



First Step Records
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OFFICIAL RELEASE:

Amy Catron, Silver Global Music Award Winner, Album Release

Amy Catron describes the cello as one of the most versatile instruments. She has established herself as one of the leading performers of her generation, currently serving as principal cellist for the Millikin-Decatur Symphony Orchestra (MDSO) and Sinfonia da Camera, as well as an adjunct faculty member for the School of Music at Millikin University where she teaches applied cello, music theory, ear training, lower string methods, and university studies.

Catron was recently honored for her incredible musicianship by receiving a silver medal from the Global Music Awards in March 2019 under the category of "Original Works for Cello." Established in 2011, the Global Music Awards is a well-known international music competition celebrating independent musicians. Past winners include jazz bassist Esperanza Spalding, blues rock band Alabama Shakes and singer Sara Bareilles.

For the Global Music Awards, Catron submitted a compilation of pieces she did over the past three to four years. Among those projects was a world premiere of "Particle I" written by Robert Chumbley.

"I recorded 'Particle I' at Millitrax Studios with Millikin alum Megan Peterson ('17) who helped produce the track," said Catron. "Another piece of the compilation was 'Particle II' by Robert Chumbley who composed the piece for me and for the Millikin Symphonic Wind Ensemble after I premiered 'Particle I.' It was a large undertaking that encompassed the Millikin Wind Ensemble and students." Catron saw this as a way to synthesize two world premieres and resulted in being the perfect vehicle to underscore what Millikin is all about: performance learning and collaboration.

Catron's compilation has been produced and released by First Step Records, a Millikin student-run record label, titled, *Particles and Prayer*, consisting of pieces *Particle I*, *Particle II*, and *Prayer*.

Millikin University prides itself on the use of performance learning, or students learning by doing. Students were in charge of recording, mixing, and mastering the pieces featured on this album. From there, Professor Catron reached out to the student-run record label to produce the product through a company called Disc Makers. One student, senior music business major Rebecca Mendenhall, decided to take on the project. She was in charge of finding a graphic designer and coordinating communications between the artist, designer, and production services of Disc Makers.

“When professor Catron first came to us with the idea of First Step Records producing the CD, I thought it would be a great project to take on to gain experience, and would truly exercise performance learning in the way that Millikin University envisioned. There have been hurdles that we had to overcome, and as we did, it was a learning experience for everyone involved,” says Mendenhall. Catron hopes “this collaboration between faculty, students, and outside composers, marketing and other professionals is an experience that will serve as a model for future productions and performance learning ventures.”

Cd's available at: <https://firststeprecords.bigcartel.com>