



2021 Biography

Passion and innovation are the hallmarks of American conductor Roberta Carpenter. Co-founder and Music Director of the Oconomowoc Chamber Orchestra since 2009, she is recognized as a builder of musicians. Ms. Carpenter's musical expertise both on and off the podium, as well as her talent for community building, has helped her to forge a rich and varied career. Nationally, she has guested with such orchestras as the Beloit / Janesville, Harper and Whitewater symphonies, the Concord and Appleton chamber orchestras and the Waukesha Choral Union. International guesting includes the Martinu, Hradec Kralove and Janacek Philharmonics in the Czech Republic; the Sudecka Philharmonic in Poland; and the Vidin State Philharmonic Orchestra in Bulgaria, in addition to leading the orchestras of the Moscow Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine and Germany's Thuringen Philharmonic in workshops.

Recent highlights include a digital remote performance with the Oconomowoc Chamber Orchestra which was released in March 2021 with cello soloist Benjamin Whitcomb performing the Boccherini Cello Concerto. In April 2019 was the premiere of American composer Brian Grundstrom's *Imagine A Day...in Lake Country* for Adult & Children's choirs and orchestra with Oconomowoc Chamber Orchestra, and performances of the Elgar Introduction & Allegro as well as a string orchestra arrangement of Crawford Gates' *Fanfare for Lake Country* entitled *Variations on Fanfare for Lake Country*, and Grundstrom's *Celebration*. Ms. Carpenter has worked with the OCO to secure six commissions about the beautiful Lake Country Area. Ms. Carpenter has also worked closely with Dr. Michael Karasis in performances of his works for orchestra & choir (American Civil War Oratorio), a full chamber music concert of his works, and the premiere of his opera. Together with the OCO, Ms. Carpenter was instrumental in arranging the premiere of a matched set of string instruments made in the 1930's by local luthier Frank S. Chatfield on the completion of a 3-year restoration project. Following their reveal on April 19, 2019, the instruments are now on permanent display at the Oconomowoc Arts Center.

An advocate of new music, Ms. Carpenter has also premiered orchestral works by composers Crawford Gates, Sigmund Snopek, Jacob Beranek, David Bohn, and Jeff Wussow. She has worked with American Composer/Conductor Diane Wittry and performed her work entitled 'After the Rain'. Her performances have been broadcast on local radio and television, many now are on YouTube and other online platforms. She has helped enable A.I. to reach orchestral audiences with the OCO-bot, a friendly robot with a musical theme song, that speaks to audiences.

On the recording front, Ms. Carpenter has recorded with the Janacek Philharmonic, the Hradec Kralove Philharmonic, Martinu Philharmonic and the Oconomowoc Chamber Orchestra (OCO) as a conductor. Her most recent CD with the OCO features four new movements of the orchestra's *Lake Tones, Legends & Landscapes* series recorded live in May 2018 (The concert is also available on YouTube). The OCO's debut recording in 2012, which featured the world premiere recording of the 2010 OCO commission of Crawford Gates' *Fanfare for Lake Country* and Beethoven's 5th Symphony, and was awarded 3rd place in the 2012 American Prize Awards.

With the Hradec Kralove Philharmonic, the 2018 recording of Glinka's Overture to *Ruslan and Ludmilla*, Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 2 (featuring violinist Wayne Lin), and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 was a finalist for the 2019 American Awards Competition Finals, and with the Janacek Philharmonic, her Dvorak, *Serenade for Strings, Op. 22* CD was a finalist for the 2017-18 American Prize in Conducting. As a violinist, she has released a CD entitled 'Light: Classic Favorites for Violin & Piano' with pianist Sharon Goodrum, a Fanfare-Instrumental Arrangements recording with pianist Dr. Aaron Matthews and composer/pianist Jacob Beranek, and made three CDs with Trio Arabesque (the late cellist Janet Marshall and Sharon Goodrum). The trio's live recording of the Haydn Piano Trio #5, the Beethoven Piano Trio Op. 70, #1 'The Ghost', and the Peter Martin 'Rhumba' was released in April 2021.

The recipient of numerous foundation grants and awards for her work as a conductor, educator, and as host for the music appreciation series "The Score Came Second....," and the OCO Chatfield Series outreach videos, among her awards are a 2018 Women's Philharmonic Advocacy Grant and being named a Lake Michigan Scholar. In addition, Ms. Carpenter is also invested in the technological aspect of health and wellness and has a long history of work in outreach and prevention in this area. Her video recording 'ZMI – Metric Balance in Music' released in October 2020 speaks to the dynamic nature of weight and motion in music and features her recordings with the OCO, Hradec Kralove & Janacek Philharmonics, and her recording of the JS Bach Sonata in g minor performed on the Thunis Stradivarius. Most recently, Ms. Carpenter was honored by receiving the 2021 OCO Chatfield Award, which recognizes 'Bright Spirit, Vision & a lifetime of Community Service'.

An accomplished violinist, Roberta Carpenter served as Concertmaster for the Waukesha Choral Union Orchestra for over 26 years, performing large-scale orchestral/choral works. She has performed with the Waukesha Symphony, the Fox Valley Symphony, the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra and the Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra, and has collaborated as a chamber musician with the Jubilate Chorale, the Waukesha Choral Union, Trio Arabesque, and with the former Karl Ratzsch Piano Trio.

A Wisconsin native, Ms. Carpenter is a respected educator, and currently runs Zenith Studio, a private teaching studio, as well as being a member of the faculty of the Lake Country Conservatory of Music. Her former posts include serving as Music Director of the Whitewater Symphony and the Carroll College Orchestra, and as Assistant Conductor for Wisconsin's Fox Valley Symphony and the Concord Chamber Orchestra, and assisting in Audition work with the Green Bay Symphony.

Ms. Carpenter completed coursework for a Doctoral Degree in Violin Performance and Orchestral Conducting at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and holds both Master of Music and Bachelor of the Fine Arts degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, graduating with honors. She also studied with Charles Bruck at the Monteux School & Music Festival, as well as in private studies in France. Included among the numerous conducting workshops in which she has participated are those of the League of American Orchestras and the Conductors Guild. Conducting mentors include Diane Wittry, Kenneth Kiesler, Gustav Meier, Charles Bruck, and Gunther Schuller.