

FOUR:
External Letters of Evaluation

Biosketches of Outside Reviewers

Professor Kimcherie Lloyd

Professor Lloyd is Professor of Music, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Director of Orchestral Studies, Music Director UofL Opera Theatre at the University of Louisville

Professor Kimcherie Lloyd is currently the Director of Orchestral Studies and Opera Theatre in the School of Music. She also serves as the Director of Undergraduate Studies. In addition to orchestra and opera theatre, Professor Lloyd teaches instrumental graduate conducting and advanced undergraduate conducting. Professor Lloyd holds a Bachelor and Master's degree in piano performance from Eastern Michigan University, a Master's degree in orchestral/opera conducting from Louisiana State University and was a member of the Apprentice Conducting Program in the School of Music at the University of Minnesota. Professionally, Ms. Lloyd served as Director of Music with Kentucky Opera from 1999-2007, where she was the Music Director for the Rudd Young Artist Program and Assistant Conductor/Chorus master for the main stage productions. The University of Louisville Symphony Orchestra, under Professor Lloyd, gave its Carnegie Hall debut in 2006, was a featured ensemble at the CODA National Conference in 2010 and a featured ensemble at the KMEA Conference in 2012. Active in promoting music of living composers, Professor Lloyd's most current recording, Karel Husa "Music of Life," on Ablaze Records, featuring the UofL Symphony Orchestra and cellist Paul York, is available on Amazon.

I knew Professor Lloyd at graduate school, but have had no contact in 20 years.

Dr. Reed Thomas

Dr. Thomas is Director of Bands and Professor of Music and Conducting at Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN

Dr. Reed Thomas is the Director of Bands and Professor of Music and Conducting at Middle Tennessee State University. His responsibilities include conducting the Wind Ensemble and University Chamber Winds, teaching undergraduate courses in conducting and instrumental methods, graduate courses in conducting and wind and orchestral repertoire, and he guides all aspects of MTSU band program. He is the founding conductor of the Three Rivers Wind Symphony, a professional group of wind and percussion players from Northeast Indiana and was the Conductor of the Littleton Chamber Winds in Littleton, Colorado from 1997-99. He has been a guest conductor throughout the United States, South Korea, China, Brazil, Panama, Columbia, Costa Rica, Russia, and several European countries. His groups have been invited to perform at venues throughout the United States, China, South Korea, Panama and Costa Rica. Dr. Thomas is an avid supporter of new music, commissioning over 50 compositions since 2003. Dr. Thomas has two Compact Disc's featuring the MTSU Wind Ensemble on the Naxos Label, including the critically acclaimed "Angel's in the Architecture" and the recently released, "Earthrise."

Dr. Thomas and I were colleagues for three years in the mid-nineties, then went to different institutions and had no contact for six years. We reconnected in 2005 professionally with several commissions and composer/conductor collaborations.

Dr. Dan Welcher

Dr. Welcher is a Professor of Composition at the University of Texas, Austin

Dan Welcher has won numerous awards and prizes and his orchestral music has been performed by more than sixty orchestras, including the BBC Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the Boston Symphony, the St. Louis Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony, the San Francisco Symphony, and the Dallas Symphony. His ballet for two antiphonal string quartets, MUSEON POLEMOS, was premiered by the Miró String Quartet and the Shanghai String Quartet in 2012. A much sought-after speaker who is known for making contemporary music intelligible to lay listeners, Welcher hosted a weekly radio program called "Knowing The Score" on KMFA-FM in Austin from 1999 to 2009. This program won the ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award for

Excellence in Classical Broadcasting. He now hosts the weekly program “From The Butler School of Music” on Saturday evenings at 8:00 on KMFA. Dan Welcher holds the Lee Hage Jamail Regents Professorship in Fine Arts at the Butler School of Music (The University of Texas at Austin), where he directs the New Music Ensemble.

I do not know Dr. Welcher (other than by name and reputation).

Tyler Goodrich White, D.M.A.

Dr. White is Professor of Music (Conducting, Composition, and Strings) and Director of Orchestral Activities at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Tyler White is Professor of Composition and Conducting and Director of Orchestras at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Under his direction, the UNL Symphony Orchestra has been recognized as one of America’s finest collegiate ensembles, selected to perform at national and regional conventions of the Music Educators National Conference. Before coming to Nebraska, White led orchestras at Cornell University and Trinity University (Texas); he appears regularly as guest conductor and clinician with student orchestras nationwide. In 2004, he was a guest lecturer in conducting at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, China, and in September 2007 he was named Best Musical Director at the Waterford International Festival of Light Opera in Waterford, Ireland. White’s ongoing service as Resident Conductor of the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra has also garnered rave reviews from audiences, critics, and professional musicians alike for his ability to make symphonic masterpieces come alive for audiences of all ages. National and international recognition for his compositions has come through awards from ASCAP, BMI, The American Conservatory at Fontainebleau (Prix Maurice Ravel), Vienna Modern Masters, the Omaha Symphony Guild, Tulane University, Indiana State University, and the Southeastern Composers League, and through commissions from the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra, and other ensembles. Most recently, the National Symphony Orchestra (Washington, DC) awarded him one of its American Residencies Chamber Commissions for a work premiered in June 2009.

I do not know Dr. White (other than by name and reputation).

Professor George Work

Professor of Music at Iowa State University

George Work holds Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees and the Performer’s Certificate from the Eastman School of Music, where he also served as teaching assistant to Robert Sylvester. In addition to Robert Sylvester, his principal teachers include Paul Katz, Ronald Leonard, Gabor Rejto, and Carol Work. In 1981, he joined the Ames Piano Quartet, in residence at Iowa State University. The Quartet has released fourteen critically acclaimed CD recordings on the Sono Luminus, Musical Heritage, Dorian, and Albany labels, and has appeared in concert throughout the United States and Canada. International appearances include Kaliningrad, Russia, Salzburg, Austria, Paris and Marseilles, France, Taipei, Tainan, Kashiong and Taichung, Taiwan, Merida, Mexico and Cape Town, South Africa. Work has appeared as soloist with numerous orchestras in the Midwest, as well as in Taiwan, R.O.C and Kaliningrad, Russia.

I know Professor Work professionally and then through the Amara Quartet’s Commission and premiere of my work in the last two years



■ SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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June 1, 2016

William L. Ballenger, Director
School of Music
Texas Tech University
P.O. Box 42033
Lubbock, TX 79409

Dear Dr. Ballenger:

Thank you for the invitation to serve as an external reviewer for Dr. Peter Fischer's application for promotion to Professor. The tenure and promotion process is an extremely important part of our work and as such I understand the great responsibility you have given me. Dr. Fischer and I met while we were both graduate students in the School of Music at Louisiana State University (1989).

It is with pleasure that I have reviewed Dr. Fischer's dossier. From my review I can state, without reservation, that Dr. Fischer is an extremely active composer having completed more than 20 works during the review period with more than 28 performances (national and international) of his works. In addition, during the review period, he has been an invited composer 5 times including New Music Festivals at the University of Pittsburgh Greensburgh, North Carolina School for the Arts, the University of Arizona and the University of Delaware. Works completed during this period include two full concerti, a chamber opera, a piece for wind ensemble, two orchestral works and one string work plus works for solo instruments, chamber ensembles and choral ensembles. His representative recordings are excellent. These recordings showcase both Dr. Fischer's compositional skill and the high caliber of musicians that are commissioning and performing his works.

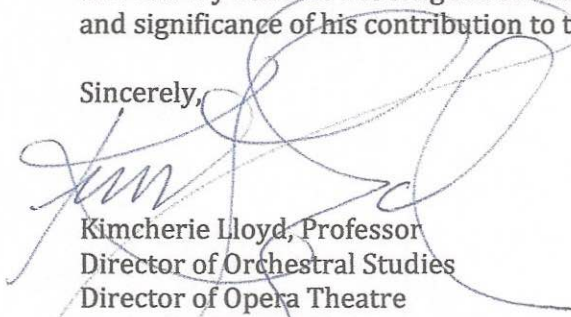
To put this into perspective, the School of Music at the University of Louisville is the home of the Grawemeyer Award in Composition. As a result of being on the UofL faculty at the home of this international prize in composition, I have the opportunity to work with composers from around the globe and of varying compositional

schools. I am able to see first hand the type of work that is currently being done. From this perspective I can say without any hesitation that Dr. Fischer's compositions are current and significant.

What is truly remarkable is that Dr. Fischer is able to complete so many excellent pieces while still maintaining a full load in the composition department. During the review period he was the graduate committee chair for seven MM degrees in composition, seven DMA degrees in composition and five PhDs with an emphasis in composition. In addition, I see that Dr. Fischer teaches theory and composition at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and is the head of the composition area. Clearly, Dr. Fischer is committed to student success and not afraid of hard work!

In closing, although it has been twenty years since I have seen Dr. Fischer, I remember him as a caring individual, insightful and always willing to go the extra mile. I would imagine that has not changed and he is a wonderful colleague. What a pleasure it has been to review his dossier, reacquaint myself with his compositions and add my name to the long list of names of musicians that recognize the relevance and significance of his contribution to the field of music.

Sincerely,



Kimcherie Lloyd, Professor
Director of Orchestral Studies
Director of Opera Theatre
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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter of support for Dr. Peter Fischer and his application for promotion to Full Professor at Texas Tech University. I have known Peter for over 20 years, having first met him during an interview for a faculty position at Adams State College, where I served on the Search committee that hired him. During our time together at Adams State College (now University), I observed Peter completely transform a small, almost non-existent theory program into an energetic, vibrant set of courses where students were challenged and prepared to meet the rigorous demands of musicians as educators, performers, and composers. He completely redesigned the curriculum and instituted a state of the art listening lab and composition studio that was the envy of all the Colorado state schools.

I was so impressed with Peter's work during his first two years, that I asked him to write his first piece for wind band for the ASC Wind Ensemble. The piece was to be premiered the following fall; but, unfortunately, I left ASC and the piece was never performed. Several years later, I asked Dr. Fischer if I could perform the work with the ensemble at my new institution. Rather than just allow me that opportunity, Peter asked if he could write a new one for us, as he felt his composing skills had increased dramatically and the original work no longer met his own expectations. I readily agreed and the result was a five-movement work entitled "Ballet of Mystical Beings." The result of that collaboration has been significant for me personally and professionally. I was so impressed with the work, and felt that other conductors would enjoy getting to know his compositional voice, that I encouraged him to write another. This time, I insisted on organizing a consortium of university wind conductors; no less than 12 university ensembles throughout the United States performed his first symphony for winds, "Earthborn, Old as Mountains". This symphony was the first piece in the MTSU Bands annual Consortium Project, which has actively premiered over 25 new works since the premier of Earthborn. This year, I will again perform Peter's "Ballet of Mystical Beings" as well as his newly composed "Trumpet Concerto", with internationally acclaimed trumpet soloist Jens Lindemann.

For the premier of the Ballet, I invited Peter to come as a guest composer in residence to work with the ensemble, host a couple of masterclasses, and talk with the audience about his new composition. He was fantastic in all facets of the visit. The experience was such a highlight for everyone, that Peter insisted he come for the premier of Earthborn. There were numerous subtleties he wanted the students to perfect for the demonstration CD we were making. Again, the experience was exceptional. His ability to communicate with the students and his creative techniques were first rate. He was able to gently persuade sounds out of the performers and make them feel completely at ease while performing tasks foreign to their ears and experiences. It was a pleasure watching a master teacher work. The current plan is to have Peter in residence with us again next academic year for the Ballet and Concerto concert; a "Peter Fischer" feature concert at MTSU.

In perusing his credentials, I am thrilled to see the high caliber of compositions Dr. Fischer has produced recently. His comprehension of voicing ensembles, his mastery of orchestration, his understanding of the uniqueness of chamber music vs. large choral or instrumental works, and his depth of intellect is remarkable. Many composers aren't as collectively active as it seems Dr. Fischer has been. Many tend to focus their abilities on one or two types of music or performing ensembles, but this is certainly not the case with my experiences and these included examples.

Several years ago, Peter and I discussed getting his wind works established with a major publishing company, but his desire to stay true to his craft taught me the importance of self-publishing. Almost all composers I currently work with are now self-publishing. I often share with young or upcoming composers the points Peter gave me about this topic so many years ago and the resultant conversations have lead to many new composers not joining major companies. He was way ahead of the curve on that and I am excited to see more performances of his music are taking place without the need for him to join a major publishing company. I personally know of several performances, with numerous ensembles in Latin America and Europe, of the two works with which I was directly involved. My dear friend and award-winning composer Nigel Clarke, from the UK, is a huge advocate of Peter's music and has championed it in several communities in England, Belgium, and the Netherlands. His works are being performed and becoming known throughout the world.

In closing, I hope my observations will prove helpful to the committee members acting on Dr. Fischer's promotion to Full Professor. I believe he has the musical ability, leadership qualities, and necessary commitment required to be a senior faculty member. I completely endorse his promotion. If I may be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me directly, I will be happy to speak further on Peter's behalf.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Reed Thomas/dmc". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Dr. Reed Thomas

Professor of Conducting, Director of Bands

Middle Tennessee State University



SARAH AND ERNEST BUTLER SCHOOL OF MUSIC
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May 29, 2016

Dr. William L. Ballenger, Director
School of Music
Texas Tech University
P.O. Box 42033

Dear Dr. Ballenger,

I am pleased to have been asked to submit an external evaluation of the work of Dr. Peter Fischer, composer and theorist, to be included in his file for consideration for promotion to the rank of Professor. I am currently the Lee Hage Jamail Professor of Composition at the University of Texas at Austin, and have served on this faculty since 1978. If anyone is interested in my own credentials, please visit my website: www.danwelcher.com.

Peter Fischer and I are not acquainted, I should say at the outset. I was unfamiliar with his work before agreeing to take on this charge, so my comments are entirely based on the materials submitted for my consideration. I read his Curriculum Vitae thoroughly, and have examined (by reading the scores and listening to the recordings) six of his works. I will describe these works, and my reactions to them, in the following paragraphs.

But first, a word on his overall productivity. I was impressed with the amount of music Dr. Fischer has produced since arriving at Texas Tech: no fewer than 24 named pieces during a nine year period. This would be exemplary even if the pieces were brief and limited in scope, such as piano solos or short works for one instrument and piano. But many of the works listed are quite large. Among them are a 24 minute chamber opera, concertos for violin and trumpet, lengthy pieces of chamber music (his piano quartet, written for the Ames Piano Quartet at Iowa State University, approaches the half-hour mark), choral works, and single-movement works for wind ensemble and symphony orchestra. When I looked at his teaching load, the fact that he has been able to write this much music is a staggering achievement. Creative artists thrive on time and solitude, and it's fairly clear that Dr. Fischer is able to work to capacity even when teaching a rigorous full-time load of courses.

The works I examined will be addressed in reverse chronological order of when they were written. The first piece, completed last summer, is the aforementioned PIANO QUARTET. This thirty minute work in three movements and a finale is almost symphonic in scope, and makes use of a rhythmic cell (the first and second movements are both written in multiples of 5, and the third movement uses that number within a more traditional meter) as a unifying gesture.

The music is hyper-Romantic in nature, with Rachmaninovian piano textures and an overall tendency toward passionate melody. (In fact, I would say that Dr. Fischer is probably a Late Romantic at heart in general, based on the music I listed to.) This very committed performance, by the dedicatees, is a testament to the work: the players clearly felt committed to it, and gave the piece all they had.

Next, I listened to the TRUMPET CONCERTO (2014), written for the Texas Tech Wind Ensemble and performed by that ensemble under Dr. Sarah McKoin, with Will Strieder, trumpet soloist. I found this work to be a delightful contribution to the medium of trumpet/wind ensemble compositions. Each of the three movements last barely six minutes (in contrast to the VIOLIN CONCERTO, which is much heavier in nature and much longer in duration), and each movement has its own character. The second movement is labeled "Troubadour", presumably because the soloist is asked to play in free melismatic lines of melody that resemble that of a singer. The third movement, labeled "Mambo", echoes Latin jazz rhythms in the band, with the trumpet soloist playing what sounds like improvisatory lines (but which are all completely written out). The overall nature of the piece is lighter, more approachable, and more audience-friendly than its elder brother, the VIOLIN CONCERTO. This work, also completed in 2014, is Bergian in its affect: filled with turgid harmonies, a very active solo line, and a very large orchestra which is nonetheless kept in check sufficiently to allow the soloist to shine. As well-handled as the orchestration is, and as ambitious as the piece itself seems to be, I found it just a bit over-written. Climaxes pile upon climaxes, and by the end of the last movement the constant thickness of the texture began to weigh on me. Since I did not have any program notes to refer to, I found myself wondering if this piece might be his doctoral dissertation (which is listed as "VIOLIN CONCERTO"), in a re-working. The style of the music, and the complexity of it, made me think it might well have originally been a piece designed for his professors to study.

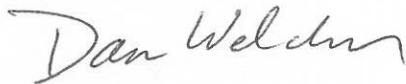
Not so the other orchestral work I listened to, PRIMORDIAL (2010). This terse, almost cinematically crafted ten minute piece was far more successful in my judgment. Episodic in nature (rather than following a strict form), this piece uses the orchestra very well without being overly old-fashioned. The TTU Orchestra played it very well, also, which is a testament to Dr. Fischer's presence on your campus: I sensed a desire on the part of conductor and players to do the very best they could for him here, and the results were admirable.

I listened to O DI'AMARTI O MORIRE (To Love You, or To Die, completed 2010), next. This is a chamber opera for four voices, presented here with a piano reduction. Dr. Fischer wrote his own libretto, based on a true story musicians particular love: the composer Carlo Gesualdo's murder of his wife and her lover. The music refers to at least one Gesualdo motet that I recognized, but is otherwise composed in a late Romantic style. I would have liked to have seen the full score, because the piano reduction frequently resembled 19th century piano music---I suspect that the orchestral version is quite different. The four singers were captivating in their roles, and the little opera packs quite a wallop in its twenty minutes.

Finally, I decided to hear his choral work "I Would Live In Your Love", since it won a prize. Composed in 2011 to poetry of Sara Teasdale, this was represented online by a synthetic MIDI recording---but the music itself is deliciously tonal and sweet. I'm sure that a performance with a real chorus would be quite beautiful: I only wish that a real recording had been uploaded.

In summary, Dr. Peter Fischer's work is well-crafted, inspired, professionally notated, and expert in its use of instruments and voices. These works are worthy, and stand up very well next to the work of Fischer's peers. He clearly has made a dynamic presence on your campus; just listing all the works that TTU performers have given of his music shows a composer who is fully engaged with the faculty and students of the School of Music. I am pleased to have encountered his music this way, and hope to meet him in the near future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dan Welcher". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long, sweeping underline.

Dan Welcher
Lee Hage Jamail Regents Professor of Composition/Director, UT New Music Ensemble
Butler School of Music, University of Texas at Austin
www.danwelcher.com



GLENN KORFF SCHOOL OF MUSIC

5 June 2016

William L. Ballenger, Director
School of Music
Texas Tech University
P. O. Box 42033
Lubbock, TX 79409

Dear Director Ballenger:

I am pleased to offer this brief evaluation of the application of Dr. Peter Fischer for promotion to the rank of Professor at Texas Tech University. I will first state that I do not know Dr. Fischer personally and have had no contact with him prior to his contacting me with the request to serve for the purposes of this evaluation.

Since attaining tenure at Texas Tech, Dr. Fischer has produced an extensive body of more than twenty works; these works encompass an engagingly diverse range of stylistic approaches and techniques, all the while maintaining a recognizable and compelling compositorial voice. Moreover, Dr. Fischer's work has in recent years begun to attract increasing recognition and interest, as represented by his awards from the International Bass Society, Ithaca College, and the Musica Domani Competition, and by a string of successful commissions. This upswing in recognition represents a most promising trajectory for his creative agenda, one that, on the basis of the work's high quality, I can foresee continuing strongly in the coming years.

The works included in the referenced portfolio are uniformly strong and polished in conception and execution. Each individual piece makes a distinctive individual statement, while sharing common penchants for lyrical melodic writing, intricacy of texture, and nonregularized rhythmic drive. In the two orchestral works (*Violin Concerto* and *Primordial*), the emphasis is on timbrally varied, layered textures that support the lyrical melodic flow, balanced by an effective use of driving rhythmic elements. The Trumpet Concerto and Piano Quartet attractively feature asymmetrical, groove-like rhythms within more traditional forms, and the one-act opera *O D'Amarti o Morire* employs lush piano textures to support the supple cantilena of its well-conceived vocal lines. All of these works are significant additions to their respective repertoires and deserve multiple and widespread hearings.



GLENN KORFF SCHOOL OF MUSIC

To judge from his CV, it is clear that Dr. Fischer is an experienced and accomplished teacher, as well. His undergraduate composition syllabus is a model of clarity, rigor, and flexibility. His mentoring of over twenty students through MM, DMA, and PhD programs in composition within ten years is clearly outstanding. In addition, he has extensive experience in teaching theoretical and historical subjects well beyond the composition studio; these experiences undoubtedly inform his composition teaching in profound and manifold ways.

I am very happy to have had the opportunity to get to know Peter Fischer's work, and I look forward to following his career in the coming years. In sum, I find Dr. Fischer's application for promotion to be quite strong, indicative of a creative and teaching record that fully merits promotion to Full Professor; I endorse the application enthusiastically.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyler Goodrich White".

Tyler Goodrich White, DMA
Professor of Music (Composition, Conducting, and Strings)
Glenn Korff School of Music
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Resident Conductor, Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra

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June 6, 2016

Dr. William Ballenger, Director
School of Music
Texas Tech University
P.O. Box 42033
Lubbock, TX 79409

Dear Dr. Ballenger:

I am happy to serve as an outside reviewer for Dr. Peter Fischer as he is considered for promotion to the rank of Professor at Texas Tech University. I am acquainted with Dr. Fischer as a result of a professional collaboration—in February of 2016, the Amara Piano Quartet, of which I am the cellist, gave dual premieres of Dr. Fischer's *Piano Quartet* at Texas Tech University in Lubbock and at Iowa State University in Ames. This collaboration came about through the offices of a mutual friend, TTU violin professor John Gilbert, who first introduced me to the music of Dr. Fischer; I had met Dr. Fischer only once and briefly before the collaboration, though I now consider him a friend.

Dr. Fischer's music is both diverse and distinctive—it ranges from the complex, developmentally driven idiom of the *Violin Concerto* to the simpler, more homophonic language of the *Trumpet Concerto*, but is always imbued with Dr. Fischer's characteristic compositional voice. It never becomes so abstract as to simply baffle the listener, but is, to my ear at least, always essentially lyrical. As a member of a professional ensemble that has premiered many new works, it was this combination of lyricism with an unmistakably original voice that attracted me to Dr. Fischer's music when I first heard it. On hearing from Dr. Gilbert that Dr. Fischer had a piano quartet in progress, I urged him to complete it, indicating that I believed my quartet would be interested in performing it.

Upon reading through the completed score, my colleagues agreed that it was definitely a piece we wanted to learn, and accordingly gave the two first performances in February of 2016. In my opinion, Dr. Fischer's *Piano Quartet* ranks with the very best new pieces that we have premiered, which include works by such noted composers as Lee Hoiby and George Tsontakis. It is my sincere hope that we have many more opportunities to perform it in the coming years.

Dr. Fischer's other compositions are of uniformly high quality insofar as I know them. Particularly impressive is the *Violin Concerto*, which makes remarkable, almost Bergian use of the virtuoso capabilities of the instrument, and the chamber opera *O D'Amarti O Morire*, which makes a tremendous dramatic impact in a succinct, almost miniature form. Dr. Fischer's various awards, most notably the Grand Prize from the International Society of Bassists David Walters Composition Competition, further validate his stature as an outstanding composer, as do the many different venues throughout the US and in Brazil and Canada where his works have been performed.

I had the opportunity to observe Dr. Fischer teach as a part of the aforementioned collaboration, when he gave guest presentations to music history and music theory classes at Iowa State. I found his presentations

concise and well-organized, and he himself to be an animated and engaging lecturer. His sample syllabi and the long list of DMA and PhD students for whom he has served as the primary mentor also speak well of his abilities as a teacher.

In summary, I believe Dr. Fischer to be both an outstanding composer and an exemplary teacher. I heartily endorse his promotion to the rank of Professor based on my evaluation of his materials, but even more on the experience of having worked with him first-hand.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Work". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "George" and the last name "Work" clearly distinguishable.

George Work
Professor of Cello
Iowa State University
Cellist, Amara (formerly Ames) Piano Quartet