

Sylvia Berry was born and raised in the city of Philadelphia. While growing up she heard countless performances of many different kinds of music, but came to study music herself relatively late. She began viola lessons at age eleven, and started studying the piano two years later. She attended the High School for the Creative and Performing Arts where she played both instruments, but upon being accepted to the New England Conservatory in Boston as a pianist, she decided to focus solely on this instrument.

After two years at NEC she transferred to Oberlin Conservatory, where she completed her Bachelor's degree with Peter Takács. While finishing this degree she developed an interest in Historical Performance Practice, and later received a full-tuition scholarship from Oberlin to pursue a Master's degree in Historical Keyboard Instruments. She was the first student in the program to study three instruments, with fortepiano as her primary instrument and organ and harpsichord as secondary instruments. Her teachers were David Breitman, David Boe, and Lisa Goode Crawford.

Upon graduating Sylvia moved to The Netherlands to concentrate on the fortepiano at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, where she studied with Stanley Hoogland and Bart van Oort. One of the most important aspects of her time there was having the opportunity to acquaint herself with numerous antique pianos from Vienna, London, and Paris. She also studied chamber music with such luminaries in the field as Jaap ter Linden, Wilbert Hazelzet, Eric Hoepfich, and Elizabeth Wallfisch. She has participated in masterclasses given by baritone Sanford Sylvan at the Vancouver Early Music Festival and by Elly Ameling at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, and has also studied with Malcolm Bilson in masterclasses in Ithaca, NY, and in The Hague.

Currently Sylvia specializes in Viennese music of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and her knowledge of the repertoire encompasses solo literature, chamber music, and lieder. She appeared frequently in the Utrecht Early Music Festival Fringe Series in the Netherlands as a soloist and a chamber musician, and has also given solo recitals in the US and Italy. In addition to her performing activities she is also active as a writer, most notably penning extensive liner notes for fortepianist Bart van Oort's *Complete Keyboard Works of Mozart*, a 14-CD set released by Brilliant Classics in 2006.

Since returning to the United States and settling in Boston in 2005, she has actively participated in musical life of the city and its environs. As well as giving solo recitals, she founded a chamber ensemble, Boston Hausmusik, whose first season was an all-Mozart series in celebration of Mozart's 250th birthday in 2006. In January 2007, they were joined by renowned historical clarinetist Eric Hoepfich in a concert at Harvard's Memorial Church. Her work in Opera Boston's 2006 production of *La clemenza di Tito* led Lloyd Schwartz to write in the Boston Phoenix, "Special applause for continuo fortepianist Sylvia Berry, [who played] as if she were one of the actors.," while Benjamin Dunham of Early Music America stated of a recent solo appearance, "Berry's recital opened with the quiet, searching adagio of Mozart's Sonata in E-flat Major, K. 282, a gutsy gambit that revealed a poetic sensibility and a willingness to draw listeners in with spaces to pause and reflect. These qualities contrasted nicely with up-tempo movements, which were handled with verve." She will present *The Many Faces of Mozart* again at Oberlin Conservatory in November 2007.