

# MEDIA KIT



Ginny Johnston

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## EMBARK ON A MUSICAL JOURNEY: EXCURSIONS, A FIVE-MOVEMENT WORK FOR SOLO PIANO BY VIRGINIA JOHNSTON *Experience Enriqueta Somarriba's captivating performance*

**March 25, 2024 | Maplewood, New Jersey** – Just in time for Piano Day on March 28, Virginia (Ginny) Johnston announces the release of her composition, *Excursions*, inviting listeners to embark on a captivating musical journey. Comprised of five distinct movements for solo piano, the piece showcases Johnston's versatility as a composer. Recorded with unparalleled artistry by pianist Enriqueta Somarriba, *Excursions* promises to enchant and enthrall listeners with its breathtaking beauty and emotional depth.

“With *Excursions*, I aimed to use both tonal and atonal harmonic palettes, fused with a lot of rhythmic energy, to evoke a range of emotions — including humor and playfulness,” said Johnston. “I wanted to find a harmonic palette that offers an ‘emotional cleanse’ and allows listeners to feel connected to and affected by the music.”

The first movement, "With Energy," is a joyful tribute to the timeless spirit of perseverance embodied by the beloved story of "The Little Engine That Could." Its almost child-like opening melody and sudden contrasts of character and dynamics suggest a youthful energy.

In contrast, the second movement, "At A Distance," takes listeners on a reflective exploration of space and time. It evokes a sense of introspection and contemplation before the lightly energetic third movement, "With Liberty," offers a unique opportunity for artistic expression, granting the performer much freedom in tempo and character.

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The slow “Passacaglia” movement, based on a ten-note pitch series, showcases a different compositional approach. Initially introduced in the bass voice, this atonal motif gradually weaves its way through the upper voices, creating a rich tapestry of sound and rhythm.

Finally, the fifth movement, "Rhythmic Dance," invites listeners to embrace the infectious energy of dance with its exuberant playfulness and slightly irregular melodies. The piece comes full circle, ending with the same whimsical sense of joy and energy with which it began.

In addition to *Excursions*, Johnston has just released three other recordings of her works – Introduction & Variation for Clarinet and Harp, Suite for Brass Trio, and Suite for Clarinet and Piano – all of which are available for streaming on [SoundCloud](#). Sheet music for Johnston's compositions can be purchased on [J.W. Pepper](#) and [Ethos Publications](#).

### **About Virginia (Ginny) Johnston**

Virginia Johnston is a clarinetist, composer, conductor, vocalist, songwriter, drummer, improv comedy performer, and actor. A Syracuse University and Boston University graduate, Johnston is well known for her diverse musical talents and innovative compositions, praised for their originality and emotional depth. Her compositions span a wide range of styles and genres, reflecting her eclectic musical background. An accomplished performer, Johnston is passionate about bringing music to life on stage and in the recording studio.

To learn more about Virginia Johnston's work and stay informed about her future projects, please visit [GinJohnMusic.com](#) and follow her on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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## ABOUT GINNY



As a professional musician, Ginny embraces a wide variety of styles and activities – from classical clarinetist and composer, to songwriter and vocalist, to conductor. She received her Bachelor of Music (Summa Cum Laude, University Scholar) from Syracuse University and her Master of Music (with Honors) from Boston University in both composition and clarinet performance. She has also studied choral conducting at Westminster Choir College through its Continuing Education department.

As an actor, Ginny has stepped into many different roles through her work in improv comedy (performing with Maplewood NJ-based improv troupe “Whatever, Dad” since 2017) and community theater, recently receiving a 2023 NJACT Perry Nomination for Leading Actress for her role as Charlotte in Stony Hill Players’ production of Moon Over Buffalo. She has trained with The Barrow Group, The Deborah Kym Studio, and The Magnet Theater.

Ginny recently completed a 13-year tenure as Executive Director of The Discovery Orchestra, a music education organization whose mission is to teach listening skills to help people connect with classical music. She is currently Finance Director of the organization. The Orchestra focuses on digital programs, with six award-winning public television shows, radio and podcast programs, and other video and educator resources to its credit. Ginny is also an accomplished singer-songwriter, vocalist, and drummer.

### **Conducting and Philanthropy**

Ginny studied choral conducting through Westminster Choir College’s Continuing Education program and received a Certificate in Nonprofit Management from The Nonprofit Center at La Salle University. As a conductor, she leads the Triad Vocal Ensemble. Under the umbrella of Triad Arts Ensemble (a non-profit performing arts

## ABOUT GINNY, continued

organization which she co-founded in 1992), this adult community choir specializes in accessible contemporary repertoire as well as traditional works, with a focus on female composers and New Jersey composers. Through Triad since 1997, Ginny has helped produce annual Canticles for Life AIDS Benefit Concerts to raise funds for three New Jersey organizations that support those impacted by HIV/AIDS. Over the years, more than \$200,000 has been raised for this music ministry. Ginny was appointed Assistant Conductor of the Garden State Symphonic Band in January 2023, and serves as Associate Conductor for the Maplewood (NJ) Concert Band.

### Clarinetist and Composer

Ginny has been an active free-lance clarinetist (and saxophone doubler) in the greater NJ area for over 25 years. She is a long-time member of the Garden State Symphonic Band and often performs with the Encore Orchestra of NJ, as well as in pits for musicals and operas. As a composer, she has written instrumental and choral music for various sized ensembles. Ethos Publications specializes in music written for clarinet and saxophone, and two of her works are included in their catalog. Other compositions are available online at J.W. Pepper.

### Folk Rock Musician and More

Ginny started writing songs as a young girl and then began co-writing with friends in high school. Over the years she has continued to write on her own and in collaboration with lyricist/poet Gretchen Hill and others. After graduate school, Ginny formed a folk-rock band, Mosaic, with several colleagues. She has performed solo and with Mosaic in various settings over the years including coffeehouses, outdoor festivals, First Night Celebrations, and private events. The band often expands its repertoire to include standards and blues when guest pianist Dan Crisci (Ginny's husband) joins. The band has released two albums of Ginny's original music to date.

As a teen, Ginny studied the drums and then continued to perform in the percussion ensemble when a student at Syracuse University. Since then, she has performed as a drummer in numerous community theater productions and more recently with husband Dan Crisci as part of a jazz duo highlighting his original music.



**APPROVED HEADSHOTS**  
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