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### Pièce pour 2 Harpes à Pédales by Marcelle Soulage: Minerva Teichert Award Winner 2021

Alexah Coon

Grace Tanner

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# *Pièce pour 2 Harpes à Pédales* by Marcelle Soulage

Minerva Teichert Award Winner 2021

SO MANY TALENTED FEMALE MUSICIANS AND COMPOSERS have been ignored throughout the centuries. Wolfgang A. Mozart may be a common household name, but very few people know about his sister Nannerl, who was a talented musician in her own right. Fanny Mendelssohn, the sister of Felix Mendelssohn, would publish scores using her brother's name so they would sell. Marcelle Soulage, a female French composer, also falls into the ranks of forgotten women. We are striving to advance and honor her creative work and give this talented composer the recognition she deserves by performing and recording her composition *Pièce pour 2 Harpes à Pédales*.

While working in the International Harp Archives housed in the BYU library, I came across an old score of *Pièce pour 2 Harpes à Pédales* by Marcelle Soulage. It looked like an interesting harp duet, so I searched for it on many music databases, as well as YouTube, and could not find any recording of it to listen to, professional or otherwise. So I played through a bit of each part and was dying to hear them together. After reaching out to Grace Tanner to play together, we soon started learning our parts and rehearsing weekly, slowly hearing more and more what the piece sounded like as a whole with each rehearsal.

Marcelle Fanny Henriette Soulage (1894–1970) taught at both the Conservatoire de Paris and the Conservatoire d'Orleans as a professor of music theory and piano. She would often publish her works under the male pseudonym Marc Sauval, including two of her orchestral pieces, "Valse" and "Minuet." She wrote several chamber pieces, as well as numerous harp, keyboard, vocal, and choral compositions. Despite being such a prolific composer, so many people have never heard of her. Some of her music, such as this harp duet, doesn't exist in recorded form, and some may only have one or two recordings.

Unfortunately, stories like this are not uncommon. There are composers from around the world whose music does not get played, recognized, or recorded, and their work is forgotten. Soulage is one such composer. She was also another woman composer who felt the need to use a man's name in order to get her work to sell.

We are striving to advance and honor the creative work of women by performing and recording Soulage's harp duet, *Pièce pour 2 Harpes à Pédales*. This piece is wonderful to play and listen to, and we have now performed it in two of BYU Music's live streamed concerts. We also intend to create a professional recording of the piece and reach out to organizations such as the American Harp Society and Harp Column in order to increase awareness of Soulage and her other compositions for the harp within the harp community. Soulage is an incredible composer who deserves to be known and remembered, and whose music deserves to be heard.

—Alexah Coon



Grace Tanner (left) and Alexah Coon (right)

Watch the Performance:

<https://youtu.be/2JmBUWZl4v8>

