

**Karen A. Shaffer's
Acceptance Speech
at the
56th Annual Special Merit Awards Ceremony
January 25, 2014
Maud Powell – Lifetime Achievement Award**

In behalf of Maud Powell and The Maud Powell Society for Music and Education, I thank The Recording Academy for this great honor.

This pioneering American violinist's remarkable legacy was unknown when I founded The Maud Powell Society for Music and Education in 1986.

We celebrate Maud Powell today thanks to those who have served on our board and supported us as Friends, the wonderful violinists who have honored her legacy and the young virtuosi, like Rachel Barton Pine, who are carrying forward her ideals.

The honor means a great deal to me personally, as I have devoted 35 years to writing Maud Powell's biography, (now working on the 2d edition), reissuing her recordings, publishing her transcriptions, leading the Maud Powell Society, and co-founding a music celebration in her name.

I am grateful to the distinguished members of the recording industry and Academy – the late John Pfeiffer, Ward Marston, and Klaus Heymann – who have enabled this Victor Immortal's recorded art to be heard once again – now on the Naxos label.

There was a time when Maud Powell's name was a household word.

Yet, as Powell's biographer, I have frequently been asked: Who is Maud Powell? and . . . Why does she matter? Here is my reply:

At a time when women could not vote, Maud Powell set out to fulfill the gifts within her.

Despite the barriers she had to overcome, the naysayers who belittled her ambition, she forged a path for others to follow.

She dared to be herself, to fulfill the promise within her – to bring music to the world and speak the truth that was in her.

Nothing could stop her rise to fame – for once she lifted her bow to her violin, she played on the heartstrings of the universe and brought a new sound into the world –

a woman's voice commanding the instrument of her choice – speaking to millions in tones they had never heard before.

Her own commanding presence brought forth the best in all who heard her.

She proved that anyone can achieve -- who dedicates themselves to the truthful service of their art.

Maud Powell brought a light into the world that can never be extinguished.

Even now she holds her lamp alight as the first female instrumentalist to receive The Recording Academy's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Why does Maud Powell matter?

She reminds us that the flame within us can be a beacon of light for all to follow.

Thank you for helping to make Maud Powell's name a household word once again.

**RACHEL BARTON PINE'S ACCEPTANCE SPEECH
AT THE
56TH ANNUAL SPECIAL MERIT AWARDS CEREMONY
JANUARY 25, 2014
MAUD POWELL -- LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

I'd like to express my gratitude to Karen Shaffer for her incredible dedication and efforts to preserve and promote the legacy of this extraordinary artist who, as I realized about an hour ago, is the only female being honored tonight.

Nearly 20 years ago, I discovered Maud Powell through the fascinating biography Karen had written. Maud Powell was recognized as America's greatest violinist and one of the pre-eminent musicians in the world at the turn of the last century.

In 1904, Maud became the first instrumentalist to record for the Victor Red Seal label (now RCA Red Seal), making more than 100 acoustic recordings before her untimely death in 1920. She was so popular that people throughout America bought the recently invented phonograph just to hear Maud's music. She was the first woman to dare to lead a quartet with men as the other members and the first white instrumentalist to champion works by composers of African descent.

I discovered that Maud Powell's legacy has left a profound impact on all of today's American classical artists. The leading industry publication of her time called her "long one of the most powerful forces for the advancement of music in America."

Maud Powell educated a nation that rarely had access to high quality concert performances. She famously said that popular music was familiar music, and that if classical became more familiar it would become more popular, and she definitely proved this to be true.

Maud Powell's story resonates powerfully for me and I've tried to model my career in music around Maud and the example she set:

- By performing music by deserving composers, both well-known and lesser known,
- By introducing classical music to new audiences across the country,
- By embracing the latest technology to spread great art to listeners everywhere,
- And by educating and encouraging the next generation of young artists.

Despite living long before the creation of the Recording Academy (and even before the introduction of the electric microphone), Maud Powell embodied the mission of the Recording Academy – to positively impact the lives of musicians, of industry members, and of our society at large.

Thank you very much for this great honor.