

*Lawrence Kramer, “That Lonesome Whistle” (2010) and “Stopping by Woods” (2019)*

The title “That Lonesome Whistle” may recall a phrase from a well-known country song by Hank Williams. My taste in music does not run that way, but this particular phrase is an almost Proustian exception. I associate it with the early days of my residence in the Hudson Valley (ca. 1978), when I frequently had to take the train by the Hudson River to and from New York, always arriving upstate after dark. Those trips, in turn, brought back certain childhood memories of listening, in bed late at night, to train whistles sounding across the Pennsylvania countryside, where my great aunt had a house barely a minute’s walk from the railroad crossing.

2019 brought new works into the public domain in the US after a 20-year drought foolishly imposed by Congress on behalf—literally—of Mickey Mouse. One of these new public domain texts was Robert Frost’s “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening.” As the year approached, I resolved to be, if I could, the first composer to write an unfettered musical setting of this iconic text. I composed the song between Christmas and New Year’s Eve, waiting to insert the final measure at 12:01 AM on January 1, 2019.

**Lawrence Kramer** divides his time between scholarship and composition. His work has won several competitions and received numerous performances across the United States, from New York’s Lincoln Center to the campus of the Santa Fe Opera to San Francisco, from Cambridge, Massachusetts to Jacksonville, Florida, and throughout Europe, including Vienna, London, Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Belgrade, Krakow, Stockholm, and Bern. Read more at [musicbylawrencekramer.com](http://musicbylawrencekramer.com).