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Life@WNET · Staff Spotlight

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Meet Sue Sinclair

The Music Services department at WNET provides music selections to producers for use in their programming, then clears the rights necessary for each program. They build relationships with producers who need unique musical expertise when creating media by meeting with producers, listening to music, and delivering selections that best support the narrative of the media. As Director of this vital department, which is part of the Legal Department, Sue Sinclair is an advisor on copyright law; an interpreter of composer and musician agreements; and a communicator of music knowledge, particularly as it pertains to synchronization with video. "For those of you who have not already connected with Music Services, please reach out and let's chat about anything music-wise you wish. Or, fill out this [form!](#)" Sue says.



Read on to learn about the path that led Sue to WNET, her eclectic musical background, and her favorite places in Greenwood Lake.

What is your background, and how did you land at WNET?

I'm a trained musician – oboist, jazz pianist, composer, arranger, and music engraver. In the spring of 2016, I heard from Rosie Fishel – Director of Music Services at WNET – who asked if I might be interested in applying for the Specialist position in her department. At the time, my husband and I had recently established Sinclair Llewelyn LLC to provide digital media services, as needed, to a variety of clients, and we were preparing to do so remotely, while open sea sailing. It was a tough choice to make – WNET vs. digital nomad – but I think I chose wisely.

Are there unique challenges in clearing music for older programs or series when they are rebroadcast or made available for streaming?

Yes. Intellectual property rights are frequently changing ownership. The internet is our most valuable tool to locate the current IP owners. Then once we do, it's Music Services' task to negotiate a fair and equitable agreement.

Some journalistic sleuthing revealed that you once interned at WNET.**Details, please!**

Did you overhear me chatting throughout the building with EVERYONE here about my long gap year? Yep, I was an intern in Music Services in 1984, working with Rosie Fishel and WNET pioneer music director, John Adams, preparing music cue sheets on an IBM Selectric typewriter with lots of WhiteOut. At the end of the internship, they recommended me for my first music publishing position (of many).

The internship, along with college prep schooling at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan, are two life experiences that have opened many doors of opportunity for me. I wouldn't have been offered my internship had it not been for my time at IAA, nor would I have had a music publishing career without WNET's helping hand.

For our Media with Impact campaign, we've been asking viewers to share stories describing how THIRTEEN has influenced their life. How has THIRTEEN (or the PBS station of your childhood) inspired you?

I grew up in Michigan with three TV stations. One broadcast public access TV and I often watched whatever music educational programming broadcast by the University of Michigan. It was stodgy programming, but very informative when it came to broadening my music knowledge. When I came out East for college, I enjoyed watching Great

Performances and cranking up the stereo during a Simulcast broadcast.

It was nearly the same as sitting in the orchestra for me, and really exciting, knowing someday, I would play in those performing groups.

Which three shows airing on our stations this month are you most likely to watch, stream, or record?

Given my job, fortunately, I see most of the programming while it's in production, but I do enjoy streaming SciTech Now, Treasures of New York, and NYC-ARTS ongoing. (Gees, I hope I don't receive any gripe emails from producers not mentioned!)

Where do you live, and what are some of your favorite places in your neighborhood?

I live in Greenwood Lake, New York, with my husband and Morris the Wonder Dog (a Corgi/flat coat black Lab mix). We enjoy sailing the lake and hiking in Sterling Forest (our backyard). Both provide much-needed respite from a challenging job and tedious 4.5 hour round-trip daily commute. And, there's the garden – one of our sustainable life-hacks, providing much of our food. Finally and perhaps, most oddly, my favorite place is driving the electric car whilst cranking up Frank Zappa or Krszzytof Penderecki – both sound magnificent through its sound system, given the lack of an engine!

What book are you currently reading?

Might I emend the question to "books"? Soul Music by the late Sir Terry Pratchett (re-reading), an intro to Python programming ('cause coding is the way forward, folks), and a facsimile edition of Igor Stravinsky's Rite of Spring (which, if memory serves, my copy was featured on a WNET doc about Diaghilev). I never tire of seeing Stravinsky's thought process as shown through his colored pencils.

Do you have a special interest or hobby outside of work? If so, tell us about it!

Yes! In addition to the above, my special interest is to connect everyone via music. It's the universal language and I'm driven to unite all together through our shared language of music. Altruistic as it reads, it's imperatively doable.

NOTE: The OWL editorial staff welcomes reader comments. Please note that we may edit comments for length, clarity and fairness. We also reserve the right to not post comments that we deem inappropriate and/or malicious in nature.

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