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Bob Aaron
Illinois Wesleyan University

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August 16, 1994

Contact: Bob Aaron, 309/556-3181

Seven-Year Win Streak

IWU Composer Wins Award from New York-Based Music Society

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--For the seventh consecutive year, an Illinois Wesleyan University music professor has won an award for his original compositions from the New York-based American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP).

ASCAP President Marilyn Bergman, wrote IWU President Minor Myers, jr. on July 29, informing him that David Vayo, assistant professor of music, had won a 1994-95 ASCAP Standard Award. The term, "standard award," in this context refers to the category of classical music.

The award, Bergman said, reflects ASCAP's "continuing commitment to assist and encourage writers of serious music." In making such awards, Bergman said, ASCAP is "glad to join with your educational institution in supporting the growth and development of our nation's musical future."

Bergman is the Academy, Emmy, and Grammy award-winning writer and lyricist, whose credits include *You Don't Bring Me Flowers* and *In the Heat of the Night*, as well as the TV show themes for *Maude* and *Good Times*, and feature film scores for *Yentl*, *The Thomas Crown Affair (The Windmills of Your Mind)*, and *The Way We Were*.

Vayo received the award on the recommendation of a four-member independent panel. Bergman noted ASCAP panels' judgments are based upon "the unique prestige value of each writer's catalog of original compositions as well as the recent performance activity of those works . . ."

Members of the panel who evaluated Vayo's compositions were:

- Harold Best, dean of the Wheaton Conservatory of Music.
- Jo Ann Falletta, music director and conductor of the Virginia Symphony, Long Beach Symphony, and Women's Philharmonic Orchestras.
- Michael Morgan, music director of the Oakland-East Bay Symphony and guest conductor of many symphony orchestras and opera companies across the United States.
- Tim Page, author and chief classical music critic at *New York Newsday* and a faculty member of the Juilliard School of Music.

Vayo has composed about 15 works, including *Symphony: Blossoms and Awakenings*; *Five Small Packages* for string quartet; *Study in Carmine and Coral* for the piano; *Poem*, a chamber music piece for flute, violin, clarinet, cello, and piano, and *Wings*, a piano and cello piece paying homage to Vayo's interests in Brazilian pop music and jazz.

When maestro Leonard Slatkin picked up his baton Jan. 29, 1993, to lead the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, the concert featured Vayo's *Symphony: Blossoms and Awakenings*, a composition orchestrated for about 80 instruments. The orchestra also performed the symphony at St. Louis' Powell Symphony Hall on Jan. 30 and in February concerts in Lincoln, Neb., and Pasadena, Calif. A recording of the St. Louis symphony's performance of Vayo's composition also has been broadcast on radio across the United States.

A review in the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* called *Symphony: Blossoms and Awakenings* "ear-catching to the extreme."

As a result of his association with the St. Louis Symphony, a St. Louis-based music house, MMB Music, Inc., published Vayo's symphony, as well as *Poem*. "By being published," Vayo said, "these works will gain wider circulation and others will be encouraged to perform them."

In a profile, published in the spring, 1993, edition of *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine*, Vayo said his composing technique begins with a determination of what instruments or voice parts will play a fundamental role in the composition.

"I pace around the office," Vayo explained, "when I'm working on musical ideas. I get up on my feet and try to imagine what the audience hears and how a sympathetic listener would react. For the opening of a piece, I'm always looking for simple ideas that carry the seeds of what comes later. I hear the music in my mind. Then I go to the piano and play things until they match what I'm hearing." Walking, according to Vayo, gets him involved in the music in a visceral way and better helps him to handle the music's emotional flow than would sitting.

"I work with a tape recorder," Vayo said. "When I get an idea, rather than writing it down, I speak it or sing it into a tape to capture the idea. I often sketch with a tape recorder rather than a pencil."

Vayo joined the IWU faculty as an assistant professor of composition and theory in 1991 after teaching at Connecticut College, the National University of Costa Rica, and the National Symphony Youth Program of Costa Rica.

A native of New Haven, Conn., Vayo earned bachelor's and master's degrees in music composition at Indiana University. He was awarded a Doctor of Musical Arts in Composition degree in 1990 from the University of Michigan.

ASCAP was founded in 1914 by a group of publishers and composers, including Irving Berlin, who wrote such standards as *God Bless America* and the Academy-Award winning *White Christmas*, and Victor Herbert, who wrote many famous operettas, including *Babes in Toyland*. It is a performing rights organization, which grants licenses and collects fees for the public performance of copyrighted musical works by its members. ASCAP then passes along royalty payments to its member composers.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 1,800 students in a College of Liberal Arts, College of Fine Arts, and a four-year professional School of Nursing. For five consecutive years, *U.S. News & World Report* has ranked IWU No. 1 in the Midwest among regional colleges and universities in its annual "America's Best Colleges" edition. *U.S. News* also rated IWU as a "best buy" in higher education in its first survey, "Paying for College," published in October, 1993.