

ARTIST STATEMENT

Flo Handy Cohn (d.1996, née Flora Morse) is perhaps best known as the wife of two renowned musicians, arranger [George Handy](#) and jazz saxophonist [Al Cohn](#). But Flo Cohn was an extraordinary musician in her own right: a singer, pianist, and composer. Her work was highly esteemed by musicians, but her compositions have yet to be recorded for release. With this award, I propose to record an album of her exquisite piano-voice settings of texts by [Edna St. Vincent Millay](#), [John Steinbeck](#), [Tennessee Williams](#), and other great American writers. My musical partner for the project will be pianist [Aaron Ellington Prado](#).

Flo was my first and most important mentor in the world of jazz, and became a lifelong friend. In her later years, she turned exclusively to the composition of art songs. I served as her muse for many of these, often performing them in the Pocono mountains outside of New York City, where she and her husband Al had settled. Shortly before she died, she honored me with the gift of her entire portfolio of vocal compositions. This grant will permit me to bring these gorgeous pieces to the wider audience they deserve.

My career--like that of Flo Cohn--has encompassed both jazz and classical idioms. My first training was as a classical flutist and twentieth-century music specialist. In my twenties, I turned to vocal performance and jazz studies. Later, I pursued a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology. My discography includes an album of songs by American composer and philosopher John Cage, entitled [La Faute de la Musique](#). [Tales & Tongues](#), my current release, features classics from what I call the "great global songbook," including Argentinean and Yiddish tangos, a French waltz, and songs in Portuguese, Italian, and Judeo-Spanish. It has been very well received nationally. See the attached bio for more information.

[Katchie Cartwright](#)