

In November 2005 I received an e-mail from Jila Nikpay, who wanted music for her book, *Heroines: Transformation in the Face of Breast Cancer*, a collection of photographs of breast cancer survivors. The photographs are accompanied by poetic descriptions of each woman, written by Jila herself. I thought, "Nice project, but I'm too busy." Rather reluctantly, I agreed to meet with her, and went armed with a list of other women composers who would be perfect for the job. But when I saw the remarkably expressive photographs and read the poetry, I began to hear music, and to imagine how the poems might be set... The result is *Music for Heroines*, a cycle of five songs on Jila's poems. It was premiered at the book's publication party in the spring of 2006.