1932 was an active year for Amy Marcy Cheney Beach, known as the “dean of American women composers.” Beach achieved one of her lifelong dreams by composing the opera, *Calbido*, Op. 149, in 1932 at the MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire. The opera was one of Beach’s late works from the period 1931-1944, which included a cantata; many songs, anthems and other choral works, solo piano works; and the largest of the chamber works, the *Piano Trio*, Op. 150. This one-act, chamber opera, based upon the imprisonment of the pirate Jean Lafitte in the Calbido in New Orleans, was the end-product of a collaboration between the author Nan Bagby Stephens and Mrs. Beach. Ms. Stephens was a one-time resident of the MacDowell Colony, where Beach was both a semi-permanent resident and a respected matriarch. The work employs Creole folk melodies and jazz elements that had heretofore been absent in Beach’s musical output. The critical analysis of this work explores not only the musical elements and compositional processes of Amy Marcy Beach, but also the socio-political and musical attributes of this one-act opera.

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