



MEET THE COMPOSER: Gabriella Smith

Age Range:	Elementary, Middle School, High School
Introduction:	Composers write music, just like authors write books. In the Class Notes “Meet the Composer” series, we will learn a little bit about the achievements, backstory, and influences of a variety of composers. Get ready to learn about these influential composers and listen to some of their music.
Total Video Time:	14:52
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 25-30 minutes

BACKGROUND on Gabriella Smith

Gabriella Smith was born in 1991 in Berkeley, California. She began playing violin when she was 7 years old and started composing soon after. In addition to music, Gabriella Smith is very interested in the environment, nature, and conservation. In fact, she sometimes uses recordings of sounds in the environment to incorporate elements of the natural world into her compositions. Gabriella Smith has moved around the country and the world and now lives in Seattle, Washington.

MUSIC of Gabriella Smith

1. In her string quartet *Carrot Revolution*, Gabriella Smith incorporates many *extended techniques* for string instruments. Extended techniques mean playing the instrument in untraditional or unexpected ways. Notice all the different ways the musicians make sounds on their instruments in this excerpt, or small portion, of the piece.

[Carrot Revolution](#). Composed 2015. Video approx. 3.5 minutes.

2. Gabriella Smith used a math equation for the title of this next piece for orchestra: $f(x)=\sin^2 x-1/x$. She explains that the structure of the piece, or how sounds and sections are put into order, is based on the formula. You don't need to understand the equation to enjoy the sounds, though! Like in *Carrot Revolution*, she uses instruments in unexpected ways. Notice when the woodwind players play on just their reeds, without the body of the instrument attached.

[f\(x\)=sin^2 x-1/x](#). Composed 2019. Video approx. 6.5 minutes.

3. Gabriella Smith wrote *Bard of a Wasteland* in response to wildfires in California. The performance video below includes imagery from nature. All the sounds you hear come from the cello or the human voice. The lyrics express concern about the state of the world's environment.

[Bard of a Wasteland](#). Composed 2021. Video approx. 5 minutes.



MEET THE COMPOSER:

Gabriella Smith, cont.

CREATE, CONNECT, & RESPOND to Smith's music

1. Gabriella Smith has said that nature and the environment are essential components of her work. Think about how other composers have depicted different natural environments in the Class Notes lesson [Themed Lesson: Landscapes](#).
2. Gabriella Smith used a mathematical equation for the title of one of her pieces. Think more about the connection between music and numbers in the Class Notes lesson [Music & Math: Numbers](#).

Gabriella Smith

FAST FACTS

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