminent Artist Award celebrates artistic innovation and rewards integrity and depth of vision with the financial support of $50,000 as judged by the Kresge Arts in Detroit Advisory Council. The Kresge Eminent Artist Award is unrestricted and is given annually to an artist who has lived and worked in Wayne, Oakland or Macomb counties for a significant number of years.

The Kresge Eminent Artist Award, annual Kresge Artist Fellowships and multiyear grants to arts and cultural organizations in metropolitan Detroit constitute Kresge Fellowships and multiyear grants to arts and cultural organizations in metropolitan Detroit as the foundation’s effort to provide broad support to the regional arts community.

The College for Creative Studies administers the Kresge Eminent Artist Award on behalf of The Kresge Foundation.

2008
Charles McGee
Artist Charles McGee was named the first Kresge Eminent Artist in recognition of his work as teacher and mentor to generations of young artists and his founding of arts organizations and galleries to support and share their work.

2009
Marcus Belgrave
Internally recognized jazz trumpeter Marcus Belgrave dedicated his energies to music education and performance excellence in his chosen home of Detroit, where he was a beloved mentor to young musicians who achieved greatness themselves. Belgrave died in 2015 at the age of 78.

2011
Bill Harris
Detroit’s distinguished author, literary critic and educator Bill Harris was named Kresge Eminent Artist for his commitment to cultivating creative writing talent as a Wayne State University professor and for his own literary contributions as an author and playwright.

2012
Naomi Long Madgett
Award-winning poet, educator and publisher Naomi Long Madgett was named Kresge Eminent Artist in recognition of her commitment to metropolitan Detroit and its literary artists. Now poet laureate of Detroit, Madgett established Detroit’s Lotus Press in 1972 to publish the work of African-American poets.

2013
David DiChiera
Michigan Opera Theatre founder and composer David DiChiera was honored as Kresge Eminent Artist for his dedication to the composition and production of new operas, his nurturing of African-American artists in the field and his instrumental role in the revitalization of Detroit’s cultural and entertainment district.

2014
Bill Rauhauser
Photographer and educator Bill Rauhauser was named Kresge Eminent Artist in celebration of his body of work, his role in establishing the photo collection of the Detroit Institute of Arts, his education of generations of photographers and for his contributions to the scholarship of photography.

2015
Ruth Adler Schnee
Textile artist Ruth Adler Schnee, a maverick purveyor of modern design ideals, was named Kresge Eminent Artist for her work designing building interiors and woven textiles and as an active preservation advocate for metropolitan Detroit’s modernist history.

2016
Leni Sinclair
Photographer and cultural activist Leni Sinclair was named Kresge Eminent Artist in recognition of her contributions to social change in Detroit and for her documentation of 1960s and ‘70s counterculture. Her images of major cultural, political, social and musical figures of the time helped visually define a pivotal era in American history.