

Ensemble Lafayette

Diane Kinsley, organ and Rebecca Anstine Smith, harp

Ensemble Lafayette offers the rare and exquisite combination of the organ and harp in a wide variety of musical styles and repertoire. While every performance includes transcriptions as well as their own arrangements, *Ensemble Lafayette* always features original music for harp and organ. In their ongoing pursuit to expand their repertoire, they discovered several compositions by composer Peter Mathews. After reading through those works, they realized that they had indeed come across something very special. Rebecca soon contacted Mr. Mathews who agreed to write a piece for the duo, which at the time was The Lafayette Square Duo. After several premier performances of that work, Peter and Rebecca met in Florida to discuss various aspects of that first commission, *Fantaisie*.

Immediately, a friendship formed as both composer and harpist discovered that they share mutual interests not only with music, but also in the French language and culture. In the summer of 2016 Peter and Rebecca spent a glorious day together at the Eiffel Tower. The following spring, Rebecca received a grant from the American Harp Society for a second work, *Passacaille*. In 2018 the work received its critically acclaimed world premier at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina, with Ms. Smith as the harpist and Peter Mathews in the audience.

Over the years, Mr. Mathews has come to Washington, DC, Charleston, SC and Annapolis, MD, to confer with the artists and to attend performances at prestigious venues such as St. John's Church, Lafayette Square, The Washington National Cathedral and St. Martin's Lutheran Church. Not only is he incredibly generous with his time to travel, attend and coach, but also with his own craft, as he recently presented his two latest works, *There is a Fountain* and *Idylle* as gifts to *Ensemble Lafayette*.

Members of the Performing Artist Touring Roster for the Maryland State Arts Council, *Ensemble Lafayette* recently presented a live-streamed recital under the auspices of the Musicians Performance Trust Fund and have been invited to perform for the upcoming American Harp Society Convention in 2022 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.





Rebecca Anstine Smith enjoys combining her passion for the French language with her musical performances, which began at Dickinson College, where she received a double degree in French and music, *magna cum laude*, Departmental Honors in Music. Subsequently she received her M.M. in harp performance, with Jeanne Chalifoux at the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University.

More recently, she traveled to southern France where she performed harp duo recitals with renowned French harpist, Isabelle Frouvelle, as *The Duo*

Transatlantique. In her capacity as guest artist faculty for The Greenspring International Summer Harp Institute, she has joined them on tours to Canada, England, Wales and the Coast of New England.

Ms. Smith remains in demand as a chamber musician, and has performed at The Piccolo Spoleto Festival (Charleston, SC), The Washington National Cathedral, St. John's Lafayette Square Church, and The Basilica of the National Shrine.

For nearly forty years, Ms. Smith has held adjunct teaching posts at the University of Maryland, College Park, The Shenandoah Conservatory of Music, The George Washington University, and currently teaches at Anne Arundel Community College and St. Mary's College of Maryland.

As an orchestral musician, Rebecca has performed as an extra with the National Symphony Orchestra, and performs often with The National Philharmonic, The Washington Ballet Orchestra and The Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra, where she held the post of Principal Harpist for a decade. She recorded a CD of Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols* at the Washington National Cathedral with Canon Michael McCarthy.

Diane Kinsley, organist, is an active performer and teacher in the Baltimore-Washington area. She began piano lessons at the age of 4 ½, but did not begin her studies at the organ until the second semester of her undergraduate degree, after being encouraged to do so by her father. She studied organ with Melvin Dickinson at the University of Louisville, Louisville, KY, while studying piano with Lee Luvisi. To further her musical studies, she earned her Master of Music degree in Ensemble Arts from the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University.



Ms. Kinsley has served as organist at several churches in the Baltimore area. Currently she is the Assistant Organist and Staff Accompanist at the United States Naval Academy.

As well as teaching both piano and organ privately, Ms. Kinsley is on the faculty of Anne Arundel Community College's performing arts department. In 2014, she toured Austria as organist with AACC's Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, playing in some of the most

brehtaking and historic churches. Other current collaborative projects include accompanying and performing with Opera AACC, Arundel Vocal Arts Society, New Moon Theater, and The Cabaret at Germano's Piattini in Little Italy.