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Nine-Year Win Streak: IWU Composer Wins Award from New York-Based Music Society

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Nine-Year Win Streak

IWU Composer Wins Award from New York-Based Music Society

Madison, CT
W. Haven
New Haven
Fairfield, CT
Daily/Wkly
newspapers,
TV

Editor's Note: Award-winning composer David Vayo, a native of New Haven, Conn., and an associate professor of music at Illinois Wesleyan University, is the son of Harold E. Vayo, Jr., a retired employee of General Electric Supply Co., and Joan C. Vayo, a published poet. The Vayo's reside at 52 Strawberry Hill Rd., Madison, Conn.

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--For the ninth 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 and Chairman of the Board Marilyn Bergman wrote IWU President Minor Myers, jr., on Aug. 23 informing him David Vayo, associate professor of music, had won a 1996-97 ASCAP Award.

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

Bergman is an 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 \$500 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.
- 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, radio host, and classical music critic for the Washington Post.
- H. Robert Reynolds, director of bands and director of the Division of Instrumental Studies at the University of Michigan.

(more)

IWU Composer-ASCAP Award/2

"I'm consistently happy with them," Vayo commented on his string of ASCAP awards. "It's a nice way of having my creative efforts recognized."

The ASCAP awards, Vayo said, are "a way to both compensate and boost confidence of composers whose compositions don't bring in a lot of money." Though the award money is minimal, Vayo explained, "the prestige is worth more than the money."

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.

In 1993, maestro Leonard Slatkin led the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Vayo's "Symphony: Blossoms and Awakenings," a composition the St. Louis Post Dispatch praised as "ear-catching to the extreme."

Vayo, born in 1957, 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 of Youth Program of Costa Rica. He coordinates the annual Symposium of Contemporary Music and New Music Cafe concert series, and recently completed a children's play with music set to premiere at IWU in March.

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 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 1,900 students in a College of Liberal Arts, College of Fine Arts, and a four-year professional School of Nursing. A \$15 million athletics and recreation center opened in the fall of 1994; and a \$25 million science building opened in the fall of 1995. The \$4.6 million Center for Liberal Arts--a facility housing 60 faculty offices, six classrooms, and other facilities for social science, humanities business and economics, and interdisciplinary studies' faculty--is slated to open next August. The Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching promoted Illinois Wesleyan to a "Baccalaureate I" institution in 1994, a classification that places it among 161 highly selective National Liberal Arts Colleges in the annual *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges*, another respected college guide, rated IWU "highly competitive (+)" in its latest edition.