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EVALUATING APPROPRIATE REPERTOIRE FOR DEVELOPING SINGERS: AN AFRICAN- AMERICAN ART SONG ANTHOLOGY

Nicole Michelle Sonbert

University of Kentucky, nsonbert@gmail.com

Author ORCID Identifier:

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2244-158X>

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Nicole Michelle Sonbert, Student

Dr. Noemi Lugo, Major Professor

Dr. Michael Baker, Director of Graduate Studies

EVALUATING APPROPRIATE REPERTOIRE FOR DEVELOPING SINGERS:
AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN ART SONG ANTHOLOGY

DMA Project

A DMA Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Musical Arts in
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By
Nicole Michelle Sonbert

Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Noemi Lugo, Professor of Voice

Lexington, Kentucky

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ABSTRACT

EVALUATING APPROPRIATE REPERTOIRE FOR DEVELOPING SINGERS: AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN ART SONG ANTHOLOGY

Finding appropriate and unique repertoire for the developing singer is a daunting task and ongoing challenge in the teaching profession. There are limited resources to help guide teachers in selecting varied, yet suitable repertoire that falls outside of the standard Western European musical canon. The early years, ages 17–21, are crucial to establishing a healthy and well-rounded vocal approach to singing, while also introducing the student to a wide variety of music. African-American art song is a great option for developing singers. Repertoire should allow a student to grow musically, vocally, and artistically according to the singer's specific stage of learning and interests. Selecting repertoire through established criteria that considers the student's personal and cultural interests (in addition to pedagogical needs) allows for a good foundation to support a healthy vocal development.

Consideration of numerous elements, such as historical, musical, physical, emotional, and vocal characteristics offers a framework for a comprehensive approach in the selection process. In *Literature for Teaching: A Guide for Choosing Solo Vocal Repertoire from a Developmental Perspective*, Christopher Arneson provides a wonderful base for further study, and application into repertoire selection. Through the utilization of Arneson's suggestions, I have created a rubric that quantifies key criteria important to the evaluation of repertoire. Through this rubric, a clear evaluation and assigned difficulty level is provided for each song in the collection.

This compilation of songs is only the beginning to a proposed anthology entitled: *African-American Art Song for the Developing Singer*. Each song offers a historical and pedagogical summary that includes the following: composer and poet biographies, text and translations, basic form, original key and other keys available, performance notes, range, tessitura, suggested voice type, tempo suggestions, difficulty level, and other available editions. This unique anthology of African-American art song offers teachers with a resource that evaluates appropriate repertoire for developing singers, between the ages of 17–21, that is clearly accessible.

KEYWORDS: Developing singer, Appropriate repertoire, Rubric, African-American art song, Anthology

Nicole Michelle Sonbert

December 4, 2017

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By

Nicole Sonbert

Dr. Noemi Lugo
Director of DMA Project

Dr. Michael Baker
Director of Graduate Studies

December 4, 2017

DEDICATION
Dr. Louise Toppin, and Dr. Noemi Lugo

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PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

Finding appropriate and unique repertoire for the developing singer is a daunting task and ongoing challenge in the teaching profession. Teachers must choose vocal literature that not only enables students to perform at their level of ability but which also cultivates the personal awareness needed by each student for a free and efficient sound. In search of appropriate repertoire, teachers are often guided to look at the standard canon of literature; however, this is a limiting view into the vast world of music. When selecting music for students, it is imperative that educators ask the following questions: Is there a process for selecting appropriate repertoire? Is the approach to this process important? and is assigning music only from the standard canon of western art song limiting for students? The answer is yes to all three of these questions: there can be a detailed and analytical method utilized when selecting repertoire; the approach to this process is multifaceted, and educators can find music that is appropriate outside of the limited traditional musical canon of literature. Although exploring repertoire outside of the standard Western European musical canon, such as songs by African-American composers, allows teachers to introduce students to lesser known works and composers, they must also remember the importance of being careful to select appropriate repertoire.

Great care and consideration should be given when developing a comprehensive approach to the selection process that supports each student's personal interests, pedagogical needs, and acknowledgement of the historical components involved with teaching repertoire to developing singers between the ages of 17–21. Before assigning music, it is crucial to observe and analyze aspects of the developing singer and the

challenges that exist within the music itself. In *Literature for Teaching: A Guide for Choosing Solo Vocal Repertoire from a Developmental Perspective*, Christopher Arneson provides a comprehensive approach that can help teachers evaluate the elements involved when selecting appropriate repertoire. Arneson suggests the creation of a rubric, which is a critical tool to use when assigning and evaluating music. A rubric forms a rating system that clearly defines and determines a difficulty level associated with each song. For this study, I created a rubric based on criteria chosen from Arneson's suggestions. This rubric will supply teachers with an easy-to-use resource that accurately evaluates and assigns a difficulty level to music selected for developing singers.

Chapter one discusses broadening teacher knowledge of diverse repertoire, explains why art song is a great choice for developing singers, and presents resources that are available to help with repertoire selection. A review of the literature will offer insight into pedagogical and historical elements that are typically studied by teachers when selecting repertoire through a comprehensive approach, especially one that helps with the development of the beginning singer. Resources that involve the study of African-American music, as well as current anthologies of art songs by African-American composers will show that there is a plethora of accessible repertoire available to broaden the musical experiences for students. This review of current resources illustrates the need for an anthology that clearly assigns a difficulty level for each song and one that focuses on African-American art song for the developing singer.

Chapter two examines the genre of American art song. Careful attention is given to defining the European tradition of art song and its influence on the development of African-American art song. Focus is given to composers of African descent, particularly

those from the United States, who self-identify as African-American. Chapter two provides a brief chronological summary of the development of African-American art song from its inception to the present day, which will explore the historical and cultural background associated with this specific repertoire and the integral role it plays in American art song history.

Chapter three provides an overview of Arneson's criteria for evaluating repertoire and an explanation of the rubric specifically created for this study. In the rubric, a numeric ranking is assigned to eleven categories, from beginning (ranking 1) to advanced (ranking 5). The criteria for these eleven categories is derived from the exploration of three broad areas: the foundational, the musical, and the textual elements. The eleven categories include the following areas: range/tessitura, rhythm/meter, tempi, melodic line, accompaniment support, diction/articulation/language, duration and form, text interpretation/characterization, phrase length, lyrical flow, and melismatic phrasing. An overall score and difficulty level for each song is determined based on the ranking assigned to each category. In this rating system, a specific level of difficulty (i.e., beginning, intermediate, advanced) can be assigned to each song for the developing singer. This rubric offers teachers a comprehensive resource for evaluating repertoire by looking at the songs through established guidelines, which determines an assigned difficulty level for each selection.

Chapter four utilizes the rubric created in chapter three to evaluate fourteen selections of African-American art song for the developing singer. The songs are ordered in the anthology by level of difficulty, from beginning to advanced, which allows the evaluated repertoire to be explored as the student independently develops. The evaluation

of each song begins with a short summary of the following: range, tessitura, suggested voice type, tempo markings, basic form, available keys and editions. Next, an evaluated rubric is shown with assigned rankings of each category and an overall difficulty level. The original poetical text and the text found within the song's composition are provided, as well as poet and composer biographies. The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is provided for songs outside of the English language. The evaluation of each song ends with a paragraph that provides further notes on the evaluated composition. Chapter four is designed and formatted so that teachers will have access to a variety of African-American art song, as well as a comprehensive evaluation of each song.

When assigning repertoire, educators need to assess the difficulty level of each song and often have limited time available for a comprehensive assessment. For the purposes of this study, several African-American art songs were selected for examination based on the variety and suitability they offered to the developing singer. The variety of songs chosen provide options for different voice types (soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, etc.) and levels of difficulty, from beginning to advanced.

The fourteen selections represent only a few of the songs that will be included in a proposed anthology titled, *African-American Art Song for Developing Singers*. The idea for this proposed anthology was the result of my personal experiences and vocal training. As a developing singer, I was uncertain about studying music that was outside the canon of popular and musical theatre genres. When my voice teacher, Dr. Louise Toppin, assigned the song, *Compensation*, by Charles Lloyd, Jr., I was inspired to study more classically based selections. As I further my education, I realize that many teachers and students are unaware of this repertoire and it is rarely assigned or studied by singers (in

comparison to other American art songs). This realization led to further research concerning how teachers assign appropriate repertoire and if a comprehensive system for evaluating vocal repertoire exists amongst the teaching profession. African-American repertoire is inspirational in my journey as an artist and a teacher, and I am honored to share this study. This unique anthology came from my own desires, as a teacher, to have a resource that I could use with developing singers in the voice studio, and it is with great joy that I share these fourteen selections, which are representative of a proposed anthology of *African-American Art Song for Developing Singers*.

CHAPTER ONE:

Selecting appropriate repertoire for developing singers is an important part of the vocal training process. Teachers must learn to evaluate many factors which impact a student's vocal development. According to John Nix, professor of voice and vocal pedagogy at the University of Texas at San Antonio, "a teacher can hamper the student's rate of development or even tear down the technique they helped the student acquire by assigning inappropriate literature."¹ The correlation between repertoire selection and vocal technique is important to remember when working with developing voices.

The term, "developing," refers to voice students who are becoming skilled, increasing their mastery. In the article, *The Developing Voice*, Graham Welch supports the use of this term stating, "the development-related labels also address our research and 'craft knowledge' evidence that singing behaviours can change and are not immutably fixed."² Developing singers can represent a very broad age range; for the purpose of this study, developing singers are considered between the ages of 17–21. The decision to focus on this age range was determined by physiological growth of the human voice, as well as the maturation that occurs after puberty. According to Leon Thurman and Carol Klitzke, "On average, [puberty] begins in females at about age 10 years and extends to about 16 years. In boys, it begins at about age 12 years and extends to about 18 years."³ The article further discusses that observable growth and change in the physical body,

¹ Barbara M. Doscher, *From Studio to Stage: Repertoire for the Voice*, ed. and annot. John Nix (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002), vii.

² Graham Welch, "The Developing Voice," in *Bodymind & Voice: Foundations of Voice Education*, rev. ed., ed. Leon Thurman and Graham Welch, vol. 3, bk. IV, ch. 3 (Collegeville, Minnesota: The VoiceCare Network, 2000), 712.

³ Leon Thurman and Carol Klitzke, "Highlights of Physical Growth and Function of Voices from prebirth to age 21," in *Bodymind & Voice: Foundations of Voice Education*, rev. ed., ed. Leon Thurman and Graham Welch, vol. 3, bk. IV, ch. 2 (Collegeville, Minnesota: The VoiceCare Network, 2000), 697.

during puberty, is different and varied for each person.⁴ Thurman and Klitzke state: “the end age parameter of the “young” voice is established by Hirano’s finding (1981) that nearly all of the macro- and micro-architecture characteristics of adult laryngeal anatomy have been completed by about age 20–21.”⁵ Debate and uncertainty concerning the defining features of the young and developing voice is still prevalent amongst voice teachers and professionals. According to Welch, “treating each student as a *client for development* would seem sensible.”⁶ The term ‘developing’ allows for the flexibility and variance that exists amongst singers, especially younger singers between the ages of 17–21. The developing singer, furthermore, embraces a student-centered pedagogy that requires teachers to explore repertoire of various levels from the beginner to the more advanced. Teaching singers through a student-centered approach involves a multifaceted process that should consider the evaluation of many elements—the vocal technique, the historical and foundational knowledge being learned, and the personal interests and goals of the individual student—all working congruently as a part of the educational journey for singers. By analyzing these personal, historical, and pedagogical components collectively, teachers are better equipped to begin the process toward selecting appropriate repertoire for developing singers.

The importance of assigning appropriate repertoire and how teachers can approach the selection process is the focus for this study. Jung draws attention to the importance of the inspirational role that music selection can play in a student’s development as a performing artist. Jung states that “it is repertoire, I believe, that most

⁴ Thurman and Klitzke, “Highlights of Physical Growth,” 698.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Welch, “The Developing Voice,” 715.

critically guides vocal development and cultivates musical interest and passion on the student's part."⁷ It is important for educators to understand that singers find inspiration from a variety of repertoire. Teachers can enhance the learning experience by offering diverse and suitable repertoire. It is the teacher's responsibility to introduce singers to new and appropriate music. When educators only assign music they know, they limit choices and potentially miss out on sharing repertoire that could be very inspirational for their students.

Traditional college repertoire classes tend to focus on a narrow canon of music that is derived primarily from Western European classical music. Teachers and students should be challenged by new and diverse repertoire. By looking through a lens that only includes a standard canon of study, students and educators are limited and undiscovered interests left undeveloped. To develop and foster these undiscovered interests, teachers must go beyond the repertoire they know, continuously exploring and searching for new repertoire. A teacher's knowledge of repertoire is never complete, and the continuous commitment required to find new repertoire can be time consuming. As Joan Frey Boytim advises, "making song literature choices for your students takes a great deal of time if you are serious about treating each student as a unique person."⁸ It is important for teachers to commit consistently to the expansion of their own knowledge of repertoire, which can help meet the needs of individual singers.

Educators and singers are not always aware of the vast amount of vocal music available to study and perform. By introducing developing singers to new and appropriate

⁷ Joo-Young Jung, "Young Singer and the Repertoire" (DMA diss., University of Washington, 2010), 7.

⁸ Joan Frey Boytim, *The Private Voice Studio Handbook: A Practical Guide to all Aspects of Teaching*, rev. ed. (Milwaukee, WI; Hal Leonard Corporation, 2014), 38.

songs they may not know, a student's interest, knowledge, and appreciation of a variety of music and musical styles increases. In his book entitled *Profiles in Vocal Pedagogy*,

Weldon Whitlock explains:

In knowing what to teach, the teacher's knowledge and experience are constantly strained to the breaking point. No matter how wide and extensive the teacher's repertoire, it is never comprehensive enough. The demands for repertoire are different for each individual pupil. The good teacher continually carries on his [or her] study in repertoire and adds to it.⁹

An environment for creative and free exploration by the singing artist can be nurtured by broadening teacher awareness and knowledge of repertoire that considers the student's needs, embracing a student-centered pedagogy. In the article, "Mirrors and Windows: Black Poetry in this Era," DaMaris B. Hill shares the words of Lucille Clifton: "children- and humans, everybody-all need both windows and mirrors in their lives: mirrors through which you can see yourself and windows through which you can see the world."¹⁰ It is crucial that voice teachers share and introduce different kinds of music outside of the traditional canon, cultivating and inspiring each individual student's personal passions and interests.

The process of finding and analyzing a variety of repertoire can be a challenging task for educators. A large collection of vocal literature can be explored and studied in the vocal studio, including music such as operatic arias, oratorio arias, chamber music, and art song. On any given audition day for singers, you will often hear the music of Purcell, Mozart, Quilter, or Schubert, a few of the composers found within the standard

⁹ Weldon Whitlock, *Profiles in Vocal Pedagogy: A Textbook for Singing Teachers* (1975) quoted by Joan Frey Boytim, et al, *Solo Vocal Repertoire for Young Singers: An Annotated Bibliography* (National Association of Teachers of Singing, 1982), i.

¹⁰ DaMaris B. Hill, "Mirrors and Windows: Black Poetry in this Era," *American Studies* 56, no. 1 (2017), 207-219.

canon of vocal literature. This traditional canon, however, does not always include music that represents the diverse interests and backgrounds of every singer. Looking at all this music can seem overwhelming, and there are limited resources available to help teachers discern which music is appropriate for developing singers. How do voice teachers know where to start looking for examples of this repertoire and evaluate the song's appropriate level of study?

Scholars often agree that art song is a great option to explore when developing and building voices. As Bonnie Von Hoff states, "These [art] songs are meant to serve as a foundation to help ensure vocal health."¹¹ Adam Michael Webb continues to support art songs as an important part of vocal study and training because they "represent an accessible repertoire for the young voice and are generally less difficult than operatic and oratorio repertoire."¹² Art Songs can help support the technical development and freedom that developing singers will need as they continue to build their own skills. Not only does art song offer a great foundation for vocal technique in varying difficulty levels, but these songs offer a wide array of options to explore culturally and historically.

In the art song genre, developing singers are usually introduced to composers representing earlier musical periods, often leaving the music of the twentieth century and beyond unexplored. Sharon Mabry tells us that "the incorporation of diverse styles of twentieth-century music into the normal study routine of a young singer is valuable in priming that singer's vocal, aesthetic, and physical responses to the organization of

¹¹ Bonnie Von Hoff, "Vocal Health and Repertoire for the Dramatic Mezzo-Soprano: A Suggested Course of Study" (DA diss., Ball State University, 2013), 7.

¹² Adam Michael Webb, "Art Songs for Tenor: A Pedagogical Analysis of Art Songs for the Tenor Voice" (DMA diss., University of Iowa, 2012), 3.

musical materials.”¹³ Thus, the introduction to a variety of art songs from all musical periods can help support the development and growth of developing singers as musicians and artists.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Resources to help teachers find this varied repertoire have grown tremendously but still lack a focus needed for the developing singer. Berton Coffin’s collection titled *Singer’s Repertoire* offers a guide to selecting repertoire for singers. It is divided into four parts by voice type and includes over 8,200 songs. Composer, title, vocal range, and publisher index the collection, but this does not offer as much detail as we find in the book, *From Studio to Stage*, by Doscher and editor Nix.¹⁴ In Doscher’s catalogue, one discovers descriptions of each song (including poet, language, tempo, teaching comments or observations, ranges for each key, tessitura, keys available, difficulty level, voice types (and genre notes), a synopsis of text or translations, and commonly found editions. Furthermore, this source is well organized and easy to search, providing five comprehensive indices (composer, title, poet, range, and difficulty level) for each song’s difficulty level. Difficulty level and historical information are often left out of resources concerning repertoire, so this is a useful addition. Overall, Doscher’s comments and notes on each song provides a plethora of information to assist the teacher and/or student with their discovery of appropriate repertoire, but the catalogue is not designed specifically for the developing singer.

In contrast, J. Arden Hopkin’s book *Songs for Young Singers: An Annotated List*

¹³ Sharon Mabry, *Exploring Twentieth-Century Vocal Music: A Practical Guide to Innovations in Performance and Repertoire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 16.

¹⁴ Barbara M. Doscher, *From Studio to Stage: Repertoire for the Voice*, ed. and annot. John Nix (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002).

for Developing Voices does focus on the developing singer.¹⁵ In this collection, the repertoire predominately focuses on young students, and the songs within are organized by difficulty level. The difficulty level is based on an overall scored ranking of “seven values: melodic contour, phrasing, language, rhythm, accompaniment, harmonic language, and dynamics.”¹⁶ Songs and complete anthologies of songs are also given an overall difficulty level ranking. Although this resource does provide a numerical ranking and a brief evaluation for the songs listed, additional information is missing such as analytical notes that look at the historical and theoretical components.

Joan Frey Boytim is another well-respected scholar of beginning vocal repertoire. She has numerous anthologies devoted to the beginning singer, including *36 Solos for Young Singers*, *Easy Songs* (arranged for various voice types), and *The First Book of Broadway Solos* (arranged for various voice types). In these anthologies, the songs are listed with very little information concerning why the songs were chosen for inclusion. These anthologies do not include any detailed information concerning the following categories: poet, composer, musical analysis, historical or theoretical notes, range, and there are no difficulty levels assigned or rankings given for each song. These anthologies do, however, present and introduce a large amount of repertoire that can be easily available in one resource.

Research related to vocal repertoire that is focused on the specific needs associated with developing singers is growing. Therefore, more attention is also being brought to the subject area of choosing music for the younger voice. In Joo-Young Jung’s

¹⁵ J. Arden Hopkin, *Songs for Young Singers: An Annotated List for Developing Voices* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2002).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, ix.

2010 dissertation, she states that it is important to remember the “characteristics of the young voice, and to establish what the young singer requires from repertoire in order to safely develop their voice and cultivate their innate musicality.”¹⁷ In her project, Jung addresses the characteristics of the younger voice and the criteria for repertoire selection; this information is then applied to the analysis of seven songs that are “commonly assigned to beginning students.”¹⁸ Jung provides details of the following elements: translations, the form of the song, a description of the melody, range, dynamics, vowels and breath management, phrase length, accompaniment, and rhythm. Though this source is quite descriptive in nature, there is little information concerning each song’s historical and poetic components. When working with developing singers, teachers also should be cognizant of the maturity level of their students. In Boytim’s book, *The Private Studio Handbook: A Practical Guide to All Aspects of Teaching*,¹⁹ she states that “the songs must appeal to the student’s present maturity level and still have lasting value.”²⁰ Developing singers should be able to relate to their repertoire, the text, and the music. With different maturity levels and experience, varying degrees of comprehension are attainable.

When students are introduced to new music, they should be encouraged to understand the text, the composer’s history, and the musical era in which each song was composed. Therefore, when studying songs and preparing for performance, students should consider the pedagogical, theoretical, and historical elements of the music as well as the text. Gerald Klickstein, in his book *The Musician’s Way: A Guide to Practice*,

¹⁷ Jung, “Young Singers and the Repertoire,” 55.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁹ Boytim, *The Private Voice Studio Handbook*, 38.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Performance, and Wellness, supports this idea and recommends that the learning process should cultivate a deepened awareness of the music. Klickstein states, “When you research a composition’s background and, with vocal music, reflect on a text, you bond with the composer and the culture surrounding the music’s creation.”²¹ In performance, an expressive interpretation can be heightened when it involves research that incorporates the history, text, and the composer in combination with studies of the theoretical and pedagogical aspects. In the voice studio, it is equally important for teachers to foster this comprehensive approach to the learning process.

Resources are available that can help teachers and students study the historical, theoretical, and textual meanings associated with each song; however, some of these sources include only a small amount of information about African-American art songs. For instance, a well-respected and widely used art song guide is Carol Kimball’s *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature*.²² Kimball, an Emerita Professor of Voice and a Barrick Distinguished Scholar at the University of Nevada, has written numerous articles on song literature. Kimball’s book details many major elements of art song literature by a variety of composers; however, very few songs by African-American composers can be found. Like Kimball’s work, *The Art of the Song Recital* by Emmons and Sonntag can also assist teachers. Emmons and Sonntag give ideas and suggestions on recital programs that are divided by voice type. This resource includes a lot of repertoire, but only a small portion of the music represents art songs by African-American composers. Although these resources offer only a limited representation of African-American composers, more

²¹ Gerald Klickstein, *The Musicians Way: A Guide to Practice, Performance, and Wellness* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 44.

²² Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature*, rev. ed. (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2006).

research is being conducted and material being published.

In *The Music of Black Americans: A History*, Eileen Southern studies the historical, cultural, and stylistic elements associated with African American music.²³ Samuel Floyd, leading scholar and music educator, received his M.M.E. degree and Ph.D. from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and is the founder and director emeritus of the Center for Black Music Research. Floyd offers insight into the analysis of music by African-American composers in his book, *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting its History from Africa to the United States*. Additionally, he was editor of *Black Music in the Harlem Renaissance: A Collection of Essays*, and was editor-in-chief for the *International Dictionary of Black Composers*. Floyd has also written articles that have appeared in a variety of publications including *Black Music Research Journal*, *Black Perspective in Music*, *19th-Century Music*, *American Music*, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, to name a few. Floyd's work centers on teaching music without restriction to the traditional canon, and he offers explanations and analysis of the depth and power that can be found in compositions by African-American composers.

Helen Walker-Hill offers research that reveals African-American women composers from the late-nineteenth century to the late-twentieth century in her monumental work *From Spirituals to Symphonies: African-American Women Composers and Their Music*. Walker-Hill also provides an excellent list of these composers, which can be found in the appendix of her book titled "Selected List of Composers."²⁴ This book is one of the few resources that brings attention to African-American women

²³Eileen Southern, *The Music of Black Americans: A History*, 3rd ed. (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1997).

²⁴Helen Walker-Hill, *From Spirituals to Symphonies: African-American Women Composers and Their Music* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002), 365.

composers, and it is crucial in developing, introducing, and compelling future research centered around African-American compositions by women.

The following are examples of dissertations that offer detailed information and introduce music by African-American composers. A dissertation by Lonieta Aurora Thompson Cornwall entitled “The African American Art Song: A Continuum in the Art of Song”²⁵ provides historical information, as well as the composer’s cultural and historical significance along with each song listed. Angelique Clay’s dissertation is another recent work in which she discusses the presence of a dual existence between the African-American and European traditions.²⁶ Clay offers expansive explanations of this duality, focusing on music by Eurydice Osterman. Additionally, she investigates the history and development of the African-American song tradition. Lastly, Everett McCorvey’s dissertation, “The Art Songs of Black American Composers” catalogues the art songs of a select few black composers, stating “it is my hope that as more is known about the composers of these songs as well as the songs themselves, performing artists and audiences will recognize these songs as serious art compositions, and include them in the standard repertoire.”²⁷ McCorvey includes a list of art songs by various composers, including composer biographical information, and song recital applicability.

Scholarship in African-American song composition is beginning to align with historical and theoretical studies, but finding printed music of art songs by African-

²⁵ Lonieta Aurora Thompson Cornwall, “The African American Art Song: A Continuum in the Art of Song” (Ph.D. diss., Teachers College Columbia University, 2006).

²⁶ Angelique Clay, “Incorporating the Traditions of the African-American Composer within the Confines of a Western European-American Structure: Selected Solo Vocal Works of Eurydice Osterman” (DMA diss., University of Kentucky, 2006).

²⁷ Everett David McCorvey, “The Art Songs of Black American Composers” (DMA diss., The University of Alabama, 1989), 1.

American composers can still be challenging. Two excellent resources that provide access to a variety of songs by several composers have been compiled by Willis Patterson. Many composers are well represented in Patterson's *Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers*,²⁸ and in his *Second Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers*.²⁹ Patterson's anthologies do not provide detailed information concerning theoretical song analysis, but they do offer excellent insight into defining the art song with specificity given to African-American compositions.

Although several composers are included, Patterson's anthology mentions that "these names represent only a small fraction of the over 600 black American composers who are busily adding to our rich American cultural heritage in music. A significant proportion of their vocal writing is in the form of the art song!"³⁰ Patterson provides easy access to these songs by compiling them into two resources that include biographical notes about each composer represented in the anthologies. In his *Second Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers*, Patterson adds additional notes about the performers and pianists found on the CD recording that accompanies the resource.

Other resources include Margaret R. Simmons and Jeanine Wagner's *A New Anthology of Art Songs by African American Composers*,³¹ Vivian Taylor's *Art Songs and Spirituals by African-American Women Composers*,³² Richard Heard's *44 Art Songs*

²⁸ Willis Patterson, *Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers* (New York, N.Y.: Edward B. Marks Music Company, 1977).

²⁹ Willis Patterson, *Second Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers* (Willis Patterson, 2002).

³⁰ Patterson, *Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers*, vii.

³¹ Margaret R. Simmons and Jeanine Wagner, *A New Anthology of Art Songs by African American Composers* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004).

³² Vivian Taylor, *Art Songs and Spirituals by African-American Women Composers* (Bryn Mawr, PA: Hildergard Publishing Company, 1995).

and Spirituals by Florence B. Price,³³ Kathy W. Bullock and Donna M. Cox's *Art Songs and Spirituals by Contemporary African American Composers*,³⁴ and Edgar Rogie Clark's *Negro Art Songs: Album by Contemporary Composers*.³⁵ Written in 1946, Clark's collection was the first known published anthology of African-American art songs, however, it is no longer in print.

Additionally, there are other resources that can offer access to a wide variety of research that is specifically focused on African-American composers and their works. The African-American Art Song Alliance, founded in 1997, "is the home of interchange between performers and scholars interested in art song by African-American composers."³⁶ This online resource is quite vast, providing knowledge and access to composers, performers, scholars, and numerous other materials concerning African-American art song.

Through this review, several resources of African-American art song including published material, anthologies, accompanied recordings, and online materials have been identified. The availability of African-American art song has and will continue to substantially increase, aiding the access and discovery to music by African-American composers. Resources for additional music from outside the traditional canon of vocal art song have also been identified, which offer well-suited options for the developing voice. There are presently no resources available that are specifically geared toward African-

³³ Richard Heard, *44 Art Songs and Spirituals by Florence B. Price* (Fayetteville, AR: ClarNan Editions, 2015).

³⁴ Kathy Bullock and Donna M. Cox, *Art Songs and Spirituals by Contemporary African American Composers* (Personal Best Ministries Press, 2011).

³⁵ Edgar Rogie Clark, *Negro Art Songs: Album by Contemporary Composers*. (New York, N.Y.: Edward B. Marks Music Company, 1946).

³⁶ Darryl Taylor, "African American Art Song Alliance," *African-American Art Song Alliance*, accessed August 15, 2017, <http://www.darryltaylor.com/alliance/>.

American art song for the developing singer. The fact that this repertoire is not as well-known as song found in the traditional canon should not hinder the continued exploration and appreciation of African-American art song repertoire, especially for the developing singer.

CHAPTER TWO:

DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN ART SONG

Art song is the fusion of music and poetry.³⁷ The relationship and collaboration found between the voice, piano, and poetry is an important aspect when beginning to understand the term, art song. *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music* describes art song as “a setting of a text of high literary quality and, unlike most folk and popular songs, includes an accompaniment that is specified by the composer rather than improvised or arranged by or for the performer.”³⁸ Art songs can be found in several languages and all of them involve poetry that is set to music. American art songs, defined through the relationship of poetry and music, are written by composers who identify as American.

American art song is a genre with compositions that have long been integrated into part of the standard repertoire studied by developing singers. In this genre, most teachers and students are unaware of the contributions by African-American composers. Awareness and inclusion is necessary to make sure that African-American composers and their songs are not excluded from the history of American art song, which is a diverse genre that must include all composers who identify as American. The exclusion of art song by any composer that identifies as American would mean a misrepresentation of the genre in its entirety. The scope of this chapter is not to provide a complete history of American art song, but rather a general overview that focuses on defining aspects of African-American art song. By providing a historical overview, the necessary and

³⁷ Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style*, xiii.

³⁸ Don Michael Randel, ed., *The Harvard Concise Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Cambridge: Belknap Press An Imprint of Harvard University Press, 2002), 36.

important inclusion of compositions by African-American composers will become clearer.

Voice instructors of developing singers typically present their students with a list that represents only a limited scope of composers from American art song. If you ask young singers which composers they know in this genre, the list will probably include Aaron Copland, John Jacob Niles, Charles Ives, and Samuel Barber. Unfortunately, many developing singers are not able to list and are not even aware of the contribution to American art song by African-American composers such as H.T. Burleigh, Leslie Adams, Florence Price, Robert Owens, and Camille Nickerson. African-American art song is a crucial part of American art song history; it is important for teachers and students to include all song composers that identify as American in their studies.

Defining African-American art song involves an understanding of a variety of influences and complex elements. In the dissertation, “The Development of Black Art Song,” Aldrich Wendell Adkins defines black art song by giving general descriptions of black music. Adkins explains that black art song is a:

result of a complex synthesis. It is part African, part Afro-American, and part Euro-American. The rhythmic complexities and syncopations remain. The peculiar harmonies of the work songs and the spirituals are the results of the Afro-American experience. Within three decades following the Civil War, black musicians were enrolled in all of the leading music schools and conservatories in America and Europe.³⁹

The diversity of these experiences, according to Adkins in the quote above, is crucial to understanding the true depth of this style. The concept of acculturation is significant in shedding light on how various components developed the style we know today. Adkins

³⁹ Aldrich Wendell Adkins, “The Development of the Black Art Song” (Ph.D. diss., The University of Texas at Austin, 1971), 5-6.

defines acculturation as “the process through which an individual or group learns a different culture. It refers mostly to people of a simple culture who try to adopt the culture of a more complex society...the process often confuses and sometimes disorganizes a people for as long as a generation or more.”⁴⁰ Through acculturation, the introduction and adoption of practices and values by one culture can result in a cultural change. In the case of African-American art song history, often out of necessity, acculturation occurred which meant the adoption of different cultural practices that were highly influenced by the European system. Music became a way in which two cultures could creatively explore a fusion of practices, rather than a complete loss of a specific culture.

The incorporation of Christianity is a highly influential element in African-American music, resulting from acculturation. The spiritual aspects became an important part of early African-American songs, leading to the development of spirituals. Spirituals are a type of song that derived from hymns, the European influence of Christianity, and African musical elements. This type of song plays an integral part of the history and development of African-American song, but they are not always grouped into the specific genre of art song. At the time of original composition and performance, Spirituals were considered part of the “slave plantation songs,” but now these songs have been honored and preserved through written notation. According to Willis Patterson:

Some have postulated that the minute these songs became codified in print, with specific, written-out harmonies and rhythms, was the minute they ceased to be by definition, songs from the folk; that at that moment, they became intentional compositions, or art songs!⁴¹

⁴⁰ Adkins, “The Development of the Black Art Song,” 48.

⁴¹ Patterson, *Second Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers*, preface.

By recognizing that spirituals have undergone many changes and growth since their original compositions, it is hard to deny their importance in American song history. Patterson agrees and continues to postulate on new ways of looking and defining song in American history. He states, “Let us consider that many of the art songs and spirituals seem, according to accepted tradition to be ‘neither fish nor fowl,’ but true hybrids of American song form.”⁴² This chapter is not meant to prove how spirituals can be distinguished or labeled as folk or art song; however, it is important to recognize that spirituals play a crucial role in the development of African-American art song.

A chronological based observation and study provide clearer connections between African-American experiences and the unique characteristics that can be found within this style. Adkins did a study of ninety-one songs by various composers, and through his research he divided the development of African-American art song into three main periods: 1900–1934; 1934–1949; 1950–1971.⁴³ At the time of Adkins research in 1971, these groupings took him to the most recent music composed. Another resource that provides a chronological period-based grouping by Hanson L. Caldwell can be found on *The African American Art Song Alliance* website.⁴⁴ Caldwell’s chronological order looks at “analyzing the full African Diaspora Evolution,” which resulted in six stages of categorization.⁴⁵ In stages four and five of her research, she discusses and divides the development of the African-American art song into three main groupings: 1850–1911; 1900–1945; 1940–1990–Present. Louise Toppin, a scholar, performer, and professor of

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Adkins, “The Development of the Black Art Song,” 125.

⁴⁴ Hanson L. Caldwell, “African American Performers and Composers of the Art Song A Chronology: A Resource Outline,” *The African American Art Song Alliance*, 2006, accessed August 15, 2017, <http://artsongalliance.org/pages/chronology>.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

voice at the University of Michigan further defines chronological based periods. She suggests the following period groupings: 1900–1930; 1931–50; 1951–70; 1971–early 1990s; and late 1990s–present. “These categories easily line up with Adkins research, expanding to present day.”⁴⁶ The correlation with these periods and the characteristics of the music within those groupings provides organization and clarity to the historical arch of the style. Through the consideration of the groupings, as defined by Toppin, one becomes cognizant of how the African-American art song develops and changes through time, influenced by a fusion of elements and African-American experiences.

When studying the beginning of this style, one must look at the composer Harry T. Burleigh, whose songs cover a period from 1902–1935 capturing “the birth of the black art song, its growth and maturation.”⁴⁷ During this time, African-American composers were not often encouraged to explore their own creativity and identity, instead they were expected to follow the rules of their European musical training. African-American art song from the earliest period did not contain numerous African elements and was highly influenced by the European system of education. Furthermore, Adkins said that these compositions were often the result of two main reasons: “(1) the desire of the young black composer to meet the approval of his teacher, and (2) the spirit of the times in which being black meant a badge of inferiority.”⁴⁸ Despite being confined and not encouraged to explore beyond those restrictions, numerous unique African-American art songs emerged, leading to a strong foundation for the style. In addition to Burleigh,

⁴⁶ Louise Toppin, telephone conversation, February 15, 2017.

⁴⁷ Adkins, “The Development of the Black Art Song,” 117.

⁴⁸ Adkins, “The Development of the Black Art Song,” 131.

William Grant Still and Florence Price are composers of art song often associated with this earlier period.

Through this historical foundation, the significant influences of the European system of music and training are highly present and recognizable. “Within two decades of the Civil War, former slaves and/or their children were enrolled in the leading conservatories in the country. There they learned the techniques of European music.”⁴⁹ Hymns, found in the European system of music training, involved the use of simple rhythmic patterns, different from the complex rhythmic patterns involved in the music of Africa. African-American composers recognized, were influenced by, and often utilized the forms and techniques employed in art music from European traditions; however, in addition, they wanted to express their own identities in American song compositions.

Composers wanted to include elements in their compositions that did not always submit to the rules found within a European based system of education. As African-American art songs developed, composers explored “the use of African and African American musical idioms in Western art forms to affirm their cultural heritage.”⁵⁰ For example, Adkins states that “many of the Creole songs were set to concert arrangements and were included on many art song programs. Like the spirituals and the work songs, the Creole songs were also set to piano accompaniment and were characterized by rhythmic syncopation.”⁵¹ African-American composers explored unique and diverse compositional elements, while also discovering a way to embrace a sense of nationalism in the American art song. The songs started to not only involve the incorporation of new ideas,

⁴⁹ Ibid., 77.

⁵⁰ Josephine R.B. Wright, “Art/Classical Music,” in *African American Music: An Introduction*, 2nd ed., ed. Mellonee V. Burnim and Portia K. Maultsby, pt. II, ch. 8 (New York, New York: Routledge, 2015), 138.

⁵¹ Adkins, “The Development of the Black Art Song,” 87.

but also use them in a way that could be reflective. According to Adkins, these new attributes included components that could embrace the following: misplaced rhythmic accent, minor scale with the sixth raised or omitted, modal or pentatonic scale, flatted third and seventh, overlapped antiphony, and a repetitive melody/rhythm, to name a few.⁵² By the implementation and approval of these new elements, distinguishing features continued to develop the African-American art song.

Toward the end of the first period, the Harlem Renaissance—which was referred to as the “New Negro Movement” and has also been referred to as the “Black Renaissance”—became a time when the world was challenged to redefine their views and stereotypes of the African-American culture. According to Hansonia Caldwell, “Artists of this New Negro Movement use their work to enhance the public understanding of African American culture.”⁵³ In response to this change, the second period of African-American art song emerges. In this period, 1931–1950, the music starts to utilize a greater number of African elements and, according to Adkins, incorporates more characteristics of protest and vindication.⁵⁴ African-American songs and poems were composed that displayed a unique and creative confidence. Hildred Roach agrees and states that “Their music is life itself – what they see and know, and what they experience and do. They demand the freedom to compose as they wish and demand the freedom for rivalry and coexistence among all musical forms. Most composers do not like restrictions, but relish versatility.”⁵⁵ Composers often associated with this second period include Margaret

⁵² Ibid., 90.

⁵³ Caldwell, “A Chronology,” stage 4, accessed Sept. 4, 2017, <http://www.darryltaylor.com/alliance/pages/stage-four>.

⁵⁴ Adkins, “The Development of the Black Art Song,” 131.

⁵⁵ Hildred Roach, *Black American Music: Past and Present, Pan-African Composers Thenceforth and Now*, vol. 2 (Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1985), 178.

Bonds, Camille Nickerson, and Howard Swanson, to name a few. Compositions during this period appear to be less dependent on training from their teachers and their compositions became more reflective of life experiences, which also resulted in a greater use of poetry by African-American poets.

Adkins explains that in period one 54 percent of songs used African-American poets; in period two, 63 percent of songs used African-American poets; and in period three 66 percent of songs used African-American poets.⁵⁶ Musically, songs of the second period began to express personal experiences. As Patterson states, “they delved into their African ‘roots’ to utilize rhythmic syncopation, the ‘blue note’ and the pentatonic scale to heighten their reflections of the intensity of life in America for its black citizens.”⁵⁷

African-American art song flourished, resulting in the unique and continuous development of this style.

In the third song period, 1951–1970, composers incorporated a more sophisticated use of black idioms.⁵⁸ They adapted techniques of various harmonic studies, representing life experiences through musical creativity. Compositional styles combined jazz and African-American elements into neoclassical forms. The output of musical compositions during this period increased significantly and African-American composers were receiving more commissions.⁵⁹ “By the 1950s, membership of African American composers in such licensing organizations as ASCAP and BMI had risen, ensuring

⁵⁶ Adkins, “The Development of the Black Art Song,” 135.

⁵⁷ Patterson, *Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers*, vii.

⁵⁸ Adkins, “The Development of the Black Art Song,” 133.

⁵⁹ Josephine R.B. Wright, “Art/Classical Music,” 149.

greater protection of their intellectual property rights.”⁶⁰ Composers of this third period include Julia Perry, and Ulysses Kay, to name a few.

Many African-American composers were achieving national recognition and beginning to experiment with various compositional techniques in concert music between 1971–early 1990s. In this fourth period, a few composers during this period include Howard Swanson, Betty Jackson King, and George Walker. The exploration and combined use of various compositional techniques continued to grow and expand from the late 1990s–present day. Composers, such as Wendell Logan, created compositions that “varied in style from tonal and atonal pitch class explorations to experimentations with multimedia, electronic, and aleatoric music.”⁶¹ As African-American concert music continues to develop, composers like Gregory Walker are utilizing a style that “employs elements of contemporary music and popular music.”⁶² Additionally, Olly Wilson’s song “Sometimes for Bill Brown,” is an example of electronic music for the voice. Finally, Leslie Adams, Rosephanye Powell, and Robert Owens are examples of composers with a more traditional, lyrical compositional style during this period.

African-American art song history encompasses a rich and diverse experience. According to Hildred Roach, “Black music should be promoted, learned, studied, probed and considered as being American.”⁶³ African-American art song is a part of American history; the lack of awareness and acceptance of its place in American history creates the necessity for delineation. African-American art song can be difficult to define, even in academia, because it is representative of a unique blend of influences, practices, and

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid., 152.

⁶² Ibid., 156.

⁶³ Roach, *Black American Music*, 179.

experiences. The style developed and evolved based on the composers' experiences and influences, which led to a completely new and constantly evolving type of song, the African-American art song.

CHAPTER THREE:

REPERTOIRE EVALUATION RUBRIC FOR THE DEVELOPING SINGER

As teachers consider the process of selecting and evaluating appropriate repertoire, it is important to look at the various components involved in assigning a level of difficulty to each song. As demonstrated in the previous chapters, repertoire can build foundational skills, inspire the developing singer, and expand the musical knowledge of both teacher and student. After establishing the important role that repertoire choices can play in vocal training and development, teachers must be careful to evaluate and select music that is appropriate for the singer. Pedagogue and professor of voice at Westminster Choir College Christopher Arneson states: “one of the biggest challenges for voice teachers is choosing repertoire that meets a pedagogical end without exceeding the student’s ability.”⁶⁴ This can be a challenging task for teachers but not an impossible one.

The goal of selecting repertoire commensurate with appropriate vocal development presents a challenge for the teacher who wants to consider the dynamic nature of a student’s interest. By considering all aspects of the student (vocal and musical ability, musical and non-musical interests, and personal background) the educator can integrate this information into a comprehensive evaluation of the individual singer. Before analyzing and making choices of repertoire for each student, teachers need to consider the vocal and musical abilities/interests of the student separate from the music itself. John Nix, professor of voice and vocal pedagogy at the University of Texas at San Antonio, explains that we must treat each singer as an individual.⁶⁵ Nix states that “the

⁶⁴ Christopher Arneson, *Literature for Teaching: A Guide for Choosing Solo Vocal Repertoire from a Developmental Perspective* (Delaware, OH: Inside View Press, 2014), 1.

⁶⁵ Doscher, *From Studio to Stage*, vii.

overriding commandment—to know the student’s strengths and weaknesses and to select repertoire that will give the student the best chance for success—must be obeyed.”⁶⁶ As these statements show, teachers must be invested in knowing the individual singer, and knowing where the singer is along the continuum of their vocal development. This knowledge and preparation will help ensure continued success in selecting appropriate repertoire.

In *Literature for Teaching: A Guide for Choosing Solo Vocal Repertoire from a Developmental Perspective*, Christopher Arneson says “The intent of this book is to give you [voice teachers] tools for selecting age and skill appropriate repertoire for your students that will help you achieve your pedagogical goals for them.”⁶⁷ Here are some of the evaluations and key topics he suggests exploring:

- student’s current skill level
- repertoire evaluation and determining difficulty level
- using repertoire as a tool to improve technical skills
- create a long-term plan for repertoire that will encourage a healthy vocal development
- broadening repertoire knowledge⁶⁸

This study will focus on two of Arneson’s recommendations: how teachers can evaluate repertoire and determine difficulty level, and how they can broaden repertoire

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Arneson, *Literature for Teaching*, 1.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

knowledge.⁶⁹ Evaluating repertoire and determining a difficulty level for each song is time consuming for teachers who are responsible for many students.

A systematic and consistently used tool for grading repertoire is still not widely accepted in the field of vocal pedagogy. There are well-respected repertoire lists that are given by state music associations for students who want to participate in solo vocal competitions, however, explanations of why these songs were chosen are hard to find and rarely accompany these lists.⁷⁰ These graded and ungraded lists are usually updated annually by an approved committee, and often accompanied by vague selection criteria. Janette Ralston, Doctor of Philosophy from University of Missouri-Columbia, states “teachers are responsible for students’ repertoire decisions; there are no defined, consistent state or national grading scales that teachers can use to help them make these decisions.”⁷¹ Ralston, through her study, created a more viable method entitled, *Ralston Repertoire Difficulty Index* (RRDI), for determining the difficulty level of vocal repertoire. Ralston explained that there were already existing resources, such as “*Singers Repertoire* by Coffin (1960), *Repertoire for the Solo Voice* by Espina (1977), and *Music for the Voice* by Kagen (1968)” that included both ungraded lists of vocal repertoire and graded-based resources such as “*Solo Vocal Repertoire for Young Singers: An Annotated Bibliography* by Boytim (1982).”⁷² Although these resources existed, Ralston

⁶⁹ Arneson, *Literature for Teaching*, 1.

⁷⁰ A few of these state supported lists include the following: *Prescribed Music List* by the University Interscholastic League in Texas, New York State Schools Music Association has a graded solo vocal list, and Florida Vocal Association has a list of solo vocal repertoire.

⁷¹ Janette Ralston, “The Development of an Instrument to Grade the Difficulty of Vocal Solo Repertoire,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 47, no. 2 (1999), 163.

⁷² *Ibid.*

acknowledged that standardizing grade level repertoire was still problematic and included vague definitions.⁷³ Furthermore, Ralston stated

While Boytim's list attempts to help match the difficulty level of repertoire to the abilities of singers, it still does not specify what musical characteristics are considered difficult or easy, nor does it explain how a difficulty decision can be made. Hence, a more exact definition of criteria is warranted.⁷⁴

Her created method for evaluation, the RRDI, allowed for teachers to assign a general overall rating, and assign a rating associated with specific criteria. These criteria include range, tessitura, rhythm, phrases, melodic line, harmonic foundations, and pronunciation. Arneson included many of these same criteria in his text as well, however, Arneson offers further guidance to evaluate these criteria. Arneson recommended that teachers create a rubric, which can serve both as a practical tool and result in a quick reference guide for future assignment of repertoire. The evaluation of music can be subjective, but rubrics create a method by which teachers can systematically, and more objectively, approach the process of evaluating and assigning appropriate levels of difficulty.

Rubrics are often used for performance based evaluations at festivals, competitions, and auditions; however, rubrics should also be used to guide repertoire evaluations. The rubric that I have created for this study entitled *Repertoire Evaluation Rubric for the Developing Singer*, helps to create a system by which teachers can evaluate vocal repertoire of any genre by delineating and grouping various musical, contextual, and pedagogical elements. This rubric determines a difficulty level and helps to coalesce elements of evaluation into a usable document for teachers.

⁷³ Ibid., 165.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

In Arneson's introductory comments, he divides key topic areas concerning repertoire selection into three main sections: "Evaluating Repertoire," "Categorizing Repertoire," and "Developing a Difficulty Rating System with Rubrics."⁷⁵ In this study I focus on two of these three categories: "Evaluating Repertoire" and "Developing a Difficulty Rating System with Rubrics." The area of "Evaluating Repertoire" involves looking at a list of specific elements that are a part of the music itself, which can be quite extensive. A three-category system encompassing the foundational, musical and textual elements of the music, creates a framework that can easily organize all the necessary elements suggested by Arneson.

As stated by Arneson, "the first thing to notice when you look at a piece will be the basic information:"⁷⁶ Arneson categorized the basic information under headings he entitled "The Basics" and "Basic Musical Elements:"⁷⁷ A comparison of Arneson's suggestions and the finalized criteria categorized as "Foundational Elements," which eliminated historical-based context, can be seen below in Figure 3.1.

⁷⁵ Arneson, *Literature for Teaching*, 6-11.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

Figure 3.1 Basic and Foundational Elements

Arneson’s “The Basics and “Basic Musical Elements”	Foundational Elements for the “Repertoire Evaluation Rubric for the Developing Singer”
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• composer biographical information• period of composition• historical context• language of the text• length of the song• key or mode of the song• range and tessitura• meter, rhythm, and tempi• form	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• language of the text• length of the song• key or mode of the song• range and tessitura• meter, rhythm, and tempi• form

In the comparison shown in Figure 3.1, elements that are quantifiable and not historical in context were taken from Arneson’s basic elements. The other excluded elements are equally important; short biographical and historical information about each song will be given outside of the rubric in the final evaluations presented in chapter four. Teachers and students should research and evaluate all the elements that Arneson recommends prior to assigning and learning a song.

Arneson suggested after the basic information is obtained, some of the following melodic and harmonic elements should be considered for evaluation.⁷⁸ Refer to Figure 3.2.

⁷⁸ Arneson, *Literature for Teaching*, 7.

Figure 3.2 Musical Elements

Arneson’s “The Melodic and Harmonic Elements”	Musical Elements for the “Repertoire Evaluation Rubric for the Developing Singer”
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• intervallic structure• phrase length and structure• melodic line• memorable melody• syllabic or melismatic• key changes• accidentals• quick harmonic changes• support level of the accompaniment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• intervallic structure• phrase length and structure• melodic line• memorable melody• syllabic or melismatic• key changes• accidentals• quick harmonic changes• support level of the accompaniment

The next area of consideration in evaluating repertoire involves “expressive considerations.”⁷⁹ In this area, Arneson used a series of probing questions to guide teachers in exploring level appropriate music-text relationships, leading students toward making successful expressive choices.⁸⁰ It is important to note that ‘text interpretation and characterization’ can vary slightly based on life experience and age. Figure 3.3 is a comparison of sample questions from Arneson’s text and the textual elements evaluated for this study.

⁷⁹ Arneson, *Literature for Teaching*, 7.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Figure 3.3 Expressive and Textual Elements

Arneson’s Expressive Considerations	Textual Elements for the “Repertoire Evaluation Rubric for the Developing Singer”
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there a lot of text?• Is the writing syllabic or lyric?• How difficult is this language for your student?• Vowel sounds familiar or mostly foreign?• Legato language or consonant-driven?• Can your student connect to the text?• Narrator or character speaking in the poetry?• Gender of character?• Who is the character talking to and what is the subject of the poem?• Is the poetry easy to understand or dated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• amount of text• complexity of consonant clusters• lyrical Flow (legato)• age appropriate story• musically assisted characterization• Text is outside of life experiences

A clearer understanding of a specific difficulty level emerges by considering the criteria established under the three categories: the foundational, the musical, and the textual elements.

By utilizing the above categories, the analytical rubric created for this study, *Repertoire Evaluation Rubric for the Developing Singer*, provides a system of assessment that can effectively evaluate a wide spectrum of songs. This rubric consists of eleven elements scored on a scale from 1–5 (beginning to advanced). The sum of all possible points is 55, which indicates a high level of difficulty. A scoring of 11–26 points represents the beginner level, a scoring of 27–41 points represents the intermediate level,

and a score of 42–55 points represents the advanced level. In addition to these level rankings, a more detailed description of each level (1–5) and each element is provided. The eleven elements derive from the main categories titled: the foundational, the musical, and the textual elements (Refer to Figure 3.4). With the use of this rubric instructors can clearly and objectively assign a difficulty level ranking to each song.

Table 3.1 Rubric for the Developing Singer: The Foundational Elements

REPERTOIRE EVALUATION RUBRIC FOR THE DEVELOPING SINGER

Beginner Level: 12-26; Intermediate Level: 27-41; Advanced Level 42-55

THE FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

RANKING	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura	A range of fifth or less; middle voice (tessitura a fifth or less – easy for the singer to sustain)	A range of one octave or less; middle voice (tessitura a fifth, but no more than an octave and moderately comfortable for the singer to sustain)	A range of an octave and half or less; (tessitura no more than an octave – moderately challenging for the singer to sustain)	A range of more than octave and a half; (tessitura that is in a moderately challenging area for the singer – challenging to sustain)	Extremes in range often presented; (tessitura is extreme and stays in a challenging area for the singer – difficult to sustain)
Rhythm & Meter	Whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, eighth notes with easy repeated rhythm patterns; Simple, no meter changes	Basic and dotted rhythms with easy repeated patterns; Simple with one meter change	Triplets with varied repeated rhythm patterns; Simple or complex with one meter change; syncopation	Syncopation with many notes per bar, less repeated rhythm patterns; Complex with one or two meter changes; moderate syncopation	Syncopation and hemiola with many notes per bar, few repeated patterns; Complex with numerous meter changes; advanced syncopation
Tempi	No change in tempo and no extremes (fast or slow)	One tempo change; moderately fast or slow tempi	Two tempi changes; very fast or slow tempi	Varied tempi throughout with more extremes in fast and slow	Often very fast or very slow, numerous extremes with many notes per bar, varied tempi throughout
Duration & Form	Song is very short (under a minute); AB, through-composed; and ABA with very little ornamentation	Song is moderate in length (under 2 minutes); AB, through-composed, strophic and repeated section, ABA with a little ornamentation needed	Song is moderate in length (under 3 minutes); AB, through-composed, strophic, with repeated sections that are longer in length; ABA with moderate ornamentation needed	Song is longer in length (under 4 minutes); AB, through-composed; ABA with moderate amount of ornamentation needed	Song is long in length (over 4 minutes); AB, through-composed; ABA with extensive use of ornamentation needed

Table 3.2 Rubric for the Developing Singer: The Musical Elements

REPERTOIRE EVALUATION RUBRIC FOR THE DEVELOPING SINGER

Beginner Level: 12-26; Intermediate Level: 27-41; Advanced Level 42-55

THE MUSICAL ELEMENTS

RANKING	1	2	3	4	5
Melodic Line	Steps or skips of a third or a fifth; mostly descending, stepwise lines; simple and diatonic	Steps, skips, and leaps that are often no greater than a fifth; descending lines with occasional ascending leaps or skips; small amounts of chromaticism supported by the accompaniment	Steps, skips, and leaps that are often no greater than an octave; descending and ascending lines with occasional leaps or skips; small amounts of chromaticism sometimes supported by the accompaniment	Large leaps, steps, skips, and leaps that are often greater than an octave; mostly ascending lines with leaps or skips; difficult intervals; larger amounts of unsupported chromaticism	Non-diatonic intervallic leaps, varied and extreme; numerous leaps and skips; extensive use of unsupported chromaticism
Accompaniment Support	Vocal line is doubled in the accompaniment, harmony is very supportive of the melodic line	Harmony is supportive of the melodic line, but does not always double the vocal line	Accompaniment rarely doubles the vocal line, and more harmonic changes	Accompaniment rarely doubles the vocal line, fast harmonic changes or lack of tonal center	Accompaniment that never doubles the vocal line, fast harmonic changes
Phrase Length	Short phrases, phrases lasting 6 seconds or less	Moderate phrasing, phrases lasting 7 seconds or less	Long phrasing, phrases lasting 8 seconds or less	Longer phrasing, phrases lasting more than 9 seconds or less	Longer phrasing, phrases lasting more than 10 seconds
Melismatic Phrasing	No <u>melismas</u>	Limited use of <u>melismas</u> or grace notes and turns	Moderate use of <u>melismas</u> with patterns	Moderate to heavy use of <u>melismas</u> with patterns	Very heavy use of <u>melismas</u> without patterns and/or intervallic challenges

Table 3.3 Rubric for the Developing Singer: The Textual Elements

REPERTOIRE EVALUATION RUBRIC FOR THE DEVELOPING SINGER

Beginner Level: 12-26; Intermediate Level: 27-41; Advanced Level 42-55

THE TEXTUAL ELEMENTS

RANKING	1	2	3	4	5
Diction & Articulation	No challenging consonant clusters for the singer; Very limited text at a moderate tempo	Limited challenging consonant clusters for the singer; Text at a moderate tempo	Challenging consonant clusters for the singer; Text at slower or faster tempi	Challenging consonant clusters and difficult consonants on challenging pitches for the singer; A lot of text at a very slow or very fast tempi	Very challenging consonant clusters and difficult consonants on challenging pitches for the singer; Text at varying levels of tempi
Text Interpretation & Characterization	An original language text or a suitable translation; Characterization often assisted through musical indications; age appropriate story	An original language text or a suitable translation; Characterization is not assisted through musical indications; age appropriate story	An original language song; Characterization is often not assisted through musical indications; Text is more demanding in dramatic capacity and outside life experience (some repetition)	An original language song with a moderate emphasis on exploring a foreign language; Characterization is rarely assisted through musical indications; Text is more demanding in dramatic capacity and outside life experience (little repetition)	An original language song with an extensive emphasis on exploring a foreign language; Characterization is not assisted through musical indications; Text is very demanding in dramatic capacity and outside life experience (no repetition)
Lyrical Flow	A majority of voiced consonants used to help with legato line	A mixture of voiced/unvoiced consonants	Consonant clusters and heavier incorporation of unvoiced consonants	Numerous consonant clusters and very heavy incorporation of unvoiced consonants	Extreme use of consonant clusters and very heavy incorporation of unvoiced consonants

CHAPTER FOUR:

AFRICAN-AMERICAN ART SONG FOR THE DEVELOPING SINGER

The following fourteen African-American art songs have been evaluated using the rubric that I created in chapter three entitled *Repertoire Evaluation Rubric for the Developing Singer*. The fourteen selections in this chapter are representative of different historical periods within African-American art song history, featuring compositions that span from the turn of the twentieth-century to the present day. Using the analytical rubric, a difficulty level is assigned that will help teachers recognize some of the challenges that students may encounter as they learn each selection. My evaluations, however, provide only recommendations and should be handled with care. It is crucial that teachers still use their own discernment to make appropriate choices for developing singers. Teachers should evaluate the individual singer and their abilities prior to beginning the evaluation of appropriate repertoire, which is the focus for this chapter.

These songs by African-American composers are presented in order of difficulty to assist teachers with the selection of repertoire. Although two songs may be assigned the same difficulty level, each will offer different challenges for the individual student. For example, one song might be easier in the category of foundational skills, yet more demanding dramatically; while another song might be more complex in the category of foundational skills, but dramatically less demanding. The final evaluation and difficulty level assigned is a result of combined scores from all eleven elements.

This collection is the beginning to a larger proposed anthology, providing teachers a resource guide that includes biographical and historical notes, and a brief musical evaluation of each song. In addition to helping the singers and teachers study these

works, the original text and the composer's text are included. The international phonetic alphabet and translations are only provided for songs that are not in the English language. A list of the range, tessitura, voice-type recommendations, language, key, form, meter, tempo, length of song, list of editions where the song can be found, and performance notes associated with each selection are presented in a condensed format.

In this chapter, it will be clear that African-American art song is accessible for developing singers and should have a more prominent place in the standard musical canon of American art song. The order of repertoire, notes associated with each song, and varied levels of difficulty create a systematic method for teachers who need to select songs appropriate for all levels of developing students, specifically between the ages of 17–21.

Figure 4.1 Evaluation of Song: “Tobacco”

“Tobacco”
 from *Four Encore Songs*, No. 1
 Florence B. Price, composer
 Graham Lee Hemminger, poet

Range: C4–C5
Tessitura: (Med-Low) F4–C5
Voice: Med-Low (Mezzo-Soprano or Baritone)

Language: English
Key: F major
Form: Through-Composed
Meter: 4/4
Tempo: *Tempo moderato*

Length of Song: approximately 40 seconds
Publisher/Edition: *44 Art Songs and Spirituals by Florence B. Price*, ClarNan Editions

TITLE: “Tobacco” from *Four Encore Songs*, No. 1
RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Beginning
OVERALL RANKING TOTAL: 16/55

ELEMENT TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura					
Rhythm & Meter					
Tempi					
Duration & Form					
Melodic Line					
Accompaniment Support					
Phrase Length					
Melismatic Phrasing					
Diction & Articulation					
Text Interpretation & Characterization					
Lyrical Flow					
CATEGORY TOTAL:	6	10	0	0	0

Additional comments:

- Short song
- Dynamics vary
- Short phrases
- Minimal leaps, not greater than a fifth
- Comedic timing is an important textual consideration
- The vocal line contains a mixture of ascending and descending motion
- Accompaniment is very supportive, often doubling the vocal line

Text (original):

Tobacco is a dirty weed:
I like it,
It satisfies no normal need:
I like it.
It makes you thin, it makes you lean,
It takes the hair right off your bean.
It's the worst darn stuff I've ever seen;
I like it.

Text (song composition):

Tobacco is a dirty weed:
I like it,
It satisfies no normal need:
I like it.
It makes you thin, it makes you lean,
It takes the hair right off your bean.
It's the worst stuff I've ever seen;
I like it.

Poet Biographical Information: Graham Lee Hemminger (1895–1950)

Graham Lee Hemminger, born in Pennsylvania in 1895, was an American poet that worked in advertising. He graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 1917. The poem, “Tobacco,”⁸¹ was written in 1915 while he was still a student at the University. As editor of the campus magazine, he wrote the poem, “Tobacco.” This composition was well received and led to immediate success, landing him his first advertising job that specialized in tobacco.⁸²

⁸¹ Graham Lee Hemminger, “Tobacco,” on “Representative Poetry Online,” *Web Development Group, Information Technology Services, University of Toronto Libraries*, 2005, accessed October 7, 2017, <https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/html/1807/4350/poem3265.html>.

⁸² Heard, *44 Art Songs and Spirituals by Florence B. Price*, vi.

Composer Biographical Information: Florence B. Price (1888–1953)

Born in 1888 in Little Rock, Arkansas, Florence Price was the first widely recognized African-American female composer. Her mother, a pianist and singer, influenced Price's early musical training. She received a Bachelor of Music degree from the New England Conservatory of Music in 1906 and was one of the first African-American women composers to be acknowledged as a symphonic composer. Her musical style is considered neo-romantic with the incorporation of African-American idioms, such as spirituals and dance rhythms. "Price's early music, along with that of her contemporaries William Grant Still and William Dawson, may be placed within the context of nationalism in American music."⁸³ She composed over three-hundred compositions, including chamber music, symphonies, art songs, spirituals, piano, organ, and works for violin.⁸⁴ In addition, several hundred more newly discovered works are now available from the University of Arkansas.

Notes: "Tobacco" from *Four Encore Songs*

This anthology begins with a set of four works by Florence B. Price (1888–1953), titled *Four Encore Songs*. In this set, Price chooses different poets for each of these short songs. The first in the set is "Tobacco," a brief song that lasts around forty seconds. In the poem, by Graham Lee Hemminger, the character talks about how much they like Tobacco, despite its terrible side effects. Price captures the spirit of this poem and its fun and playful attitude. Furthermore, she utilizes repeated notes and a rhythmic motif on the

⁸³ Josephine Wright, "Florence Price," in Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., ed., *International Dictionary of Black Composers*, vol. 2 (Chicago & London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1999), 942.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 937–945.

words, “I like it,” which aids to the comedic characterization needed to interpret this song.

The octave range of this piece and low tessitura make it easily accessible for lower voices. A meter of 4/4 and a moderate tempo supports a low threshold for difficulty. Although there is some chromaticism in the song, it is relatively minimal and provides a moderate challenge for the beginning singer. The accompaniment offers support by doubling the vocal line throughout the song. The dynamic range does extend from *piano* to *forte*, but is well prepared as the song develops. The brevity of the text makes it easy for students to memorize. Refer to Figure 4.1 for further evaluation.

Figure 4.2 Evaluation of Song: “A Flea and a Fly”

“A Flea and a Fly”
 from *Four Encore Songs*, No. 2
 Florence B. Price, composer
 Anonymous, poet

Range: A3–C5
Tessitura: (Med-Low) D4–A4
Voice: Med-Low (Mezzo-Soprano or Baritone)

Language: English
Key: F major
Form: Through-Composed
Meter: 4/4
Tempo: *Allegretto*

Length of Song: approximately 25 seconds
Publisher/Edition: *44 Art Songs and Spirituals by Florence B. Price*, ClarNan Editions

TITLE: “A Flea and A Fly” from *Four Encore Songs*
RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Beginning
OVERAL RANKING TOTAL: 18/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura		■			
Rhythm & Meter	■				
Tempi	■				
Duration & Form	■				
Melodic Line			■		
Accompaniment Support		■			
Phrase Length	■				
Melismatic Phrasing	■				
Diction & Articulation		■			
Text Interpretation & Characterization		■			
Lyrical Flow		■			
CATEGORY TOTAL:	5	10	3	0	0

Additional comments:

- Short song
- Quick tempo
- Short phrases
- Minimal leaps
- The vocal line contains a mixture of ascending and descending motion
- Accompaniment is supportive, sometimes doubling the vocal line

<p>Text (original):</p> <p>A fly and a flea in flue Were imprisoned, so what could they do? Said the fly, “Let us flee!” “Let us fly!” said the flea. So they flew through a flaw in the flue.</p>	<p>Text (song composition):</p> <p>A flea and a fly in a flue were imprisoned, so what could they do? Said the fly, “Let us flee.” Said the fly, “Let us flee,” Said the flea “Let us fly,” so they flew through a flaw in the flue.</p>
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Notes: “A Flea and a Fly” from *Four Encore Songs*

The next song of the set, “A Flea and a Fly,” is even shorter, lasting a total of twenty-five seconds. “A Flea and a Fly⁸⁵,” is a poem in which the narrator tells the story of “a flea and a fly in a flue” through a charming use of alliteration. A flue is an opening in a chimney where the flea and fly are trapped, and they discuss how to escape from the flue. Chromaticism and a quick tempo are the musical devices that Price uses to text paint the movement of a flea and a fly.

The range of this song is slightly more than an octave with a tessitura suitable for lower voices. A meter of 4/4 supports a low threshold for difficulty. This song is slightly

⁸⁵ William Cole, *Humorous Poetry for Children*, Cleveland: World Pub., 1955.

more challenging because it includes greater octave ascending leaps, chromatic motion, a slight *accelerando*, and an accompaniment independent of the vocal part that does not always double the vocal line. The dynamic range only requires one shift to *mezzo-piano*, and the brevity of the text makes it easy for students to memorize. The evaluation of this song ranks it slightly higher than the previous song in the set, “Tobacco.” Although this song is slightly more difficult than the other three in the set, it is still suitable for a beginning singer, and is included in its original order as presented by the composer. Refer to Figure 4.2

Figure 4.3 Evaluation of Song: “Come, come,’ said Tom’s Father”

“Come, come,’ said Tom’s Father”
 from *Four Encore Songs*, No. 3
 Florence B. Price, composer
 Thomas Moore, poet

Range: A \flat 3–C5
Tessitura: (Med-Low) C4–G4
Voice: Med-Low (Mezzo-Soprano or Baritone)

Language: English
Key: F minor/A \flat major
Form: Through-Composed
Meter: 4/4
Tempo: *Andantino*

Length of Song: approximately 30 seconds
Publisher/Edition: *44 Art Songs and Spirituals by Florence B. Price*, ClarNan Editions

TITLE: “Come, come,’ said Tom’s Father” from *Four Encore Songs*
RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Beginning
OVERAL RANKING TOTAL: 16/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura		■			
Rhythm & Meter	■				
Tempi	■				
Duration & Form	■				
Melodic Line		■			
Accompaniment Support		■			
Phrase Length	■				
Melismatic Phrasing	■				
Diction & Articulation	■				
Text Interpretation & Characterization		■			
Lyrical Flow		■			
CATEGORY TOTAL:	6	10	0	0	0

Additional comments:

- Short song
- Short phrases
- Comedic timing
- Minimal leaps, rarely greater than a fifth
- The vocal line contains a mixture of ascending and descending motion
- Accompaniment is supportive, occasionally doubling the vocal line

Text (original): “A Joke Versified”

“Come, come,” said Tom’s father, “at
your time of life,
“There’s no longer excuse for thus
playing the rake-
It is time you should think, boy, of
taking a wife” –
“Why, so it is, father – whose wife
shall I take?”

Text (song composition):

“Come, come” said Tom’s father,
“at your time of life,
There’s no longer excuse for thus
playing the rake.
It is time you should think, boy, of
taking a wife.”
“Why, so it is, father,
Whose wife shall I take?”

Poet Biographical Information: Thomas Moore (1779–1852)

Thomas Moore, born in Ireland, was an Irish poet, singer, and songwriter. He showed an early interest in the arts, performing in musical plays. Moore became well-known for his *Irish melodies*, such as “The Minstrel Boy,” “The Last Rose of Summer,” and “Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms.”⁸⁶ Numerous composers have set music to Moore’s poetry, including William Bolcom, Benjamin Britten, Robert Schumann, Hector Berlioz, Henri Duparc, Lori Laitman, and many others. The first line

⁸⁶ Heard, *44 Art Songs and Spirituals by Florence B. Price*, vii.

of this song, “‘Come, come,’ said Tom’s Father,” is based on the poem by Thomas Moore titled “A Joke Versified.”⁸⁷

Notes: “‘Come, come,’ said Tom’s Father” from *Four Encore Songs*

The third song of Price’s set, “‘Come, come,’ said Tom’s Father,” depicts a conversation between Tom and his father. His father tells him that it is time to find a wife, no more excuses. Price captures this short poem through dynamic variation, and going back and forth between narration and actual spoken dialogue. Dynamics are progressing from the softest to the loudest, *forte-fortissimo*, at the end when Tom finally replies to his father: “Why, so it is, father, whose wife shall I take?”

This song’s range spans for slightly more than an octave, and, similar to the other songs in this set, a low tessitura makes this more accessible for lower voices. As with the first two songs in the set, this one also uses a 4/4 meter. The tempo is marked *andantino* with a *ritardando* at the end, which helps magnify the question, “whose wife shall I take?” There is one ascending leap of a sixth, but overall this song does not utilize large leaps or skips. Repetition on middle C or C4 might present a challenge to the beginning singer. The brevity of text makes it easier for students to memorize. This song is evaluated as being appropriate for a beginning singer. Refer to Figure 4.3.

⁸⁷ Thomas Moore and William Michael Rossetti, *The Complete Poems of Sir Thomas Moore*, (New York: A.L. Burt Co., 1900), 1332.

Figure 4.4 Evaluation of Song: “Song of the Open Road”

“Song of the Open Road”
 from *Four Encore Songs*, No. 4
 Florence B. Price, composer
 Ogden Nash, poet

Range: F4–D5
Tessitura: (Med-Low) F4–C5
Voice: Med-Low (Mezzo-Soprano or Baritone)

Language: English
Key: F major
Form: Through-Composed
Meter: 4/4
Tempo: *Andante moderato*

Length of Song: approximately 50 seconds
Publisher/Edition: *44 Art Songs and Spirituals by Florence B. Price*, ClarNan Editions

TITLE: “Song of the Open Road” from *Four Encore Songs*
RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Beginning
OVERAL RANKING TOTAL: 16/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura		■			
Rhythm & Meter	■				
Tempi	■				
Duration & Form	■				
Melodic Line			■		
Accompaniment Support		■			
Phrase Length	■				
Melismatic Phrasing	■				
Diction & Articulation	■				
Text Interpretation & Characterization	■				
Lyrical Flow		■			
CATEGORY TOTAL:	7	6	3	0	0

Additional comments:

- Short song
- Short phrases
- Minimal leaps, rarely greater than a fifth
- The vocal line consists mainly of descending motion
- Accompaniment is supportive, occasionally doubling the vocal line

Text (original):

I think that I shall never see
A billboard lovely as a tree.
Indeed, unless the billboards fall,
I'll never see a tree at all.

Text (song composition):

I think that I shall never see
a billboard lovely as a tree.
Indeed unless the billboards fall
I'll never see a tree at all.

Poet Biographical Information: Ogden Nash (1902–1971)

Ogden Nash, born in New York in 1902, was an American poet, known for his writing of light verse. He attended Harvard College, but dropped out after only one year of study. His first published poems were in 1930 in the *New Yorker*, and he published his first collection of poems in 1931. His poetry often had an anti-establishment quality, capturing the attention of many Americans. Nash's poem, "Song of the Open Road,"⁸⁸ was published in the *New Yorker* in 1932, and in 1940 a modified version of the poem was published in his collected works titled *The Face is Familiar*. "In this poem, he makes a playful twist on Joyce Kilmer's most famous poem 'Trees'."⁸⁹

Notes: "Song of the Open Road" from *Four Encore Songs*

"Song of the Open Road," the final song of Price's *Four Encore Songs*, is another brief poem. In this story, the character talks about how they will never see "a billboard

⁸⁸ Ogden Nash, "Song of the Open Road," *CCPA Monitor*, 17, no. 1 (05, 2010), 23.

⁸⁹ Heard, *44 Art Songs and Spirituals by Florence B. Price*, vii.

lovely as a tree.” Price begins the song at a dynamic level of *mezzo-forte* repeating a popular melody written by Oscar Rasbach in 1922. At the end of the song, Price utilizes a *forte* setting on the words “I’ll never see a tree at all” to place emphasis and dramatically deliver the text.

The range is less than an octave and set in a medium-low tessitura. As with other songs in this set, it is written in the same meter of 4/4. The tempo marking is *andante moderato* with a *fermata* at the end to magnify the word, “tree.” The vocal line incorporates heavy use of descending phrases; however, the use of the ascending vocal line and chromaticism creates tension which is resolved in the final phrase. Due to these elements and a few small leaps, this song is ranked at the level of a beginner. Refer to Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.5 Evaluation of Song: “In the Springtime”

“In the Springtime”
 Betty Jackson King, composer
 William Shakespeare, poet

Range: D4–E ♭ 5
Tessitura: (Med) E ♭ 4–D5
Voice: Med (All Voice Types)

Language: English
Key: E ♭ minor/E major
Form: AA’
Meter: 3/4
Tempo: *Tenderly*

Length of Song: approximately 2 minutes and 30 seconds
Publisher/Edition: *Art Songs and Spirituals by African-American Women Composers*,
 Hildegard Publishing Company

TITLE: “In the Springtime”
RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Beginning-Intermediate
OVERAL RANKING TOTAL: 22/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura			■		
Rhythm & Meter		■			
Tempi	■				
Duration & Form		■			
Melodic Line			■		
Accompaniment Support		■			
Phrase Length		■			
Melismatic Phrasing	■				
Diction & Articulation		■			
Text Interpretation & Characterization	■				
Lyrical Flow			■		
CATEGORY TOTAL:	3	10	9	0	0

Additional comments:

- Repetitive and simple text
- Dynamics and tempo vary slightly, supporting the characterization of the text
- One key change
- Phrases are shorter in length
- Leaps greater than a fifth, octave leaps throughout
- The vocal line contains a mixture of descending and ascending motion
- Accompaniment is supportive, occasionally doubling the vocal line

Text (original):

From *As you like It*, Act 5 Scene 3

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey-nonny-no,
That o'er the green cornfield did pass
In springtime, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding,
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey-nonny-no,
These pretty country folks would like
In springtime, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding,
Sweet lovers love the spring.

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey-nonny-no,
How that a life was but a flower
In springtime, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding,
Sweet lovers love the spring.

And therefore take the present time,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey-nonny-no,
For love is crowned with the prime
In springtime, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding,
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Text (song composition):

In the Springtime,
the only pretty ringtime
When birds do sing
Hey ding a din ding,
Sweet lovers love the Spring
Sweet lovers love the Spring.

In the Springtime,
the only pretty ringtime
When birds do sing
Hey ding a din ding,
Sweet lovers love the Spring
Sweet lovers love the Spring

Poet Biographical Information: William Shakespeare (1564–1616)

William Shakespeare, an English poet and playwright, is considered one of the greatest writers of his time. He wrote 38 plays, 154 sonnets, and 2 narrative poems. He was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564, and married Anne Hathaway at the age of 18. Historical information, after 1585, is often contradictory and scholars consider this time to be his “lost years.”⁹⁰ The comedy, *As You Like It*, was first published in 1623 and is set in France with love being a central theme throughout the play.

Composer Biographical Information: Betty Jackson King (1928–1994)

Betty Jackson King, composer, conductor, educator, pianist, and scholar, was born in 1928. Her love for music and faith was evident throughout her life. Her music education began in Chicago and she received a BA in Piano and MM in Composition from Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University. She is well-known for her arrangements of spirituals. “Ride-Up in the Chariot” is a spiritual arrangement that was performed by Kathleen Battle in Carnegie Hall for a spiritual concert in 1990. King’s compositional output includes operas, oratorios, choral, and solo work for piano, voice, and organ.⁹¹

Notes: “In the Springtime”

“In the Springtime” by Betty Jackson King, comes from a well-known text by Shakespeare that has been set to music by composers such as Thomas Morley and Roger Quilter under the title “It was a Lover and His Lass,” originally from *As You Like It*, Act

⁹⁰ Amanda Mabillard. “Shakespeare’s Lost Years,” *Shakespeare Online*. Accessed August 15, 2017. <http://www.shakespeare-online.com/biography/shakespearelostyears.html>.

⁹¹ Taylor, ed., *Art Songs and Spirituals by African-American Women Composers*, i.

5, Scene 3.⁹² King offers a great alternative for young singers to the other well-known compositions by Quilter and Morley. In the forest scene, one finds two Pages that run into the characters Touchstone, the clown, and Audrey, his intended bride. During this scene, one Page dances with them in a circle while the other plays the song.

“In the Springtime,” composed by King in 1976, uses a melodic and lyrical line that helps capture a tender springtime love. The words, which are repeated twice in two different keys and dynamic levels, aid the singer in expressing the repetitive text. The repeating octave leap and dynamic changes may be challenging elements for the beginning singer. This song is ranked slightly harder due to the use of larger leaps, longer phrases, and the demand that the length of the song places on the singer. The song is composed with a meter marking of 3/4 and uses a tempo marked *tenderly*. The supportive accompaniment helps to mitigate the difficulties in the vocal line, which is often in a medium tessitura making it accessible for all voice types. Refer to Figure 4.6 for the rubric evaluation which ranked this song at a beginning-intermediate level.

⁹² William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*. 4th ed., ed. David Bevington (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 322.

Figure 4.6 Evaluation of Song: “Compensation”

“Compensation”

Charles Lloyd, Jr., composer

Paul Laurence Dunbar, poet

Range: B ♭ 3–D ♭ 5

Tessitura: (Low) E ♭ 4–B ♭ 4

Voice: Low (Bass, Baritone, Contralto, Mezzo-soprano)

Language: English

Key: D-flat centered (transitional)

Form: Implies a simple AA’ form

Meter: 3/4

Tempo: *Slowly with Expression*

Length of Song: approximately 1 minute and 10 seconds

Publisher/Edition: *Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers*, Edward B. Marks Music Company

TITLE: “Compensation”

RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Intermediate

OVERAL RANKING TOTAL: 27/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura		■			
Rhythm & Meter		■			
Tempi			■		
Duration & Form		■			
Melodic Line				■	
Accompaniment Support			■		
Phrase Length			■		
Melismatic Phrasing	■				
Diction & Articulation		■			
Text Interpretation & Characterization		■			
Lyrical Flow			■		
CATEGORY TOTAL:	1	10	12	4	0

Additional comments:

- Narrow range with unusual intervals and chromaticism
- Phrases are of moderate length
- Leaps greater than a fifth
- The vocal line contains a mixture of descending and ascending motion
- Accompaniment does not always double the vocal line, but is supportive
- Long lyrical lines

Text (original):

Because I had loved so deeply,
Because I had loved so long,
God in His great compassion
Gave me the gift of song.

Because I had loved so vainly,
And sung with such faltering breath,
The Master in infinite mercy
Offers the boon of Death.

Text (song composition):

Because I had loved so deeply;
Because I had loved so long;
God gave, in His great compassion,
The gift of song.

Poet Biographical Information: Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906)

Paul Laurence Dunbar is an influential African-American poet and “the first African-American poet to earn national distinction and acceptance.”⁹³ His parents were freed slaves from Kentucky and their stories of plantation life played a significant role in his career. From an early age, Dunbar aspired to be a writer and received his first publication by the age of 16. Although he was unable to afford college, he forged his own path and became a professional writer. From 1895-1905 he published several books of poetry before dying at the young age of thirty-three. His writing often contains a

⁹³ Heard, *44 Art Songs and Spirituals by Florence B. Price*, v.

conversational character, inventive construction, and the use of different dialects, as well as conventional English.⁹⁴

Composer Biographical Information: Charles Lloyd, Jr. (b. 1948)

Charles Lloyd, Jr. was born in 1948 in Ohio, beginning piano lessons at the age of four at the Bach Conservatory of Music. His mother was a music major and educator, and his family was a strong source of encouragement for his musical studies. In 1974, he was accepted into the University of Michigan, a “place where he formed a valuable relationship with African-American editor Willis Patterson, who was a professor of voice and head of the voice area.”⁹⁵ Patterson had a significant impact on many students and was considered the “Godfather,” introducing many to the music of African-American composers.⁹⁶ Lloyd’s compositional output consists of the following: instrumental, oratorio, opera, art songs, spiritual arrangements, choral, and sacred works. His early art song compositions began in 1972 with his composition *I Judge Not My Own Self* and *Compensation* in 1977.

Notes: “Compensation”

The song, “Compensation,” uses a limited range and chromaticism that has misleading resolutions. At first glance, the song “Compensation” by Charles Lloyd, Jr. appears easier based on brevity and limited text. However, there are some challenges revealed with further study. The song has large leaps and contains great dissonance.

⁹⁴ Heard, *44 Art Songs and Spirituals by Florence B. Price*, v.

⁹⁵ Charis Kelly Hudson, “The Vocal Works of Charles Lloyd, Jr.: A Performer’s Guide to Selected Dramatic Works, Art Songs, and Spiritual Art Songs” (DMA diss., Louisiana State University, 2011), 5.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Charis Kelly Hudson states that this song “immediately establishes a stately atmosphere created by dissonances.”⁹⁷ Furthermore, the accompaniment is expressive but does not always offer melodic support to the performer. “Compensation” utilizes slightly more than an octave range and is set in a lower tessitura. This song is most suitable for lower voices: bass, baritone, contralto, or mezzo-soprano.

Even though “Compensation” is a brief song and has received criticism for its short length, the composer supported his decision for brevity by saying “it says exactly what I want it to say.”⁹⁸ The text, published in 1905, is drawn from Dunbar’s collection, *Lyrics of Sunshine and Shadow*. The poem, which is not gender specific, shares the idea that deep love has the power to bring joy in a unique way, “The gift of song.” Refer to Figure 4.6 for an evaluation, ranking this song at an intermediate level.

⁹⁷ Hudson, “The Vocal Works of Charles Lloyd, Jr.,” 47.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

Figure 4.7 Evaluation of Song: “Chere, Mo Lemmè Toi”

“Chere, Mo Lemmè Toi”
Camille Nickerson, arranger

Range: B \flat 3–E \flat 5
Tessitura: (Med) F4–D5
Voice: Med (All Voice Types)

Language: French Creole (Louisianan)
Key: B \flat major
Form: Ternary
Meter: 2/4
Tempo: *Moderato with marked rhythm* ($\text{♩} = 92$)

Length of Song: approximately 2 minutes and 5 seconds
Publisher/Edition: Boston Music Company, 1942

TITLE: “Chere, Mo Lemmè Toi”
RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Intermediate
OVERAL RANKING TOTAL: 27/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura			■		
Rhythm & Meter			■		
Tempi		■			
Duration & Form		■			
Melodic Line		■			
Accompaniment Support			■		
Phrase Length		■			
Melismatic Phrasing	■				
Diction & Articulation			■		
Text Interpretation & Characterization			■		
Lyrical Flows			■		
CATEGORY TOTAL:	1	8	18	0	0

Additional comments:

- Text in Louisianan Creole
- Short phrases
- Leaps greater than a fifth
- Repetitive and memorable melody
- The vocal line contains a mixture of descending and ascending motion
- Accompaniment is supportive, but does not usually double the vocal line

IPA and Translation:

Chere, Mo lemmé toi, Oui, Mo lemmé toi,
ʃɛ:ʁ, mo leme twa, wi, mo leme twa,
Dear, I love you, Yes, I love you,

‘vec tou mo cœur mo lemmé toi... Chere, Mo fou pou toi
‘vek tu mo kœʁ mo leme twa... ʃɛ:ʁ, mo fu pu twa
with all my heart I love you... Dear, I’m crazy about you

comme ‘tit cochon lemmé labou.
kɔm ti kɔʃɔ̃ leme labu.
like (a) little pig loves mud.

Si jamais mo pas lemmé vou,
Si ʒame mo pa leme vu,
If ever I not love you,

Mo prends couteau, oui prends couteau,
Mo pʁɑ̃ kuto, wi pʁɑ̃ kuto,
I take knife, yes take knife,

et coupé mo vieux lacou... Chere, Mo tou peu toi
e kupe mo vjø laku... ʃɛ:ʁ, mo tu pø twa
and cut my old neck... Dear, I everything for you⁹⁹

Composer Biographical Information: Camille Nickerson (1888–1982)

Camille Nickerson grew up in New Orleans, Louisiana and was an educator, composer, vocalist, and pianist. Being influenced by her musical family, she received her

⁹⁹ Dr. Fabiola Henri, meeting for translation, December 2, 2016.

Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory.¹⁰⁰

Nickerson was known for her arrangements and performances of Creole songs, and her passion to share her knowledge with others about the Louisianan Creole culture. She was recognized as “The Louisiana Lady.”¹⁰¹ The Boston Music Company published some of her arrangements in 1942 as *Five Creole Songs Harmonized and Arranged by Camille Nickerson*.¹⁰²

Composers Notes on her *Five Creole Songs*

Camille Nickerson writes “The Creole folk songs herein represented originated on the plantations of the French and Spanish colonists of Louisiana much in the same manner as the spirituals and work songs of the American Negro. But, whereas the latter folk music is in part a product of Anglo-Saxon environment, the former reflects the influence of a Latin regime; hence there are differences in the two folk creations.”¹⁰³

Notes: “Chere, Mo Lemmè Toi”

The next two songs are arranged by Camille Nickerson. In Christopher Jordan’s dissertation, “*Songs of the Soul: An Exploration of Music by African-American Composers*,” he states “the poems use a French-based *patois* commonly spoken by the older generation of Louisiana Creoles. Like many other dialects, the language omits prepositions and articles, and splits verbs.”¹⁰⁴ These songs may be challenging for those

¹⁰⁰ Christopher C. Jordan, “Songs of the Soul: An Exploration of Music by African American Composers” (DMA diss., The University of Alabama, 2016), 31.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Camille Nickerson, *Five Creole Songs Harmonized and Arranged by Camille Nickerson* (Boston: Boston Music Company, 1942).

¹⁰³ Ibid., forward.

¹⁰⁴ Jordan, “Songs of the Soul,” 33.

new to singing in the language of Louisianan Creole, knowledge of the French language will help ease this difficulty. The song is repetitive, and the limited amount of text makes it easier to memorize. Both songs in this collection are upbeat and offer the singer great dramatic exploration.

The song, “Chere, Mo Lemmè Toi,” is a song full of flirtation and as Nickerson states in her notes,

sung on Mardi Gras Day, the last day of the Carnival season, when a suitor, otherwise timid, could easily find courage with which to declare his heart’s longing to the one of his choice, since he was hidden by a mask and a complete disguise. The second strain of this song is, interestingly enough, a tune popular with the Americans, and played by the bands when on parade. The Creoles being intrigued by the melody, translated the words into their own vernacular, and enjoyed singing it as much as did the Americans.¹⁰⁵

The phrases are relatively short, but the rhythm of the accompaniment can pose a greater challenge for beginning singers. The range is almost an octave and a half and set in a medium tessitura that is good for all voice types. This song is ranked at an intermediate level. Refer to example Figure 4.7 for an evaluation of this song.

¹⁰⁵ Nickerson, *Five Creole Songs Harmonized*.

Figure 4.8 Evaluation of Song: “Michieu Banjo”

“Michieu Banjo”
Camille Nickerson, arranger

Range: D4–D5
Tessitura: (Med) G4–D5
Voice: Med (All Voice Types)

Language: French Creole (Louisianan)
Key: G major
Form: Binary
Meter: 2/4
Tempo: *Gaily, but not too fast* (♩ = 116)

Length of Song: approximately 1 minute and 30 seconds
Publisher/Edition: Boston Music Company, 1942

TITLE: “Michieu Banjo”
RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Intermediate
OVERAL RANKING TOTAL: 28/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura			■		
Rhythm & Meter			■		
Tempi		■			
Duration & Form		■			
Melodic Line		■			
Accompaniment Support			■		
Phrase Length		■			
Melismatic Phrasing	■				
Diction & Articulation				■	
Text Interpretation & Characterization			■		
Lyrical Flow			■		
CATEGORY TOTAL:	1	8	15	4	0

Additional comments:

- Fast and moderately challenging text in Louisianan Creole
- Short phrases
- Leaps are not greater than a fifth
- Repetitive and memorable melody
- The vocal line contains descending motion and some ascending motion
- Accompaniment is supportive, but does not usually double the vocal line

IPA and Translation:

Gardez piti Mulatte la, Michieu Banjo, Comment li insolent!

gɑ̃de piti mylat la, miʃjø bɑ̃zo, kɔmɑ̃ li ɛsɔlɑ̃!
Look after kid mulatto there, Mister Banjo, how he is insolent!

Chapeau su' côté, Michieu Banjo, Badine a la main;

ʃapɔ sy' kɔtɛ, miʃjø bɑ̃zo, badin a la mɛ;
Hat on one side, Mister Banjo, Walkin' cane in hand;

Mouchoir dans so poche, Michieu Banjo, Cigar dans so gros labouche.

mufwɑ̃ dɑ̃ so pɔʃ, miʃjø bɑ̃zo, sigɑ̃k dɑ̃ so ɡʁɔ labuʃ.
handkerchief in his pocket, Mister Banjo, Cigar in his big mouth.

Cheveux bien glacé, Michieu Banjo, Cravat, rouge assez!

ʃɑ̃vø bjɛ̃ glasɛ, miʃjø bɑ̃zo, kʁɛvɑ, ʁuʒ asɛ!
Hair well smoothed, Mister Banjo, tie, red enough!

Pantalon plein plein 'tit Banjo, Bottes qui apé fait "Crinc, crinc!"

pɑ̃talɔ̃ plɛ̃ plɛ̃ 'ti bɑ̃zo, bɔt ki apɛ fɛ "kʁɛ̃, kʁɛ̃!"
Trousers plenty plenty little banjo, boots which go "crank, crank!"

Yeux qui apé roulé Michieu Banjo, Fleur dans so boutonniere,

jø ki apɛ ʁulɛ miʃjø bɑ̃zo, flœʁ dɑ̃ so butɔni:ʁ,
Eyes that are rolling Mister Banjo, flower in his boutonniere,

'tit Banjo, Joué li meme capab, Mais laid jus' comme le Diab'

ti bɑ̃zo, ʒwe li mem kapab, mɛ lɛ ʒys' kɔm lə djab'
little banjo, play he himself can, but ugly just like the devil¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ Dr. Fabiola Henri, meeting for translation, December 2, 2016.

Notes: “Michieu Banjo”

The song, “Michieu Banjo,” also utilizes Louisianan Creole. In this satirical song, Nickerson states in her notes,

‘Mister Banjo,’ the Town ‘Dandy’ is the envy of those who have neither his fine clothes nor his talent for entertaining on the banjo; moreover the envious pang is certainly not softened by the fact that he is a *mulatto*. Hence, Mister Banjo is the victim of much ridicule.¹⁰⁷

This song is written using only an octave range, in a medium tessitura that is suitable for all voice types. With a quick tempo, in binary form, it lasts only one minute and thirty seconds. Additionally, a repetitive, descending line can be heard throughout the song.

Like Nickerson’s previous song, “Chere, Mo Lemmè Toi,” brief phrases and an independent accompaniment are also prevalent, however the amount of text along with its rapid proclamation and comedic timing ranked ‘Michieu Banjo’ as a slightly harder piece. This selection is ranked at an intermediate level and the evaluation for this song can be seen in Figure 4.8.

¹⁰⁷ Nickerson, *Five Creole Songs Harmonized*.

Figure 4.9 Evaluation of Song: “Prayer”

“Prayer”
 from *Nightsongs*
 H. Leslie Adams, composer
 Langston Hughes, poet

Range: C4–E ♭ 5
Tessitura: (Med-Low) E ♭ 4–B ♭ 4
Voice: Med-Low (Baritone or Mezzo-soprano)

Language: English
Key: E ♭ major
Form: Binary, hymn-like
Meter: 4/4
Tempo: *Adagio expressive* (♩ = 60)

Length of Song: approximately 3 minutes and 20 seconds
Publisher/Edition: *The Second Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers*, Willis C Patterson (self-published), available through Videmus.org and through American Composers Alliance, Inc. (BMI)
Other Keys Available: Medium Voice and High Voice (D ♭ major and G ♭ major)

TITLE: “Prayer” from *Nightsongs*
RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Intermediate
OVERAL RANKING TOTAL: 28/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura			■		
Rhythm & Meter			■		
Tempi		■			
Duration & Form			■		
Melodic Line			■		
Accompaniment Support		■			
Phrase Length			■		
Melismatic Phrasing	■				
Diction & Articulation		■			
Text Interpretation & Characterization			■		
Lyrical Flow			■		
CATEGORY TOTAL:	1	6	21	0	0

Additional comments:

- Hymn-like, simple text
- Phrases are of moderate length
- Leaps greater than a fifth
- The vocal line contains a mixture of descending and ascending motion
- Accompaniment does not always double the vocal line, but is supportive
- Dynamics play a crucial role in portraying the text

Text (original):

I ask you this:
Which way to go?
I ask you this:
Which sin to bear?
Which crown to put
Upon my hair?
I do not know,
Lord God,
I do not know.

Text (song composition):

I ask you this: Which way to go?
I ask you this: Which sin to bear?
Which crown to put upon my hair?
I do not know, Lord God,
I do not know.
I ask you this: Which way to go?
I ask you this: Which sin to bear?
Which crown to put upon my hair?
I do not know, Lord God,
I do not know.

Poet Biographical Information: Langston Hughes (1902–1967)

Langston Hughes, poet of the Harlem Renaissance, was born in Missouri in 1902, and is considered an important writer of the twentieth century. He published the first of his many poems, *The Weary Blues* in 1926. Hughes found comfort writing poetry that “depicts black America from a first hand perspective, and that literary evolution united with his love of music, specifically jazz and blues. He used the incredibly creative poetry of black language, blues, and jazz to construct an Afro-American aesthetic that rarely has been surpassed.”¹⁰⁸ His life and work, which included poetry, eleven plays, and prose.

¹⁰⁸ Allanda Constantina Small, “H. Leslie Adams’ Nightsongs: Poetry, Music, and Performance” (DMA diss., The University of Southern Mississippi, 2007), 16.

Composer Biographical Information: H. Leslie Adams (b. 1932)

H. Leslie Adams was born in Cleveland, Ohio on December 30, 1932. An active composer, Adams's works span various genres including piano, choral, opera, instrumental, chamber music, orchestral, and vocal art songs. Adams is most widely known for his art song compositions, encompassing over 40 songs for solo voice and 4 song cycles or groups. At the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, Adams studied voice, piano, and composition. He earned his bachelor's degree in 1955 and continued to earn a master's degree in music from the California State University at Long Beach in 1967. In 1973, he earned a Ph.D. in music education from The Ohio State University. Adams has worked as a choral director, pianist, musical director, educator, arts advocate, and composer. Adams musical style, as described by Josephine Wright in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, is a "lyrical style that fuses elements of jazz and black folksong with 20th century compositional techniques."¹⁰⁹ Throughout his works, one can hear the influence of classical and contemporary genres.

Notes: "Prayer" from *Nightsongs*

"Prayer," is from a "song group," as Leslie Adams describes the songs, entitled *Nightsongs*.¹¹⁰ Of special note is Adams' use of poets exclusively connected with The Harlem Renaissance. This song group, titled, *Nightsongs*, was originally composed over a six-month period in 1961. "Prayer" is the first song in the group with poetry written in 1954 by Langston Hughes. The text expresses a personal struggle in understanding the

¹⁰⁹ Josephine Wright, "Leslie Adams," in Stanley Sadie, ed. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. II (London: Macmillan, 2001), 697-698.

¹¹⁰ Small, "H. Leslie Adams' *Nightsongs*: Poetry, Music, and Performance," 13.

purpose of life, and turning to God for help. The verse which is repeated without modulation is heightened emotionally through dynamic contrast.

The range of “Prayer,” covers more than an octave and as many other Leslie Adams compositions, is available in several keys. For this study, the medium key has been chosen for the song “Prayer.” The tessitura lies in the range of a fifth, and the meter is in 4/4 with a tempo marked, *adagio expressive*. As Allanda Constantina Small states “Prayer is a hymn-like and repetitive song that is uncomplicated and easy to learn.”¹¹¹ However, Small also explains that “it is imperative that the singer internalizes the poetry and maximizes its emotional direction through the use of dynamic contrast and textual clarity.”¹¹² This song has been ranked at an ‘intermediate’ level, which can be seen in the rubric, Figure 4.9, due to its expressive depth, more moderate phrase length, register shifts, and larger intervallic leaps.

¹¹¹ Small, “H. Leslie Adams’ Nightsongs: Poetry, Music, and Performance,” 29.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

Figure 4.10 Evaluation of Song: “Sence You Went Away”

“Sence You Went Away”
 from *Nightsongs*
 H. Leslie Adams, composer
 James Weldon Johnson, poet

Range: C4–D5
Tessitura: (Low) E ♭ 4–B ♭ 4
Voice: Low (Baritone or Mezzo-soprano)

Language: English
Key: E ♭ major/E major
Form: Ternary
Meter: 4/4
Tempo: *Moderately moving and very expressively* (♩ = 92)

Length of Song: approximately 4 minutes and 20 seconds
Publisher/Edition: American Composers Alliance, Inc. (BMI)
Other Keys Available: Medium Voice and High Voice (F major/G ♭ major and G major/
 A ♭ major)

TITLE: “Sence You Went Away” from *Nightsongs*
RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Intermediate
OVERAL RANKING TOTAL: 31/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura			■		
Rhythm & Meter			■		
Tempi		■			
Duration & Form				■	
Melodic Line			■		
Accompaniment Support		■			
Phrase Length			■		
Melismatic Phrasing	■				
Diction & Articulation			■		
Text Interpretation & Characterization				■	
Lyrical Flow			■		
CATEGORY TOTAL:	1	4	18	8	0

Additional comments:

- Ballad-like
- Use of dialect
- Phrases are of moderate length
- Leaps greater than a fifth
- The vocal line contains a mixture of descending and ascending motion
- Accompaniment does not always double vocal line, but is supportive

Text (original):

Seems lak to me de stars don't shine
so bright,
Seems lak to me de sun done loss his
light,
Seems lak to me der's nothin' goin'
right,
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me de sky ain't half so
blue,
Seems lak to me dat eve'ything wants
you,
Seems lak to me I don't know what to
do,
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me dat eve'ything is
wrong,
Seems lak to me de day's jes twice ez
long,
Seems lak to me de bird's forgot his
song,
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me I jes can't he'p but
sigh,
Seems lak to me ma th'oat keeps
gittin' dry,
Seems lak to me a tear stays in ma eye,
Sence you went away.

Text (song composition):

Seems lak to me de stars don't shine
so bright,
Seems lak to me de sun done loss his
light,
Seems lak to me der's nothin' goin'
right,
Sence you went away
Sence you went away.
Seems lak to me de sky ain't half so
blue,
Seems lak to me dat ev'rything wants
you,
Seems lak to me I don't know what to
do,
Sence you went away
Sence you went away.

Oh, ev'rything is wrong,
De day's jes twice as long,
De bird's forgot his song
Sence you went away
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me I jes can't he'p but
sigh,
Seems lak to me ma th'oat keeps
gittin' dry,
Seems lak to me a tear stays in my
eye
Sence you went away.

Poet Biographical Information: James Weldon Johnson (1871–1938)

James Weldon Johnson is widely known for his poem “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” that he wrote with his brother J. Rosamond Johnson in 1899, which “became unofficially known as the ‘Negro National Anthem’.”¹¹³ During this time, he also completed the book, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, which was originally published anonymously in 1912. “Johnson established his reputation as a writer, and was known during the Harlem Renaissance for his poems, novels, and anthologies collecting both poems and spirituals of black culture.”¹¹⁴ Johnson was a strong leader and was one of the first African-American professors to be hired at New York University. His poetry and writings were inspirational for future generations of poets, demonstrating “that black folk life could be the material of serious poetry.”¹¹⁵

Notes: “Sence You Went Away” from *Nightsongs*

“Sence You Went Away” is the fifth song in Adams’s song group, *Nightsongs*, with poetry written by James Weldon Johnson. In this song, Adams distinguishes this setting from other poetry in the group by starting “right out without an introduction. It’s a dramatic vignette with a little bit of sadness. But again, the richness of the harmony and lyricism show that it’s not sad, but rather bittersweet.”¹¹⁶ This composition requires the use of a dialect. Small states that “Adams chose not to change any of the dialectical aspects because it is important to stay true to the poet’s original thought and intent.”¹¹⁷ It

¹¹³ Heard, *44 Art Songs and Spirituals by Florence B. Price*, vi.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., vii.

¹¹⁶ Small, “H. Leslie Adams’ *Nightsongs*,” 48.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 47.

is crucial for teachers and students to respect and carefully study the pronunciation of the text. Anton Armstrong, conductor of the St. Olaf Choir and Professor of Music at St. Olaf College, notes that "dialect changes the sound drastically and for the better, but the singers have to understand why this is important in order to show respect for the composition."¹¹⁸ Armstrong states, "we music continue to have open dialogue with our singers about their concerns; we must, however, balance what is politically correct for the time versus what is historical and authentic to the music."¹¹⁹ The use of dialect, duration of the song, and occasional leaps over a fifth can be challenging aspects found within this song for the singer.

Adams uses text painting, moments of call and response, and subtle rhythmic differentiation to heighten his musical expression. The song is ballad-like with a range of slightly more than an octave. Dynamics vary throughout the song and phrases are of a moderate length. According to the ranking assigned within the rubric, Figure 4.10, this song has been ranked slightly higher than "Prayer," but is still considered at an 'intermediate' level.

¹¹⁸ Penelope Cruz, "Is Music for Everyone?," *The Choral Journal* 58, no. 4 (2017): 20.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Figure 4.11 Evaluation of Song: “Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal”

“Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal”

H.T. Burleigh, composer

Lord Alfred Tennyson, poet

Range: A3–D5

Tessitura: (Med-Low) G4–C4

Voice: Med-Low (Baritone or Mezzo-soprano)

Language: English

Key: B ♭ major

Form: Through-Composed

Meter: 4/4

Tempo: marked *Andante cantabile*

Length of Song: approximately 2 minutes and 10 seconds

Publisher/Edition: William Maxwell Music Company, 1908

Other Keys Available: High Voice (D ♭ major)

TITLE: “Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal”

RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Intermediate

OVERAL RANKING TOTAL: 31/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura			■		
Rhythm & Meter		■			
Tempi		■			
Duration & Form			■		
Melodic Line			■		
Accompaniment Support			■		
Phrase Length				■	
Melismatic Phrasing	■				
Diction & Articulation			■		
Text Interpretation & Characterization				■	
Lyrical Flow			■		
CATEGORY TOTAL:	1	4	18	8	0

Additional comments:

- Mixture of ascending and descending motion in vocal line
- Accompaniment supports the vocal line but does not double the line throughout
- Phrases are moderately advanced in length
- Leaps and skips are rarely greater than a fifth
- Lyrical lines

Text (original):	Text (song composition):
<p>Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white; Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk; Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font: The fire-fly wakens: waken thou with me.</p> <p>Now droops the milk white peacock like a ghost, And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.</p> <p>Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the stars, And all thy heart lies open unto me.</p> <p>Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.</p> <p>Now folds the lily all her sweetness up, And slips into the bosom of the lake: So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip Into my bosom and be lost in me.</p>	<p>Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white; Now waves the cypress in the palace walk; Now winks the gold fin in the porphyry font; The firefly wakens: Waken thou with me.</p> <p>Now folds the lily all her sweetness up, And slips into the bosom of the lake: So fold thyself my dearest, So fold thyself my dearest: So fold thyself my dearest, thou, And slip, slip Into my bosom and be lost in me, be lost in me, in me!</p>

Poet Biographical Information: Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809–1892)

Lord Alfred Tennyson was born in England, 1809, the fourth in a family of twelve children. His family life was one of great struggle which he was able to escape in 1827 when he followed two of his brothers to Cambridge. His brothers were part of a poetry

club, and were highly inspirational to his writing. Tennyson was first published in 1827 and became the poet laureate for Queen Victoria in 1850.

Composer Biographical Information: Harry Thacker Burleigh (1866–1949)

H.T. Burleigh, a baritone, composer, and arranger was born on December 2, 1866 in Pennsylvania. Burleigh attended the National Conservatory of Music in New York, where he began working with Antonín Dvořák in 1893. Burleigh played a crucial role in introducing Dvořák to African-American music, especially spirituals. In 1898, William Maxwell published Burleigh's first art songs. Burleigh composed more than 300 songs, including his arrangement of spirituals for solo voice and choir. He was one of the first to arrange solo spirituals for the concert stage. In her book, *Harry T. Burleigh from the Spiritual to the Harlem Renaissance*, Jean Snyder states: "Burleigh's success in composing art songs and ballads that were performed by many professional singers of national and international eminence was unprecedented for black composers and has seldom been exceeded, in volume if not in enduring fame."¹²⁰ Burleigh is an important figure in the recognition, acceptance, and accessibility of African-American art music.

Notes: "Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal"

Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal, poetry by Lord Alfred Tennyson was set by H.T. Burleigh in 1908.¹²¹ Teachers frequently assign more well-known settings of *Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal* by composers like Roger Quilter. This selection, however, is a

¹²⁰ Jean E. Snyder, *Harry T. Burleigh: From the Spiritual to the Harlem Renaissance* (Urbana, Chicago, Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 253.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 266.

wonderful alternative for singers and according to Snyder, “one of his strongest pieces from this period [1908-1913]”.¹²² *Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal* includes text that is derived from a brief poem found within “The Princess.” It employs the use of indirect descriptions to enhance the sense of eroticism. In “The Princess,” the woman is reading a tranquil and erotic poem in the presence of a man who has earlier professed his love for her. Overall, there is a sense of being consumed by love with a suggestion of a romantic encounter.

The accompaniment is very expressive and lush, while also giving some support to the vocal line. The song uses a series of diatonic key changes that help to reinforce the meaning of the text, which can be expressed in many different ways. Additionally, there are several tempo and dynamic variances found throughout the song. In contrast, the phrases are relatively short, leaps/skips are smaller and are rarely greater than a fifth, and the range consists of only an octave. This song is ranked at the intermediate level, please refer to Figure 4.11.

¹²² Snyder, *Harry T. Burleigh*, 266.

Figure 4.12 Evaluation of Song: “A Death Song”

“A Death Song”

Howard Swanson, composer

Paul Laurence Dunbar, poet

Range: B \flat 3–E \flat 5

Tessitura: (Med-Low) G4–C4

Voice: Med-Low (Baritone or Mezzo-soprano)

Language: English

Key: C major/D \flat major

Form: ABA

Meter: 4/4

Tempo: marked *Andante moderato*

Length of Song: approximately 3 minutes and 40 seconds

Publisher/Edition: *Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers*, Edward B. Marks Music Company

TITLE: “A Death Song”

RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Intermediate

OVERAL RANKING TOTAL: 33/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura			■		
Rhythm & Meter			■		
Tempi		■			
Duration & Form				■	
Melodic Line				■	
Accompaniment Support			■		
Phrase Length				■	
Melismatic Phrasing	■				
Diction & Articulation			■		
Text Interpretation & Characterization			■		
Lyrical Flow			■		
CATEGORY TOTAL:	1	2	18	12	0

Additional comments:

- Phrases are moderately advanced in length
- Mixture of ascending and descending motion in vocal line
- Accompaniment establishes modulations but does not always double the vocal line
- Use of dialect is optional
- Leaps are a fifth or less
- Repetition of patterns can be found throughout the song

Text (original):

Lay me down beneaf de willers in de
grass,
Whah de branch 'll go a-singin' as it
pass
An' w'en I's a-layin' low,
I kin hyeah it as it go
Singin', "Sleep, my honey, tek yo' res'
at las'."

Lay me nigh to whah hit meks a little
pool,
An' de watah stan's so quiet lak an'
cool,
Whah de little birds in spring,
Ust to come an' drink an' sing,
An' de chillen waded on dey way to
school.

Let me settle w'en my shouldahs draps
dey load
Nigh enough to hyeah de noises in de
road;
Fu' I t'ink de las' long res'
Gwine to soothe my sperrit bes'
If Is layin' 'mong de t'ings I's allus
knowed.

Text (song composition):

Lay me down beneath the willows in de
grass,
Whah de branch 'll go a singin' as it
pass.
An w'en I's layin' low
I kin hyeah it as it go singin;
"Sleep my honey, Tak yo' res' at las'"

Lay me nigh to whah it meks a little
pool.
An de watah stan's so quiet lak an'
cool.
Whah de little birds in spring
ust to come an' drink an sing,
An' de chillen wadded on dey way to
school.

Let me settle w'en my shouldahs draps
dey load.
Nigh enough to hyeah de noises in de
road.
Fu' I t'ink de las' long res'
Gwine to sooth my sperrit bes',
Ef I's laying 'mong de t'ings
I's allus knowed.

Composer Biographical Information: Howard Swanson (1907–1978)

Howard Swanson was an African-American composer born in Atlanta, Georgia. He graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Music with a Bachelor's degree in music theory. In 1939, he received a fellowship that allowed him to study in France with Nadia Boulanger. In 1950 at the age of 43, one of his most well-known compositions, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," poetry by Langston Hughes, was performed by Marian Anderson at Carnegie Hall.¹²³ His compositional output includes works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, solo instrumental, and choral, "but he is best known for his art songs."¹²⁴ Swanson's musical style utilizes techniques and forms of the Western European classical tradition, as well as demonstrating "a deep commitment to his African-American heritage, upon which he drew heavily for musical ideas and inspiration."¹²⁵

Notes: "A Death Song"

A Death Song composed by Howard Swanson to poetry by Paul Laurence Dunbar¹²⁶ presents a unique challenge for the singer because of its use of blues idioms and dialect. According to Samuel A. Floyd in his book *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States*, "the structure is that of a blues with two-measure statements by the voice followed by two-measure answers by the

¹²³ Marsha Jean Reisser, "Compositional Techniques and Afro-American Musical Traits in Selected Published Works by Howard Swanson" (Ph.D. diss., The University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1982), 9.

¹²⁴ Marsha J. Heizer and Timothy Rommen, "Howard Swanson," in Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., ed., *International Dictionary of Black Composers*, vol. 2 (Chicago & London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1999), 1088.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ James Weldon Johnson, *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, 93.

piano, the two ‘voices’ calling and responding as in a traditional blues song.”¹²⁷ There are moments where the accompaniment does help establish the modulations, but it doesn’t always double the vocal line. Unlike in the song “Sence You Went Away” by Adams, Swanson notes in the music that the song can be sung with or without using a specific dialect.

“A Death Song” is considered a lullaby, although not as a song that lulls one to sleep but rather to death. The rocking motion is portrayed by the accompaniment in a *leitmotif* that is introduced at the beginning of the song and used consistently throughout. Phrase length is moderate to long with easily recognizable repetitive pattern. The low tessitura, which is C4–G4, is best suited for lower voices. According to the Figure 4.12, a difficulty level of intermediate is assigned.

¹²⁷ Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 252.

Figure 4.13 Evaluation of Song: “I Want to Die While You Love Me”

“I Want to Die While You Love Me”
 from *Miss Wheatley’s Garden*, No. 1?
 Rosephanye Powell, composer
 Georgia Douglas Johnson, poet

Range: E4–A5
Tessitura: (Med-High) G#4–E5
Voice: Med-High (Soprano or Tenor)

Language: English
Key: A major
Form: Modified strophic form
Meter: 3/4
Tempo: *Tenderly, Moderately Slow*

Length of Song: approximately 3 minutes
Publisher/Edition: Gentry Publications, Inkhorn Music Publications
Other Keys Available: Med-Low (E ♭ major)

TITLE: “I Want to Die While You Love Me” from *Miss Wheatley’s Garden*
RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Intermediate
OVERALL RANKING TOTAL: 34/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura			■		
Rhythm & Meter			■		
Tempi				■	
Duration & Form			■		
Melodic Line			■		
Accompaniment Support			■		
Phrase Length				■	
Melismatic Phrasing	■				
Diction & Articulation			■		
Text Interpretation & Characterization				■	
Lyrical Flow			■		
CATEGORY TOTAL:	1	0	21	12	0

Additional comments:

- Dynamics and tempo vary often, a challenging climatic ending.
- Phrases are moderately advanced in length
- Mixture of ascending and descending motion in vocal line
- Accompaniment creates a dramatic texture and can be challenging; does not always double the vocal line
- Leaps are a fifth or less

Text (original):	Text (song composition):
<p>I want to die while you love me, While yet you hold me fair, While laughter lies upon my lips And lights are in my hair.</p> <p>I want to die while you love me, And bear to that still bed, Your kisses turbulent, unspent To warm me when I'm dead.</p> <p>I want to die while you love me Oh, who would care to live Till love has nothing more to ask And nothing more to give!</p> <p>I want to die while you love me And never, never see The glory of this perfect day Grow dim or cease to be.</p>	<p>I want to die while you love me, while yet you hold me fair, while laughter lies upon my lips and lights are in my hair.</p> <p>I want to die while you love me. And bear to that still bed, your kisses: turbulent, unspent, to warm me when I'm dead. And never, never see the glory, glory of this day grow dim or cease to be, grow dim or cease to be.</p> <p>I want to die while you love me. Oh, who would care to live 'til love has nothing more to ask and nothing more to give?</p> <p>I want to die while you love me, and never, never see the glory of this perfect day, the glory of this perfect day grow dim or cease to be!</p>

Poet Biographical Information: Georgia Douglas Johnson (1880–1966)

Georgia Douglas Johnson was born in Atlanta, Georgia in 1880, becoming a strong presence during the Harlem Renaissance. Johnson graduated from Atlanta University and the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, finally residing in Washington, D.C.

She was one of the first African-American women poets to receive national acclaim.

According to Rosephanye Powell's website, Georgia Douglas "published four volumes of verse: *The Heart of a Woman* (1918), *Bronze* (1922), *An Autumn Love Cycle* (1928), and *Share My World* (1962)."¹²⁸ *An Autumn Love Cycle* (1928) is considered one of her greatest works.

Composer Biographical Information: Rosephanye Powell (b. 1962)

Rosephanye Powell was born in 1962 in Alabama, obtaining her B.M.E. from Alabama State University, M.M. in vocal performance and pedagogy from Westminster Choir College, and D.M. degree in vocal performance from The Florida State University.¹²⁹ Her compositional output includes choral music, art songs, and spiritual arrangements. Powell is currently an Endowed Professor of voice at Auburn University.

Notes: "I Want to Die While You Love Me" from *Miss Wheatley's Garden*

"I Want to Die While You Love Me" is from a set of three songs titled *Miss Wheatley's Garden* by Rosephanye Powell. This song, written in a higher tessitura, is well suited for the soprano or tenor voice, but also accessible for higher mezzo-soprano voices. In this set, the three songs in *Miss Wheatley's Garden* use poetry by different writers. In the words of the composer:

Miss Wheatley is remembered for many first-time accomplishments, including: first African-American to publish a book; an accomplished African-American woman of letters; first African-American woman to earn a living from her writing. Because of these accomplishments, I thought it befitting to title the work

¹²⁸ Rosephanye Powell, "Art Songs," *Rosephanye Powell*, accessed December 1, 2016, <http://rosephanyepowell.com/compositions/publishers/>.

¹²⁹ Rosephanye Powell, "Biography," *Rosephanye Powell*, accessed December 1, 2016, <http://rosephanyepowell.com/#about>.

Miss Wheatley's Garden in honor of Phyllis Wheatley's works which are the garden in which many generations of African-American women poets have blossomed.¹³⁰

The song, "I Want to Die While You Love Me," sets the poetry found in *An Autumn Love Cycle* (1928) by Georgia Douglas Johnson.¹³¹ In this poem, Johnson describes a day of passion in which the character hopes to never die. Powell begins with the feeling of a breeze, which she marked "moderately slow, rather than slow, because it takes on a sadness not present in the poetry if sung too slowly."¹³² Additionally, her markings in the B section labeled, "slightly agitated" and "serenely," help set a change of mood.

One of the biggest challenges that this song presents to a singer is its modified strophic form. A repetitive but variant nature to the melodic lines is used throughout. "I Want to Die While You Love Me" also utilizes frequent tempo and dynamic changes, which help intensify the emotional delivery of the text. The accompaniment creates a beautiful atmosphere, but does not always double the vocal line. Additional care must be considered when selecting this piece due to the ascending leap to the fermata on A5 at the end of the song which can add a level of difficulty for the developing singer. The song is ranked at the difficulty level of intermediate, please refer to Figure 4.13. In the words of Dr. Marcia Porter, "Powell's *Miss Wheatley's Garden* is a wonderful tribute to the legacy of Phyllis Wheatley. The texts are full of imagery and color, which Powell captures in her writing. The songs are well-crafted with warm harmonies and appealing vocal lines. The

¹³⁰ Rosephanye Powell, "Art Songs," *Rosephanye Powell*.

¹³¹ Johnson, *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, 205–206.

¹³² *Ibid.*

songs of *Miss Wheatley's Garden* are a delight to sing and are a great addition to the vocal repertoire.”¹³³

¹³³ Ibid.

Figure 4.14 Evaluation of Song: “Genius Child”

“Genius Child”
 from the Song Cycle *Mortal Storm*, No. 5
 Robert Owens, composer
 Langston Hughes, poet

Range: B3–F5
Tessitura: (Med-Low) F4–C5
Voice: Med-High (Mezzo-Soprano or Baritone)

Language: English
Key: E ♭ minor/G major/A major
Form: ABA’ modified by the transitional material
Meter: 4/4, with one meter change to 3/4
Tempo: *Vivace*

Length of Song: approximately 2 minutes and 10 seconds
Publisher/Edition: *Anthology of Art Songs by Black Composers*, Edward B. Marks Music Company

TITLE: “Genius Child” from *Mortal Storm*
RANKING LEVEL ASSIGNED: Advanced-Intermediate
OVERAL RANKING TOTAL: 39/55

CATEGORY TITLE	1	2	3	4	5
Range & Tessitura			■		
Rhythm & Meter				■	
Tempi				■	
Duration & Form			■		
Melodic Line				■	
Accompaniment Support				■	
Phrase Length				■	
Melismatic Phrasing		■			
Diction & Articulation			■		
Text Interpretation & Characterization				■	
Lyrical Flow				■	
CATEGORY TOTAL:	0	2	9	28	0

Additional comments:

- Key Changes
- Dramatic and challenging poem
- Dynamics and tempo vary often, a challenging climatic ending.
- Phrases are moderately advanced in length and vary
- Mixture of ascending and descending motion in vocal line
- Accompaniment creates a dramatic texture and can be challenging, does not always double the vocal line
- Leaps are greater than a fifth

<p>Text (original):</p> <p>This is a song for the genius child. Sing it softly, for the song is wild. Sing it softly as ever you can – Lest the song get out of hand.</p> <p>Nobody loves a genius child.</p> <p>Can you love an eagle, Tame or wild? Can you love an eagle, Wild or tame? Can you love a monster Of frightening name?</p> <p>Nobody loves a genius child. Kill him – and let his soul run wild.</p>	<p>Text (song composition):</p> <p>This is the song for the Genius Child. Sing it softly, for the song is wild. Sing it softly as ever you can lest the song get out of hand. Nobody loves a Genius Child. Nobody loves a Genius Child.</p> <p>Can you love an eagle, tame or wild? Can you love an eagle, wild or tame? Can you love a monster of frightening name? Nobody loves a Genius Child.</p> <p>Nobody loves a Genius Child. Kill him, Kill him and let his soul run wild!</p>
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Composer Biographical Information: Robert Lee Owens, III (1925–2017)

Robert Lee Owens, III was born in 1925 in Texas but his family moved to California shortly after his birth. His mother was an excellent pianist and Owens began piano lessons at the age of four, composing his first piano concerto at the age of fifteen. At a young age, Owens was drafted into the US Army where he learned German from the prisoners of war. In 1946, Owens traveled to Europe and lived in Paris. After extensive training and artistic exploration, he returned to the US in 1957 to teach in Georgia and it

was here where Owens first experienced a racially divided culture. “A turning point in his life occurred when he met Harlem Renaissance writer and poet Langston Hughes, who gave him a short volume of poems entitled *Fields of Wonder*, along with the wish that he ‘see what he could do with them’ in setting the texts to music.”¹³⁴ In 1959, Robert moved to Hamburg, Germany where he lived and composed until his death.

Notes: “Genius Child” from *Mortal Storm*

The final song in this collection, “Genius Child,” is also the last song in a five-song cycle, titled *Mortal Storm*. In this cycle, Owens encapsulates the essence of being human and all the “storms” that “mortals” may endure. Owens depicts a society of unrest and intolerance for those that show unusually advanced skills or talents. From the moment the introduction begins, a frenzied, almost panicked, musical environment is present. The triplet figures seemingly become too fast for the pianist to articulate as the poet scrambles to find a solution for this “genius child.” This triplet figure paired against the duple nature of the vocal line creates a rhythmical ‘two against three’ challenge for the singer. Owens also uses a few sudden key changes in the song that help further portray the text and feelings of unrest. The cycle concludes with a dramatic ending back in E-flat minor, with the return of a raging triplet figure accompaniment. “These well-defined sections create a rounded binary form (ABA’) that is modified by the transitional materials.”¹³⁵ The cycle was written specifically for the baritone voice. The octave and a

¹³⁴ Timothy Rommen, “Robert Lee Owens,” in Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., ed., *International Dictionary of Black Composers*, vol. 2 (Chicago & London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1999), 897.

¹³⁵ Timothy Rommen, “Robert Lee Owens,” 899.

half range and through-composed form increases the level of difficulty for this song. The song is ranked at the level of advanced-intermediate. Refer to Figure 4.14.

CONCLUSION

Evaluating songs by African-American composers has been an honor and a worthwhile experience, one that I hope inspires voice teachers to assign African-American art song. For those teaching and studying voice, this anthology presents suitable material for artistic performances at different levels of difficulty for the developing singer. By using the *Repertoire Evaluation Rubric for Developing Singers*, teachers now have a tool that can help them review repertoire through a comprehensive and systematic method.

By using this rubric, voice teachers will be better equipped to evaluate the difficulty level of a song, however, there are still more variables to consider before teachers can appropriately assign repertoire. Two of the five variables listed in Chapter Three, evaluating and broadening repertoire knowledge, were given an in-depth exploration through this research. The other three variables are still equally important: the student's skill level, the use of repertoire to improve technical skills, and the creation of a long-term plan for repertoire that will encourage a healthy vocal development.¹³⁶ This rubric will not help teachers identify the ability level of their singers or the singer's interest. Nor is it meant to take the place of other resources that currently help with repertoire selection. Many of these resources, graded and ungraded, such as those by Coffin, Hopkin, Espina, Boytim, Doscher, and Kagen provide excellent choices and help broaden knowledge of repertoire. However, it is the teacher's responsibility to evaluate the resources and determine the best way to use them in their voice studios. Repertoire-based resources can only be helpful if teachers are assessing, discerning, learning, and

¹³⁶ Arneson, *Literature for Teaching*, 1.

adequately using them to meet the needs and interests of their individual singers. Further research is still needed in vocal pedagogy concerning how we evaluate, assign, and match appropriate repertoire with each individual singer.

Through this study, I have expanded my own knowledge of vocal repertoire. It is my hope that developing performers, between the ages of 17–21, will find the historical and musical information contained in the anthology useful in their song study and preparation. This study also provides teachers and students with knowledge about compositions outside of the traditional canon of music. As teachers, it is our responsibility to share music that represents a diverse canon, inspiring students to discover and study new repertoire in and outside of the voice studio. The contribution of African-American art song to the genre of American art song is significant; its delineation is only necessary because these compositions are often marginalized and left out of the traditional canon. When songs are easy to find, additional discourse develops that allows for a better sense of inclusiveness. It is my sincerest desire that this collection of African-American art songs will become a part of mainstream study for the developing singer and inspire teachers to look beyond our established canon of repertoire.

PART TWO: Recital Program Notes

DMA CHAMBER RECITAL: LULLABIES AND LAMENTS

The University of Kentucky
School of Music
Presents

Nicole Sonbert
In a Doctor of Musical Arts Chamber Voice Recital

with Professor Cliff Jackson, Piano
Dr. Wendy Yates, Viola
Adria Sutherland, Clarinet
Bill Meyer, Cello

Sunday, April 17, 2016
Singletary Center for the Arts Recital Hall
7:00 PM

PROGRAM

From *Christmas Oratorio* Johann Sebastian Bach
Bereite dich, Zion (1685–1750)
Schlafe, mein Liebster

Bill Meyer, Cello

From *Sechs Deutsche Lieder, Op. 103* Louis Spohr
Sei Still Mein Herz (1784–1859)
Zwiesengesang
Sehnsucht
Wiegenlied
Das Heimliche Lied
Wach Auf

Adria Sutherland, Clarinet

-INTERMISSION

From *Zwei Lieder, Op. 91* Johannes Brahms
Gestillte Sehnsucht (1833–1897)
Geistliches Wiegenlied

Dr. Wendy Yates, Viola

Nanna's Lied Kurt Weill
Berlin im Licht (1900–1950)

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Musical Arts in Vocal Performance. Nicole Sonbert is a student of Dr. Noemi Lugo.

PROGRAM NOTES

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) is often regarded as one of the greatest composers of all time. From 1703-1708 Bach served as organist and choirmaster in Arnstadt and Mühlhausen, the beginning of a long and prolific career. He wrote and performed both secular and sacred music. In 1723, Bach was appointed to the position of ‘Cantor zu St. Thomae et Director Musices Lipsiensis,’ which included four associated churches in the city of Leipzig, staying in the town of Leipzig for the remainder of his life.¹³⁷ Throughout his appointment, Bach composed a large amount of music for regular services and over 60 specialized services throughout the year.

During the 18th century, the town of Leipzig celebrated the holiday season with six special services from Christmas Day to Epiphany. The *Christmas Oratorio*, BMV248, was originally conceived as a set of six cantatas that were presented at each of the special services from Christmas Day to Epiphany. The movements found within the *Christmas Oratorio* can easily form a continuous account of the Christmas story, but was not conceived as an entire cohesive work. The librettist is unknown, but some scholars believe that “Christian Friedrich Henrici (under the pseudonym Picander), a German poet and the librettist for many of Bach’s Leipzig cantatas, probably gathered and arranged the texts.”¹³⁸ The *Christmas Oratorio* was not written until 1734, but it includes borrowed

¹³⁷ Christoph Wolff, “Johann Sebastian Bach: Leipzig,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed November 1, 2015, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

¹³⁸ William D Crump, “Christmas Oratorio,” *The Christmas Encyclopedia*, 3rd ed. (Jefferson, North Carolina, and London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2013).

and adapted material from his previous compositions. The work contains a mixture of recitatives, choruses, and arias.

Bach's arias usually contain melodic and expressive ideas. "In the aria, "Bereite dich, Zion" ("Prepare thyself, Zion"), modeled on the aria "Ich will dich nicht hören" ("I will not hear thee") from *Hercules*, the same music is attached to different text with subtle, but significant alterations."¹³⁹ This aria is found in the first part of the *Christmas Oratorio*, the cantata composed for celebration on December 25th, speaking to the faithful about being prepared for the coming of Christ. "Schlafe, mein Liebster," "Sleep, my dearest," is a lullaby sung by Mary to the Son of God. This aria is performed during the second cantata that was composed for celebration on December 26th, which tells of the Angel's announcement to the shepherds that the Christ child is born.

Louis Spohr (1784-1859) is rarely recognized today, but was a popular German composer during the first half of the 19th century. Spohr composed a considerable amount of work that encompasses symphonies, operas, chamber music, art songs, and many other genres. Spohr, a contemporary of Beethoven and Weber, was highly celebrated in the early 19th century and became influential for younger composers, Mendelssohn and Wagner. Spohr was born on April 5, 1784, in Brunswick, Germany and showed an interest in music at an early age.

Spohr's early musical tastes were highly shaped by performances of Hiller, Mozart, and other composers of German origin, along with the Giovanni Battista Viotti school of violin playing. In 1830-1831, Spohr wrote his *Violinschule*, which was used for classical violin methodology. He also played a meaningful part in the advancement of

¹³⁹ Uri Golomb, "Bach's Oratorios," *Goldberg Early Music Magazine* 48 (October 2007), 58-71.

conducting through his own version of the “Viotti style,” and was one of the first conductors to use a baton in his conducting for precision purposes. Spohr wrote numerous concertos, exhibiting an assimilation of operatic expressions, such as recitative, and a symphonic orchestral style. Clive Brown has even noted, “a lot of Wagner’s harmony is in Spohr some 20 years earlier.”¹⁴⁰ Some believe Spohr remained true to the classical style and was fairly conservative, despite the increasing climate of free romantic expression surrounding him.

Spohr wrote numerous lieder of which 33 were written between 1834 and 1839. During this short and difficult span of his life, he experienced the death of his daughter and wife. The *Sechs Deutsche Leiden*, Op. 103 were commissioned by a well-respected clarinetist of his day, Johan Simon Herstedt and the soprano, Princess Sondershausen. Spohr was extremely honored and excited about this project and completed the entire cycle within six weeks. Clive Brown states, “the Op. 103 set especially contains much fine writing, and the use of the clarinet in all its register is masterly, as is the wide variety of textures achieved from the three performers.”¹⁴¹ Spohr’s unique treatment of each part creates a truly beautiful ensemble, considering each player to be equally important to the overall expression.

This cycle is designed with connecting themes of love, loss, and revival. Despite the fact that each song tells a different story by different poets, they are ultimately connected through a larger design: Nos. 1, 3, and 5 are zealous, impassioned lieder that

¹⁴⁰ Kyle MacMillan, “Nearly Forgotten Composer Louis Spohr to get His Due Pair of Concerts,” January 22, 2010, accessed November 1, 2015, http://www.denverpost.com/spencer/ci_14232916.

¹⁴¹ Clive Brown, *Louis Spohr—A Critical Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 237.

are followed by songs, Nos. 2, 4, and 6, that are direct, sincere lieder without over-romanticizing. In *Sei still mein Herz* (Be Still My Heart), poem by Karl Friedrich (1797-1847), there is an introduction of the cycle's poignant themes, directing towards unrequited love and rejection. Spohr often utilizes 'word painting' and musical themes throughout connecting the character and story. When the singer is singing *Sei still mein Herz*, the piano and singer are simulating a heartbeat while the clarinet attracts the sense of stillness through a held pitch and a swelling dynamic line of *piano-pianissimo*.

Zwiegesang, poem by Robert Reinick (1805-1852), is a beautiful duet between a girl and a bird, which can be heard through the clarinet's interpretation of bird calls. In *Zehnsucht*, poem by Emanuel von Geibel (1815-1884), Spohr is able to create a sense of an ambiguous meter by rushing forward through desire, however, as the notes lengthen, a consciousness of being detained begins, intensified by the syncopated longing.

As one can hear, the clarinet continues to play an important role within the story. In *Wiegenlied*, poem by August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben (1798-1874), the clarinet, which symbolizes the wind, buds blossoming, and a mother's heart, all provide an awareness of a motion within the lullaby. *Das heimliche Lied*, poem by Ernst Koch (1808-1858), creates an atmosphere from the beginning of call and response that musically can be explorative of feelings associated with pain. The final song, *Wach auf*, poem by an anonymous poet, beautifully creates references to the pain explored previously, but there is also a message to be found of transformation and acceptance. Spohr portrays this beauty by using an amalgamation of previous musical signs. Spohr is considered a master at the interplay between harmony and melody. His compositional

techniques are delicate, advanced, and provide a unique insight into a lasting and influential composer of the 19th century.

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897), a German composer and pianist, is considered one of the leading musicians of the Romantic era. Brahms was quite popular and afforded the opportunity to work with many other great musicians during his time, including the Schumanns and violinist, Joseph Joachim. Brahms nurtured the Lied, often letting months or years go by between the composition and publication. He would take time to ponder, making adjustments and changes that he discovered through his period of reflections. Brahms' student Gustav Jenner wrote *Johannes Brahms as Man, Teacher and Artist*, in which he notes, "Brahms demanded from the composer, first of all, that he should know his text precisely".¹⁴² Brahms chose his texts carefully, often focusing on poetry that dealt with finding solace through nature, life, isolation, and unrequited love.

Zwei Lieder was written for two of his friends, Amalie and Joseph Joachim. Completed in 1884, Op. 91 contains two songs for alto, viola, and piano, however, these songs were composed nearly twenty years apart. The origin or circumstances surrounding the composition of the second song, *Geistliches Wiegenlied*, are in question. Some scholars believe it to be written for the Joachim's wedding between 1863 and 1864, while other scholars believe it to be composed in 1864 for the baptism of their son. The text is a lullaby sung by Mary to the baby Jesus. The second song, *Gestillte Sehnsucht*, was composed in 1884 in hope that Brahms would be able to help his friends rekindle their love.

¹⁴² Rufus Hallmark, ed. *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century: Routledge Studies in Musical Genres* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 144.

Kurt Weill (1900-1950), a German composer, born in Dessau, Germany began composing in 1913 and, despite difficult times, continued to compose throughout his life. In 1922, he joined the November Group, which was a group of Berlin artists and architects led by Max Pechstein and César Klein that bonded over their shared socialist values. Weill believed that music should be expressive and help give voice to social reason. Weill had to leave his own country because of his Jewish origin and views; he found refuge in the United States and became an American citizen in 1943. American popular and stage music intrigued Weill, who began to study and work with writers like Maxwell Anderson and Ira Gershwin. Weill composed in various styles, including cantatas, opera, chamber music, piano music, orchestral, lieder, chansons, and film music.

Performing Weill's vocal music often requires the singer to focus on dramatic communication because of his use and unique blend of musical theatre forms. According to Carol Kimball, "Weill's work for the German theater and for the American Broadway stage yielded a rich body of songs that are regularly performed outside of their original dramatic context."¹⁴³ *Nanna's Lied*, originally written in 1939 as a Christmas present for his wife paints a picture of a young prostitute. Bertolt Brecht used this text in his play *Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe* (The Roundheads and the Peakheads), based upon Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. "In the play, the song is sung by Nanna Callas, a Roundhead peasant's daughter who has resorted to prostitution."¹⁴⁴ *Berlin im Licht*, 1928, was originally commissioned by Berlin's utility industries as a part of a festival

¹⁴³ Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature*, rev. ed. (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2006).151.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 152.

that promoted the city of Berlin. Berlin, like New York or Paris, is also a “city of light,” written with much energy through dance-like rhythms detailed by Weill as a “slow fox trot,” which is believed to be very similar or directly related to the music found in *Three Penny Opera*.

Bereite dich, Zion

Nun wird mein liebster Bräutigam,
nun wird der Held aus Davids Stamm zum
Trost,
zum Heil der Erden einmal geboren werden.
Nun wird der Stern aus Jakob scheinen,
sein Strahl bricht schon hervor;
auf, Zion!
Und verlasse nun das Weinen,
dein Wohl steigt hoch empor.

Bereite dich Zion, mit zärtlichen
Trieben,
Den Schönsten, den Liebsten bald bei dir zu
sehn!
Deine Wangen
Müssen heut viel schöner prangen,
Eile, den Bräutigam sehnlichst zu lieben!

Schlafe, mein Liebster

Schlafe, mein Liebster, genieße der Ruh,
Wach nach diesem vor aller
Gedeihen!
Labe die Brust,
Empfinde die Lust,
Wo wir unser Herz erfreuen!

Prepare yourself, Zion

Now will my dearest Bridegroom,
Now will the hero from David's lineage for
our comfort,
For the welfare of the Earth will be born.
Now will the star from Jacob shine
It's ray breaks forth now;
Rise up, Zion!
And leave now your weeping,
Your well-being climbs up high.

Prepare yourself, Zion, with tender
desires,
To behold your loveliest, your dearest,
Behold!
Your cheeks
Must now glow much more radiantly,
Hurry to love the Bridegroom longingly!

Sleep, my beloved

Sleep, my dearest, enjoy Your rest,
Awake, thereafter it for the prosperity of
everyone!
Let your heart delight,
Feel the joy
When our hearts rejoice!

Sei still mein Herz (Karl Friedrich)

Ich wahrte die Hoffnung tief in der Brust,
die sich ihr vertrauend erschlossen,
mir strahlten die Augen voll Lebenslust,
wenn mich ihre Zauber umflossen,
wenn ich ihrer schmeichelnden Stimme
gelauscht – im Wettersturm ist ihr Echo
verrauscht,
sei still mein Herz, und denke nicht d'ran,
das ist nun die Wahrheit, das And're war
Wahn.

Die Erde lag vor mir im
Frühlingstraum,
den Licht und Wärme durchglühte,
und wonnetrunken durchwallt ich den
Raum,
der Brust entsproßte die Blüte,
der Liebe Lenz war in mir erwacht
mich durchrieselt Frost, in der Seele ist
Nacht,
sei still mein Herz, und denke nicht d'ran,
das ist nun die Wahrheit, das And're war
Wahn.

Ich baute von Blumen und Sonnenglanz
eine Brücke mir durch das Leben,
auf der ich wandelnd im Lorbeerkrantz
mich geweiht dem hochedelsten Streben,
der Menschen Dank war mein schönster
Lohn –
laut auf lacht die Menge mit frechem Hohn,
sei still mein Herz und denke nicht d'ran,
das ist nun die Wahrheit, das And're war
Wahn.

Be Still, My Heart

I cherished hope deep in my heart,
Which trustingly had opened itself to her;
My eyes radiated with lovelight shone on
me
When her magic flowed around me,
When I listened to her beguiling voice –
Now her echo is lost in the tempest,
Be still, my heart: think of it no more:
This is now the truth, the other was
delusion.

The earth lay before me in the dream of
Spring,
Glowing with light and warmth,
And rapturously I paced up and down my
room;
My heart blossomed forth,
Love's Spring had awakened in me
now frost pervades me, and darkness my
soul.
Be still, my heart: think of it no more:
This is now the truth, the other was
delusion.

Through life I built myself a bridge
of flowers and sunny radiance
on which I walked, wreathed in laurel,
dedicated to the noblest aspiration,
with mankind's thanks my richest
reward –
the crowd laughs out loud in derisive scorn.
Be still, my heart: think of it no more:
This is now the truth, the other was
delusion.

Zwiesengesang (Robert Reinick)

Im Fliederbusch ein Vöglein saß
in der stillen, schönen Maiennacht,
darunter ein Mägdlein im hohen Gras
in der stillen, schönen Maiennacht.
Sang Mägdlein, hielt das Vöglein Ruh,
sang Vöglein, hört das Mägdlein zu,
und weithin klang der Zwiesengesang
das mondbeglänzter Tal entlang.

Was sang das Vöglein im
Gezweig
durch die stille, schöne Maiennacht?
Was sang doch wohl das Mägdlein gleich
durch die stille, schönen Maiennacht?
Von Frühlingssonne das Vöglein,
von Liebeswonne das Mägdlein;
wie der Gesang zum Herzen drang,
vergeß ich nimmer mein Leben lang.

Sehnsucht (Emanuel von Geibel)

Ich blick in mein Herz und ich blick in die
Welt,
bis von schwimmenden Äuge die Träne mir
fällt,
wohl leuchtet die Ferne im goldenen Licht,
doch halt mich der Nord,
ich erreiche sie nicht.
O die Schranken so eng und
die Welt so weit,
und so flüchtig die Zeit.

Ich weiß ein Land, wo aus sonnigem Grün
um versunkene Tempel die Trauben glüh'n,
wo die purpurne Woge das Ufer beschäumt
und von kommenden Sängern der Lorbeer
träumt,
Fern lockt es und winkt dem
verlangenden Sinn,
und ich kann nicht hin.

O hätt' ich Flügel durch Blau der Luft,
Wie wollt' ich haden im Sonnenduft!
Doch umsonst! Und Stunde auf Stunde
entflieht,
Vertraure die Jugend, begrabe das Lied.
O die Schranken so eng und
die Welt so weit, Und so flüchtig die Zeit.

Duet

In the still, lovely May night
a small bird sat in the lilac-bush:
below, in the tall grass, a girl
In the still, lovely May night.
When the girl sang, the bird fell silent;
when the bird sang, the girl listened;
and their duet filled with sound
the whole moonlit valley.

What was the bird singing amid the
branches
through the still, lovely May night?
And what, likewise, was the girl singing
through the still, lovely May night?
The bird sang of Spring sunshine,
the girl of love's bliss;
how that song moved my heart
I'll not forget so long as I live.

Longing

I look in my heart and I look at the world,
till a teardrop falls from my brimming eyes,
though the horizon shines in golden light,
yet the North holds me,
out of its reach,
O the bounds so narrow and
the world so wide,
and time so fleeting!

I know a land where the grapes glow
amid the sunny green, around the sunken
temple,
where the purple wave sprays
the bank,
and the laurel dreams of poets
to come.
It lures from afar and beckons the longing
senses,
and I cannot go there.

O had I wings through the blue air,
how I could bathe in the sun and scent!
But in vain! And hour after hour would go
by,
Mourn your youth, bury your song.
O the bounds so narrow and
the world so wide, and time so fleeting!

Wiegenlied (Hoffmann von Fallersleben)

Alles still in süßer Ruh,
drum mein Kind, so schlaf auch du.
Draußen säuselt der Wind,
Su, su, su, schlaf ein mein Kind.

Schließ du deine Äugelein,
laß sie wie zwei Knospen sein.
Morgen, wenn die Sonn' erglüht,
sind sie wie die Blum' erblüht.

Und die Blümlein schau ich an,
und die Auglein küß ich dann,
und der Mutter Herz vergißt,
daß es draußen Frühling ist.

Cradle Song

Everything quiet, in sweet peace,
so go to sleep too, my child:
outside, only the wind rustles,
so hush and sleep, my child!

Close your little eyes,
let them be like two buds.
Tomorrow, when the sun shines,
they will open like the flowers.

Then I'll look at those flowers
and kiss those little eyes,
and your mother's heart forgets
that it's Spring outside.

Das heimliche Lied (Ernst Koch)

Es gibt geheime Schmerzen
sie klaget nieder Mund,
getragen tief im Herzen
sind sie der Welt nicht kund.
Es gibt ein Heimlich Sehnen,
das scheuet stets das Licht,
es gibt verborgne Tränen,
der Fremde sieht sie nicht.
Es gibt ein still Versinken
in eine inn're Welt,
wo Friedensauen winken
von Sternenglanz erhellt,
wo auf gefall'nen Schranken
die Seele Himmel baut,
und jubelnd den Gedanken
den Lippen anvertraut.

Es gibt ein still' Vergehen
in stummen, oden Schmerz,
und niemand darf es sehen,
das schwergepreßte Herz.
Es sagt nicht was ihm fehlet,
und wenn's im Grame bricht,
verblutend und zerquälet,
der Fremde sieht es nicht.
Es gibt einen sanften Schlummer,
wo süßer Ruh' den Kummer
der müden Seele heilt.
Doch gibt's ein schöner Hoffen,
das Welten überfliegt,
da wo am Herzen offen
das Herz voll Liebe liegt.

Secret Song

There are secret sorrows
They are never uttered,
born deep in the heart,
and unknown to the world.
There is a secret longing
that always shuns the light;
there are hidden tears
the stranger does not see.
There is a quiet sinking
into an inner world
where peaceful meadows beckon,
lit by the stars' radiance,
where on broken barriers
the soul builds heaven
and joyfully entrusts
its thoughts to words.

There is a quiet passing,
in mute, desolate grief,
and no one may see
the heaviness of heart.
It does not say what ails it,
and when it breaks in anguish,
bleeding and tormented,
the stranger does not see.
There is a gentle slumber
in which sweet peace heals
the care of the soul.
But there's a sweet
hope that flies over the worlds,
where the heart
is a heart that openly lies full of love.

Wach auf (anonymous)

Was stehst du lange und sinnest nach?
Ach schon so lange ist Liebe wach!
Hörst du das Klingen allüberall!
Die Vöglein singen mit süßem Schall;
aus Starrem sprießet Baublättlein weich,
das Leben fließet um Ast und Zweig.

Das Tröpflein schlüpfet aus Waldesschacht,
Das Bächlein hüpfet mit Wallungsmacht;
Der Himmel neiget in's Wellenklar,
Die Bläue zeigt sich wunderbar,
Ein heit'res Schwingen zu Form und Klang,
Ein ew'ges Fügen im ew'gen Drang!
Was stehest du bange und sinnest nach?
Ach schon so lange ist Liebe wach!

Awaken

Why do you delay, lost in thought?
Oh, love has been awake so long!
Do you not hear its sound all around?
Little birds are caroling sweet sounds,
from bare trees little leaves shoot gently
forth; life is flowing in bough and twig.

Drops slide from woodland slopes,
The brooklet frisks ebulliently;
The sky stoops to the limpid water,
The blue reflects wondrously.
Joy vibrates cheerfully in form and sound,
And endless process in an endless drive!
Why are you so anxious, lost in thought?
Oh, love has been awake so long!

Gestillte Sehnsucht (Frederich Rückert)

In gold'nen Abendschein getaucht,
Wie feierlich die Wälder stehn!
In leise Stimmen der Vöglein hauchet
Des Abendwindes leises Weh'n.
Was lispeln die Winde,
die Vögelein?
Sie lispeln die Welt in Schlummer ein.

Ihr Wünsche, die ihr stets euch reget
Im Herzen sonder Rast und Ruh!
Du Sehnen, das die Brust beweget,
Wann ruhest du, wann
schlummerst du?
Beim Lispeln der Winde,
der Vögelein,
Ihr sehnenenden Wünsche,
wann schlaft ihr ein?

Ach, wenn nicht mehr in gold'ne Fernen
Mein Geist auf Traumgefieder eilt,
Nicht mehr an ewig fernen Sternen
Mit sehndem Blick mein Auge weilt;
Dann lispeln die Winde, die Vögelein
Mit meinem Sehnen mein Leben ein.

Satisfied Longing

Immersed in the evening's golden light,
How solemnly the forests stand!
In soft voices of birds breathes
Evening breezes gentle blowing.
What do the winds and the little birds
whisper?
They whisper the world into slumber.

You wishes that always stir
In the heart without rest or peace!
You longing that troubles the soul,
When are you going to rest, when you
slumber?
To the sounds of the whispering winds and
the little birds,
You longing wishes,
when are you going to sleep?

Oh, when no longer into the golden distances
My spirit rushes on wings of dreams,
No longer on the eternal distant starts
With a longing gaze my eyes linger;
Then the winds, the little birds will whisper
Lulling to sleep my longings, my life.

Geistliches Wiegenlied (Emanuel von Geibel)

Die ihr schwebet um diese Palmen
in Nacht und Wind,
Ihr heiligen Engel, Stillet die Wipfel!
Es schlummert mein Kind.
Ihr Palmen von Bethlehem
Im Windesbrausen,
Wie mögt ihr heute So zornig sausen!
O rauscht nicht also!
Schweiget, neiget Euch leis und lind;
Stillet die Wipfel!
Es schlummert mein Kind.

Der Himmelsknabe Duldet Beschw
Ach, wie so müd er ward vom Leid der
Erde.
Ach nun im Schlaf ihm Leise gesänftigt
Die Qual zerrinnt,
Stillet die Wipfel!
Es schlummert mein Kind.
Grimmige Kälte Sauset hernieder,
Womit nur deck ich des Kindleins Glieder!
O all ihr Engel, Die ihr geflügelt Wandelt im
Wind,
Stillet die Wipfel!
Es schlummert mein Kind.

Spiritual Lullaby

You that hover among these palms
In the night and the wind,
You holy angels, quiet the treetops!
My child is slumbering.
You palms of Bethlehem
In the raging wind,
How can you rustle so angrily today,
O not so noisily!
Be silent, sway softly and gently;
Quiet the treetops!
My child is slumbering.

Heaven's Child suffers pain,
Oh, how tired he became from the sufferings
of the earth.
Oh now gently soothed in sleep,
The agony fades away,
Quiet the treetops!
My child is slumbering.
Bitter cold roars down,
With what can I cover my child's limbs!
O all you angels, You on wings hovering in
the air,
Quiet the treetops!
My child is slumbering.

Berlin im Licht (Kurt Weill)

Und zum Spazieren gehn
genügt das Sonnenlicht,
doch um die Stadt Berlin zu sehn,
genügt die Sonnenlicht,
das ist kein lauschiges Plätzchen,
das ist ne ziemliche Stadt.
Damit man da
alles gesehen kann,
da braucht man schon einige Watt.
Na wat denn?
Was is das für ne Stadt denn?

Komm, mach mal Licht,
damit man sehn kann, ob was da ist,
Komm, mach mal Licht und rede nun
mal nicht.
Komm, mach mal Licht,
dann wollen wir doch auch mal sehen,
ob das ne Sache ist: Berlin im Licht.

Berlin in Lights

And for walking,
The Sunshine is enough,
But to see the city of Berlin,
The sun is not enough.
It's not a little hick-town,
It's quite a city.
So if you want to see
everything well there,
You've got to have a few watts.
Well, what then?
What kind of city is it?

Come on, turn on the lights
So you can see if there is something there.
Come on, turn on the lights and don't say
another word.
Come on, turn on the lights
So then we also want to see for sure
Whether it is a big deal: Berlin in Lights.

DMA VOICE RECITAL: JOURNEY THROUGH SONG

The University of Kentucky
School of Music
Presents

Nicole Sonbert
In a Doctor of Musical Arts Chamber Voice Recital

with Nan McSwain, Piano
Bill Meyer, Cello
Saesha Senger, Flute

Saturday, October 22, 2016
Lucille Little Fine Arts Library, Niles Gallery
7:00 PM

PROGRAM

From *Flores argentinas* Carlos Guastavino
Cortadera, plumerito (1912–2000)
¡Qué linda la madre selva!
Jazmín del país: ¡qué lindo...!

From *Chansons madécasses* Maurice Ravel
Nahandove (1875–1937)
Aoua!
Il est doux

Bill Meyer, Cello
Saesha Senger, Flute

-INTERMISSION

From *Nightsongs* Leslie Adams
Prayer (b. 1932)
Drums of Tragedy
The Heart of a Woman
Night Song
Sence You Went Away
Creole Girl

Balm in Gilead arr. by Marvin Curtis
Changed My Name (b. 1951)

Give Me Jesus

Bill Meyer, Cello

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Musical Arts in Vocal Performance. Nicole Sonbert is a student of Dr. Noemi Lugo

PROGRAM NOTES

Carlos Vicente Guastavino (1912–2000), a popular Argentinean composer of the twentieth century, was born on April 5, 1912 in Santa Fe, in the Argentinean plains (or pampas). In August of 1938, Guastavino moved to Buenos Aires, after winning a grant to study music, and enrolled in the composition program at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música y Arte Escénico. He published his first songs in 1939, and during 1940-1975, Guastavino completed the majority of his compositional output. He is well known for his piano works, chamber music, and art songs.

Even though Guastavino composed a large number of art songs, many still remain unpublished. There are over 150 songs published that capture beautiful, lyrical melodies. Many scholars refer to him as the “The Argentine Schubert,” or the “The Schubert of the Pampas.”¹⁴⁵ Musicologist, composer, and guitarist Jonathan Kulp divides Guastavino’s song output into two periods: 1939–1962 and 1963–1975.¹⁴⁶ During the first period, Guastavino demonstrated influences of Manuel de Falla and Isaac Albeniz, with relatively few settings of Argentine poetry. On the other hand, in his second period, he embraced a more nationalistic style of writing, using popular Argentinean dance rhythms and poetry.

¹⁴⁵ Jonathan Lance Kulp, “Carlos Guastavino: The Intersection of *música culta* and *música popular* in Argentine Song,” *Latin American Music Review* 24, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 42.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 42–61.

During 1969, Guastavino composed *Flores argentinas*, twelve songs on poems by León Benarós (1915–2012). Guastavino had a deep respect for Benarós and “his settings are not so much interpretations of the poems as efforts to bring their essences to the surface with a minimal intrusion of music.”¹⁴⁷ Throughout *Flores argentinas*, melodies are memorable with the support of the accompaniment in strophic form. The first song of the *Flores argentinas*, “Cortadera, plumerito,” is set in the style of a *milonga*, incorporating characteristic rhythms of the genre.¹⁴⁸ “Qué linda la madre selva” is the fifth song in *Flores argentinas*. It is a very happy song, which “could almost be described as Guastavino’s Argentinian version of a waltz.”¹⁴⁹ The eighth song of *Flores argentinas*, “Jazmín del país: qué lindo!,” embraces many simplistic moments that capture Guastavino’s unique sense of nationalism and beautiful melodic line.

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) was born in Ciboure, France on March 3, 1875 and died in Paris on December 28, 1937. Ravel studied composition under the teacher and composer, Gabriel Fauré. Although his work is often regarded as impressionistic, he was influenced by a variety of music and styles. Ravel’s compositions often incorporate elegant, but subtle melodies, while using classical forms. He was also very careful when selecting poetry. Tristan Klingsor stated that “for Ravel, setting a poem meant transforming it into expressive recitative to exalt the inflexions of speech to the state of

¹⁴⁷ Jonathan Lance Kulp, “Carlos Guastavino: A Study of His Songs and Musical Aesthetics” (Ph.D. diss., The University of Texas at Austin, 2001), 244.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 247.

¹⁴⁹ Deborah R. Wagner, “Carlos Guastavino: An Annotated Bibliography of His Solo Vocal Works” (DMA diss., Arizona State University, 1997), 91.

song, to exalt all the possibilities of the word, but not to subjugate it. Ravel made himself the servant of the poet.”¹⁵⁰

The *Chansons Madécasses* (“Songs of Madagascar”) premiered on June 13, 1926 in Paris, having been commissioned in April 1925 by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. Ravel selected three poems by late eighteenth-century Creole poet, Evariste-Désiré de Parny. Parny “falsely claimed to have translated the poems of his *Chansons madécasses*, *traduites en françois, suivies de poesies fugitives* from songs collected among the people of Madagascar.”¹⁵¹ Orenstein, in his biography “Ravel: Man and Musician” states “the *Chansons Madécasses* were written in India in 1784–85, and it appears that the heintensys, which are popular Madagascar poems, served as the author’s model.”¹⁵² The songs embrace twentieth-century experimentation, capturing an erotic nature. Ravel describes this music as “introducing a new element, dramatic-indeed erotic, resulting from the subject of Parny’s poems.”¹⁵³ The *Chansons Madécasses* invoked quite a sensation for its exotic nature, and is said to “appear to be at the summit of Ravel’s vocal art.”¹⁵⁴

The first song, “Nahandove,” is unambiguously erotic and possesses a quiet exoticism. The song captures a story of love that goes through anticipation, satisfaction, and remorse or longing, which inevitably leads back to anticipation.¹⁵⁵ “Aoua!” portrays

¹⁵⁰ Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature*, rev. ed. (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2006), 212.

¹⁵¹ Diana Lea Ellis, “A Performer’s Analysis of Maurice Ravel’s *Chansons Madécasses* A Lecture Recital, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works of B. Britten, R. Schumann, S. Barber, T. Pasatieri, F. Poulenc, G. Verdi, T. Arne, and Others” (DMA diss., University of North Texas, 2004), 3.

¹⁵² Arbie Orenstein, *Ravel, Man and Musician* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 196.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 197.

¹⁵⁵ Ellis, *A Performer’s Analysis of Maurice Ravel’s Chansons Madécasses*, 6.

an aggressive desire, creating a vivid contrast with the previous song. In the opening a declamatory cry of despair and warning is captured and continued through the use of bitonal dissonance. From the beginning of the song, a sad musical picture of human cruelty and foolishness becomes clear. When this song premiered, France was fighting a colonial war in Morocco and several members of the audience left because of the incendiary nature of the text. The final song, “Il est doux” is a celebration, capturing an atmosphere of a languorous life.

H. Leslie Adams was born in Cleveland, Ohio on December 30, 1932. An active composer, Adams’ works span various genres including piano, choral, opera, instrumental chamber music, orchestral, and vocal art songs. Adams is most widely known for his art song compositions, encompassing over 40 songs for solo voice and 4 song cycles or groups. At the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, Adams studied voice, piano, and composition. He earned his bachelor’s degree in 1955 and continued on to earn a master’s degree in music from the California State University at Long Beach in 1967. In 1973, he earned a Ph.D. in music education from the Ohio State University. Adams has worked as a choral director, pianist, musical director, educator, arts advocate, and composer. Throughout his works, the influence of classical and contemporary genres can be heard.

Nightsongs, originally titled *Six Songs on Text by Afro-American Poets*, was composed over a six-month period in 1961. Adams refers to the six songs as a “song group,” based on the poetry of five different poets.¹⁵⁶ They are not linked necessarily in

¹⁵⁶ Allanda Constantina Small, “H. Leslie Adams’ Nightsongs: Poetry, Music, and Performance” (DMA diss., The University of Southern Mississippi, 2007), 13.

context, but all poets are associated with the Harlem Renaissance. For example, Langston Hughes (1902–1967), considered one of the most important writers of the twentieth century, published the first of his many poems, *The Weary Blues* in 1926. Hughes found comfort writing poetry that “depicts black America from a first hand perspective, uniting it with his love of music, specifically jazz and blues. He used the creative poetry of black language, blues, and jazz to construct an Afro-American aesthetic that rarely has been surpassed.”¹⁵⁷ “Prayer” is the first song in the group with poetry written in 1954. The text expresses a personal struggle to understand the purpose of life, and turning to God for help. The second song in the group is titled “Drums of Tragedy.” The original title for the poem, which is also written by Langston Hughes, was entitled “Fantasy of Purple.” Adams states, “I believe the song expresses the idea of courage in the face of death. This song also adds a different dimension to the song group with being in direct contrast to the ‘Prayer,’ which it follows.”¹⁵⁸

Another poet used by Adams was Georgia Douglas Johnson (1880–1966). Born Georgia Blanche Camp on September 10, 1880, she was a strong presence during the Harlem Renaissance, publishing four volumes of poetry.

Historian James Weldon Johnson describes her poems as “songs of the heart,”¹⁵⁹ and her first volume of poetry in 1918 titled *The Heart of a Woman* includes the poem of the same name that Adam chose for his song group. Adams states, “The music is more

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 16.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 36.

¹⁵⁹ James Weldon Johnson, ed., *The Book of American Negro Poetry* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1950), 181.

dramatic than tragic, the way it rises and then plunges. To me, the drama is beautiful. The beauty tempers the harshness of whatever the poet is expressing.”¹⁶⁰

Poet, educator, and social worker, Clarissa M. Scott Delany (1901–1927), was born in Alabama and died at the early age of 26 from kidney disease, publishing only four poems. Lorraine Roses explains, “The only four poems she published are somewhat mysterious; they do not refer to specific obstacles she faced as a black woman. Rather her verses are charged with a melancholy tone that attempts to embrace the hope of healing for a troubled soul.”¹⁶¹ “Interim” was one of Delany’s four published poems, creating the fourth song in *Nightsongs*. Adams retitled this song “Night Song,” stating: “this song is about freedom and breaking away and out of bondage. It has a connection to the same idea found in “The Heart of a Woman.”¹⁶²

James Weldon Johnson (1871–1938), is widely known for his composition “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” which he wrote with his brother J. Rosamond Johnson. During this time, he also completed the book, “The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man,” originally published anonymously in 1912. “Sence You Went Away,” written by Johnson, is the fifth song in *Nightsongs*. This work creates a distinctive difference than the other poetry used in this song group. The style of the language is in a dialect that captures the character and time period.¹⁶³ This poignant poem reflects back on a love that went away. Adams states, “The song starts right out without an introduction, one of the few of my songs without an introduction. It’s a dramatic vignette with a little bit of

¹⁶⁰ Small, “H. Leslie Adams’ *Nightsongs*,” 38.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 45.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 47.

sadness. But again, the richness of the harmony and lyricism show that it's not sad, but rather more bittersweet."¹⁶⁴

Leslie Morgan Collins (b. 1914), born in Louisiana, is an Emeritus Professor at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. He has received numerous honors for his poetry and in 1976, gained international acclaim with the poem "Creole Girl." In this poem, a girl of mixed descent (French, Spanish, and African ancestry) is asked questions about her heritage and influences. "Collins utilizes clearly, relevant aspects of each culture, and shapes them into this candid poem."¹⁶⁵ Adams uses percussive elements throughout, allowing the piano to play a dynamic role in capturing this dramatic scene for the last song in the group of *Nightsongs*.

Marvin V. Curtis (b. 1951), a native of Chicago, Illinois is the first African-American composer commissioned to write a choral work for a Presidential Inauguration. His work, *The City on the Hill* was premiered at President Clinton's 1993 Inauguration and performed by The Philander Smith Collegiate Choir of Little Rock, Arkansas and The United States Marine Band prior to the oath of office being administered to Vice President Al Gore. This choral work is housed in numerous libraries across the country including the Smithsonian Institute's National African American Project Archives and the Clinton Library.

Curtis is Dean of the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts at Indiana University South Bend and Director of the Symphonic Choir of South Bend. In his first year, he established the University's African American music celebration, *Lift every*

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 48.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 51.

Voice...Celebrating the African American Spirit as part of Black History Month and the award winning *Aspire* magazine, the official publication of the School of the Arts. He serves on the boards of The South Bend Symphony Orchestra, The Center for History, 100 Black Men of South Bend, Fischhoff National Chamber Music, South Bend Museum of Arts, and is Vice President of the boards of the South Bend Youth Symphony Orchestra, The Music Village, and the Morris Performing Arts Center. He is a member of The Downtown Rotary Club of South Bend. He was recently appointed to the Congressional Black Caucus 21st Leadership Institute.

Curtis earned the Bachelor of Music Degree from North Park University in Chicago; his Master of Arts from The Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia; and the Doctor of Education from The University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. He did additional studies at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey and The Juilliard School of Music in New York. He was a 1993 Ford Foundation Fellow to the National Council for Black Studies Conference in Accra, Ghana, where he studied at the University of Ghana at Lagon. His published scholarly articles on African American music and Multicultural education appear in scholarly journals such as the *Choral Journal*, *Music Educators Journal*, and the *Western Journal of Black Studies*. His choral works are published by The Mark Foster Music Company (now affiliated with Shawnee Press), Music 70/80, Coronet Press, International Opus, and GIA publications.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁶ Marvin V. Curtis, e-mail message from author, October 18, 2016.

Cortadera, plumerito (León Benarós)

Cortadera, plumerito
¡cuánto nácar en el viento!
Recuerdos de tus verdores
Me causan un sentimiento.

¡Ay, cuánto te necesito!
trebolar donde vivía.
¿Podré volver algún día,
Cortadera, plumerito?

Por esos campos viví,
Provincia de Buenos Aires,
y, abanicando los aires,
por esos años te ví.

¡Qué linda la madreselva!

¡Qué linda la madreselva!
Parece un labio que besa.
Pregona, con sus dulzores,
La primavera que empieza

¡Ay, madreselva!
No creas promesas del picaflor,
que ya olvidó tus amores,
que se llevó tus dulzores...

¡Qué lindo cuando en las tardes,
difunde tanta dulzura.
Aroma de verde cerco
De la madreselva pura.

Cortadera, plumerito

Cortadera, plumerito
Like mother-of-pearl in the wind!
Memories of your greenness
Stir feelings in me.

Oh, how much I need you,
Clover fields where I lived.
Can I return someday,
Cortadera, plumerito?

I lived among those fields,
the Province of Buenos Aires,
and, during those years,
I saw you fanning the airs.

How beautiful is the honeysuckle!

How beautiful is the honeysuckle
Seems like a kissing lip,
announcing, with sweetness,
the beginning of the Spring.

Ah, honeysuckle!
Do not trust the humming bird promises,
since it already forgot the love
that took away your sweetness...

How beautiful when in the evenings,
so much sweetness is sprayed,
by the perfume of the greenery
and the pure honeysuckle.

Jazmín del país: ¡qué lindo...!

Jazmín del país; ¡qué lindo
tu florecer cuando llueve!
Volteas tus blancas flores
como estrellitas de nieve.
Tus flores sencillas tienen
de rosa una pincelada:
carmín del rubor primero de la luz
avergonzada.

Jazmín del país, florcita:
te hicieron como ninguna;
estrellita de la tarde,
gajitos de blanca luna.

Jazmín del país: tu planta,
cuando a dar flores empieza,
es dulce y feliz sonrisa
de colegiala traviesa.

Y cuando va curioseando
Tu enredadera que asoma.
Volcando va en la vereda delicadísimo
aroma.

Wild Jasmine; how beautiful...!

Wild Jasmine; how beautiful
your blooming is when it rains!
Your white flowers become
tiny snow stars.
Your simple flowers have
a touch of rose:
as the light shamefully
blushes you.

Wild Jasmine, little flower
You are not like another one;
little afternoon star,
small segments of white moon.

Wild Jasmine; your plant,
as it starts blooming,
smiles sweetly and happily
as a mischievous school girl.

And as you curiously go
peeking through your trellis,
your delicate scent pours over the
trail.

Nahandove (Evariste-Désiré de Parney)

Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!
L'oiseau nocturne a commencé ses cris,
la pleine lune brille sur ma tête,
et la rosée naissante humecte mes cheveux.
Voici l'heure: qui peut t'arrêter,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Le lit de feuilles est préparé;
je l'ai parsemé de fleurs et d'herbes
odoriférantes;

il est digne de tes charmes,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Elle vient. J'ai reconnu la respiration
précipitée que donne une marche rapide;
j'entends le froissement de la pagne qui
l'enveloppe;
c'est elle, c'est Nahandove, la belle
Nahandove!

Reprends haleine, ma jeune amie;
repose-toi sur mes genoux.
Que ton regard est enchanteur!
Que le mouvement de ton sein est vif et
délicieux sous la main qui le presse!
Tu souris, Nahandove,
ô belle Nahandove!

Tes baisers pénètrent jusqu'à l'âme;
tes caresses brûlent tous mes sens;
arrête, ou je vais mourir.
Meurt-on de volupté,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove?

Le plaisir passe comme un éclair.
Ta douce haleine s'affaiblit,
tes yeux humides se referment,
ta tête se penche mollement,
et tes transports s'éteignent dans la langueur.
Jamais tu ne fus si belle,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Tu pars, et je vais languir
dans les regrets et les désirs.
Je languirai jusqu'au soir.
Tu reviendras ce soir,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Nahandove

Nahandove, O lovely Nahandove!
The bird of night has begun its calls,
the full moon shines on my head,
and the new-born dew moistens my hair.
Now is the hour, who can stop you,
Nahandove, O lovely Nahandove!

The bed of leaves is prepared;
I have strewn it with flowers and sweet
smelling herbs;

it is worthy of your charms,
O lovely Nahandove!

She comes. I recognized the hasty breath
that comes from quick walking;
I hear the rustle of the loin-cloth that wraps
her round;
it is she, it is Nahandove, O lovely
Nahandove!

Take breath, my little dear,
rest on my lap.
How bewitching is your glance!
How quick and delightful is the motion of
your breast under the pressure of a hand!
You smile, Nahandove,
O lovely Nahandove!

Your kisses fly to the soul;
your caresses burn my every sense;
stop, or I shall die.
Does one die of pleasure,
Nahandove, O lovely Nahandove?

Delight fades like a flash of lightning.
Your sweet breath falters,
your damp eyes close,
your head falls softly forward,
and your ecstasies melt into languor.
You were never so beautiful,
Nahandove, O lovely Nahandove.

You leave and I shall pine
in yearning and desire.
I shall pine until evening.
You will return tonight,
Nahandove, O lovely Nahandove!

Aoua! (Evariste-Désiré de Parney)

Aoua! Méfiez-vous des blancs,
habitants du rivage.
Du temps de nos pères,
des blancs descendirent dans cette île.
On leur dit: Voilà des terres,
que vos femmes les cultivent.
Soyez justes, soyez bons,
et devenez nos frères.

Les blancs promirent, et cependant
ils faisaient des retranchements.
Un fort menaçant s'éleva;
le tonnerre fut renfermé
dans des bouches d'airain;
leurs prêtres voulurent nous donner
un Dieu que nous ne connaissons pas;
ils parlèrent enfin
d'obéissance et d'esclavage.

Plutôt la mort!
Le carnage fut long et terrible;
mais, malgré la foudre qu'ils vomissaient,
et qui écrasait des armées entières,
ils furent tous exterminés.
Aoua! Méfiez-vous des blancs!

Nous avons vu de nouveaux tyrans,
plus forts et plus nombreux,
planter leur pavillon sur le rivage.
Le ciel a combattu pour nous;
il a fait tomber sur eux les pluies,
les tempêtes et les vents empoisonnés.
Ils ne sont plus, et nous vivons libres.
Aoua! Méfiez-vous des blancs,
habitants du rivage.

Aoua!

Aoua! Beware of white men,
dwellers of the shore.
In the time of our fathers,
white men landed on this island.
They were told: Here are lands,
may your women till them.
Be just, be worthy,
and become our brothers.

The white men promised, and yet
they built entrenchments.
A threatening stronghold arose;
thunder was shut up
in mouths of brass;
their priests wanted to give us
a god we did not know;
they spoke in the end
of obedience and slavery.

Death rather than that.
The bloodshed was long and terrible;
but despite the thunder they spewed out
which destroyed whole armies,
they were all exterminated.
Aoua! Beware of white men.

I have seen new tyrants,
stronger and more numerous,
planting their tent on the shore.
Heaven has fought on our behalf.
It has sent rain to fall on them,
tempests and poisoned winds.
They are no more, and we live in freedom.
Aoua! Beware of white men,
dwellers of the shore.

Il est doux (*Evariste-Désiré de Parney*)

Il est doux de se coucher, durant la chaleur,
sous un arbre touffu,
et d'attendre que le vent du soir amène la
fraîcheur.

Femmes, approchez.
Tandis que je me repose ici sous un arbre
touffu, occupez mon oreille par vos accents
prolongés.
Répétez la chanson de la jeune fille,
lorsque ses doigts tressent la natte ou
lorsqu'assise auprès du riz, elle chasse les
oiseaux avides.

Le chant plaît à mon âme. La danse est pour
moi presque aussi douce qu'un baiser.
Que vos pas soient lents; qu'ils imitent les
attitudes du plaisir
et l'abandon de la volupté.

Le vent du soir se lève; la lune commence à
briller au travers des arbres
de la montagne.
Allez, et préparez le repas

It is sweet

It is sweet to sleep, during the heat,
beneath a leafy tree,
and to wait for the wind of evening to
bring coolness.

Women, draw near.
While I rest here under a leafy tree,
fill my ear with your
drawling accents.
Repeat the song of the young girl who,
when her fingers braid her plaits or when
she sits beside the rice, chases off the
greedy birds.

The song delights my soul. The dance is
for me almost as sweet as a kiss.
Let your steps be slow; let them mimic
the attitudes of enjoyment
and the abandon of pleasure.

The wind of evening rises; the moon
begins to shine through
the mountain trees.
Go and prepare the evening meal.

Prayer

By Langston Hughes

I ask you this:
Which way to go?
I ask you this:
Which sin to bear?
Which crown to put
Upon my hair?
I do not know,
Lord God,
I do not know.

Fantasy in Purple (Drums of Tragedy)

By Langston Hughes

Beat the drums of tragedy for me.
Beat the drums of tragedy and death.
And let the choir sing a stormy song
To drown the rattle of my dying breath.

Beat the drums of tragedy for me,
And let the white violins whirl thin and slow,
But blow one blaring trumpet note of sun
To go with me
 to the darkness
 Where I go.

The Heart of a Woman

By Georgia Douglas Johnson

The heart of a woman goes forth with the dawn,
As a lone bird, soft winging, so restlessly on,
Afar o'er life's turrets and vales does it roam
In the wake of those echoes the heart calls
home.

The heart of a woman falls back with the night,
And enters some alien cage in its plight,
And tries to forget it has dreamed of the stars
While it breaks, breaks, breaks on the sheltering
bars.

Interim (Night Song)

By Clarissa Scott Delany

The night was made for rest and sleep,
For winds that softly sigh;
It was not made for grief and tears;
So then why do I cry?
The wind that blows through leafy trees
Is soft and warm and sweet;
For me the night is a gracious cloak
To hide my soul's defeat.
Just one dark hour of shaken depths,
Of bitter black despair-
Another day will find me brave,
And not afraid to dare.

Sence You Went Away

By James Weldon Johnson

Seems lak to me de stars don't shine so
bright,
Seems lak to me de sun done loss his
light,
Seems lak to me der's nothin' goin'
right,
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me de sky ain't half so
blue,
Seems lak to me dat ev'ything wants
you,
Seems lak to me I don't know what to
do,
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me dat ev'ything is wrong,
Seems lak to me de day's jes twice as
long,
Seems lak to me de bird's forgot his
song,
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me I jes can't he'p but sigh,
Seems lak to me ma th' oat keeps gittin'
dry,
Seems lak to me a tear stays in my eye,
Sence you went away.

Creole Girl

By Leslie Morgan Collins

When you dance, do you think of Spain,
Purple skirts and clipping castanets, Creole Girl?

When you laugh, do you think of France,
Golden wine and mincing minuets, Creole Girl?

When you sing, do you think of young America,
Grey guns and battling bayonets?

When you cry, do you think of Africa,
Blue nights and casual canzonets?

When you dance, do you think of Spain,
Purple skirts and clipping castanets, Creole Girl?

Balm in Gilead

There is a balm in Gilead
to heal the sin sick soul.
But then the Holy Spirit
revived my soul again.
If you can-not preach like Peter,
If you can-not preach like Paul.
There is a balm in Gilead
To heal the sin sick soul.

Give Me Jesus

Oh when I come to die, Oh when I come to die,
Oh when I come to die, Give me Jesus, give me Jesus,
Give me Jesus, you can have all the rest.
Give me Jesus.

Dark midnight was my cry, Dark midnight was my cry,
Dark midnight was my cry, Give me Jesus, give me Jesus,
Give me Jesus, you can have all the rest.
Give me Jesus

Changed My Name

Lord I know I've been changed.
Yes, I know I've ben changed.
The angels, the angels
The angels in heaven done changed my name.
If you get there before I do
Tell all my friends I'm coming to
changed my name, changed my name
The angels in heaven, angels in heaven.
The angels in heaven done changed my name.

DMA LECTURE RECITAL:
AFRICAN-AMERICAN ART SONG FOR THE YOUNG SINGER

The University of Kentucky
School of Music
Presents

Nicole Sonbert
In a Doctor of Musical Arts Chamber Voice Recital

with Nan McSwain, Piano
Audrey Belle Adams, Mezzo-Soprano
Willnard Anderson, Baritone
Emily Evans, Soprano
Joseph Wrightson, Tenor

Thursday, December 8, 2016
Lucille Little Fine Arts Library, Niles Gallery
4:30 PM

PROGRAM

From <i>Four Encore Songs</i> Tobacco A Flea and A Fly Song of the Open Road	Florence Price (1887–1953)
In the Springtime	Betty Jackson King (1928–1994)
From <i>Five Creole Songs</i> Chere, Mo Lemmé Toi Michieu Banjo	arr. by Camille Nickerson (1888–1982)
Compensation	Charles Lloyd, Jr. (b. 1948)
From <i>Nightsongs</i> Prayer Sence You Went Away	Leslie Adams (b. 1932)

Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal	H. T. Burleigh (1866–1949)
A Death Song (Lullaby)	Howard Swanson (1907–1978)
From <i>Miss Wheatley's Garden</i> I Want to Die While You Love Me	Rosephanye Powell (b. 1962)
From <i>Mortal Storm</i> Genius Child	Robert Owens (b. 1925)

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Musical Arts in Vocal Performance. Nicole Sonbert is a student of Dr. Noemi Lugo

PROGRAM NOTES

Florence B. Price (b. 1888–1953) was a remarkable composer born in 1888 in Little Rock, Arkansas. Her mother was a pianist and singer, influencing her early musical training. She received a Bachelor of Music degree from the New England Conservatory of Music in 1906. Price was one of the first African-American women composers to be acknowledged as a symphonic composer. Her musical style is considered neo-romantic with the incorporation of African-American idioms, such as spirituals and dance rhythms. She composed over 300 compositions, including chamber music, symphonies, art songs, spirituals, piano, organ, and works for violin.

Graham Lee Hemminger (1895–1950) born in Pennsylvania in 1895, was an American poet that worked in advertising. He graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 1917. The poem, “Tobacco,” was written in 1915 while he was still a student of the University. During his time as student editor, he wrote the poem for the campus humor magazine. This composition was well received and led to immediate success, landing him his first advertising job that specialized in tobacco.

Thomas Moore (1779–1852) was born in Ireland in 1779. He was an Irish poet, singer, and songwriter. He showed an early interest in the arts, performing in musical plays. Moore became well known for his *Irish melodies*, such as “The Minstrel Boy,” “The Last Rose of Summer,” and “Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms.” Numerous composers have often set music to Moore’s poetry, including William Bolcom, Benjamin Britten, Robert Schumann, Hector Berlioz, Henri Duparc, Lori Laitman, and many others. “Come, come,” said Tom’s Father” is from the poem titled “A Joke Versified” by Thomas Moore.

Ogden Nash (1902–1971) was born in New York in 1902. He was an American poet, known for his writing of light verse. He attended Harvard College, but dropped out after only one year of study. His first published poems were in 1930 in the *New Yorker* and in 1931 he published his first collection of poems. His poetry often had an anti-establishment quality, capturing many Americans. Nash’s poem, “Song of the Open Road,” was published in the *New Yorker* in 1932 and in 1940 a modified version of the poem was published in his collected works titled, *The Face is Familiar*. In this poem, he creates a lighthearted twist on “Trees,” a famous poem by Joyce Kilmer.

Four Encore Songs consists of four songs by various poets. The song, “Tobacco”, the first song in the group, is a short and quick song. In this poem, the character talks about how much they like Tobacco, despite its terrible side effects. Price captures this short, but direct poem, in a fun manner. Capturing the repeated words, “I like it,” on the same pitch and rhythm motif throughout the song. The second song, “A Flea and a Fly”, is a short and quick song. In this poem, the character tells a story of “a flea and a fly in a flue.” A flue is an opening in a chimney, where the flea and fly get

caught. They talk about how to escape and find a way to fly out of the flue. Price captures this short poem, utilizing the quicker tempo marking and some chromaticism to depict the motion of flying.

The third song, “Come, come,” said Tom’s Father”, is a short, one page song. In this poem, the character depicts a conversation between Tom and his father. His father tells him that it is time to find a wife, no more excuses. Price captures this short story-like poem through dynamic variation, going back and forth between narration and actual spoken dialogue.

Extreme in dynamics, *f-ff* is used at the end when Tom finally replies back to his father with “Why, so it is, father, whose wife shall I take?” The final song, “Song of the Open Road”, is another short and quick song. In this poem, the character talks about how they will never see “a billboard lovely as a tree.” Price begins the song by quoting a popular melody written by Oscar Rasbach in 1922, capturing and building each small phrase until the dynamic ending on *f*, utilizing the words “I’ll never see a tree at all” with a fermata over the word “tree.”

Betty Jackson King (1928–1994) composer, conductor, educator, pianist, and scholar, was born in 1928. Her love for music and faith was evident throughout her life. Her music education began in Chicago, while also taking her to New Jersey and Baltimore, receiving a BA in Piano and MM in Composition from Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University. She is well known for her arrangement of spirituals. “Ride-Up in the Chariot,” is a spiritual arrangement that was performed by Kathleen Battle in Carnegie Hall for a spiritual concert in 1990. King’s compositional output includes operas, oratorios, choral, and solo work for piano, voice, and organ.

William Shakespeare (1564–1616) was an English poet and playwright. He is considered one of the greatest, writing 38 plays, 154 sonnets, and 2 narrative poems. He was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564, and married Anne Hathaway at the age of 18. After the birth of their three children, historical information is often contradictory and scholars consider these years, after 1585, to be his “lost years.” The comedy, *As You Like It*, was first published in 1623 and is set in France with love being a central theme throughout the play.

From Act V, sc. 3 of *As You Like It*, a play by William Shakespeare, came the song, “It was a Lover and His Lass.” In this forest scene one finds two Pages that run into Touchstone, the clown, and Audrey, his intended bride. During this scene, one Page dances with them in a circle while the other plays the song. “In the Springtime,” is a song that derives from the chorus of “It was a Lover and His Lass.” Betty Jackson King composed “In the Springtime” in 1976. The beautiful melodic and lyrical line is elegant, capturing a tender springtime love. The words, repeated twice, are presented in two different keys and different dynamics, which aid the singer in expressing an ever growing and deep love.

Camille Nickerson (1888–1982) grew up in New Orleans, Louisiana and was an educator, composer, vocalist, and pianist. Being influenced by her musical family, she received her Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from Oberlin Conservatory. She taught at the Nickerson School of Music and Howard University. Nickerson was known for her arrangements, performances, and her passion to share her knowledge with others in the Louisiana Creole culture, becoming recognized as “The Louisiana Lady.”

The Boston Music Company published some of her arrangements in 1942 as *Five Creole Songs Harmonized and Arranged by Camille Nickerson*.

Camille Nickerson writes “The Creole folk songs herein represented originated on the plantations of the French and Spanish colonists of Louisiana much in the same manner as the spirituals and work songs of the American Negro. But, whereas the latter folk music is in part a product of Anglo-Saxon environment, the former reflects the influence of a Latin regime; hence there are differences in the two folk creations.”¹⁶⁷ The poems use a “French-based *patois* commonly spoken by the older generation of Louisiana Creoles. Like many other dialects, the language omits prepositions and articles, and splits verbs.”¹⁶⁸ Pronunciation of the French Creole is very similar to French, just varies in grammatical structure.

The song, “Chere, Mo Lemmé Toi”, is one of the songs of Nickerson’s *Five Creole Songs*. The tune is upbeat and as Nickerson states in her notes, “sung on Mardi Gras Day, the last day of the Carnival season, when a suitor, otherwise timid, could easily find courage with which to declare his heart’s longing to the one of his choice, since he was hidden by a mask and a complete disguise. The second strain of this song is, interestingly enough, a tune popular with the Americans, and played by the bands when on parade. The Creoles being intrigued by the melody, translated the words into their own vernacular, and enjoyed singing it as much as did the Americans.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ Camille Nickerson, *Five Creole Songs*, (Boston: Boston Music, 1942), forward.

¹⁶⁸ Christopher Jordan, “Songs of the Soul: An Exploration of Music by African-American Composers,” (DMA diss., The University of Alabama, 2016), 33.

¹⁶⁹ Nickerson, *Five Creole Songs*, forward.

The song, “Michieu Banjo”, is another one of the songs of Nickerson’s *Five Creole Songs*. In this satirical song, Nickerson states in her notes, “‘Mister Banjo,’ the Town ‘Dandy’ is the envy of those who have neither his fine clothes nor his talent for entertaining on the banjo; moreover the envious pang is certainly not softened by the fact that he is a *mulatto*. Hence, Mister Banjo is the victim of much ridicule.”¹⁷⁰

Charles Lloyd, Jr. (b. 1948) was born in 1948 in Ohio, beginning piano lessons at the age of four at the Bach Conservatory of Music. His mother was a music major and educator, his family was a strong source of encouragement for his musical studies. In 1974, he was accepted into the University of Michigan, a “place where he formed a valuable relationship with African-American editor Willis Patterson, who was a professor of voice and head of the voice area.”¹⁷¹ Patterson had a significant impact on many students and was considered the “Godfather,” introducing many students to the music of African-American composers.¹⁷² Lloyd’s time spent at the University of Michigan was highly influential as he continued into his professional career, inspiring and encouraging his future endeavors and compositional output. Lloyd’s compositional output consists of the following: instrumental, oratorio, opera, art songs, spiritual arrangements, choral, and sacred works. His early art song compositions began in 1972 with his composition *I Judge Not My Own Self* and *Compensation* in 1977.

Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906) is an influential African-American poet and one of the first to gain national recognition. His parents were freed slaves from Kentucky

¹⁷⁰ Nickerson, *Five Creole Songs*, forward.

¹⁷¹ Hudson, “The Vocal Works of Charles Lloyd, Jr.,” 5.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 5.

and their stories of plantation life were highly influential on his career. From an early age, Dunbar was writing and although he was unable to afford college, he continued to pursue his dreams. From 1895-1905, he published several books of poetry before dying at the young age of thirty-three. His writing often depicts conversational character, inventive construction, and utilization of different dialects, as well as conventional English.

The song, *Compensation*, is a relatively short song and has received criticism for its short length, however, “the composer stands by his decision, ‘it says exactly what I want it to say.’”¹⁷³ The accompaniment is expressive and is able to continue the sense of the drama throughout the song; however, it does not offer melodic support to the performer. The song incorporates a small range, but has moments of chromaticism with misleading resolutions. The text, published in 1905, is drawn from Dunbar's collection, *Lyrics of Sunshine and Shadow*. The text, which is not gender specific, shares the idea that deep love has the power to bring joy in a unique way, “The gift of song.”

H. Leslie Adams (b. 1932) was born in Cleveland, Ohio on December 30, 1932. An active composer, Adams' works span various genres including piano, choral, opera, instrumental, chamber music, orchestral, and vocal art songs. Adams is most widely known for his art song compositions, encompassing over 40 songs for solo voice and 4 song cycles or groups. At the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, Adams studied voice, piano, and composition. He earned his bachelor's degree in 1955 and continued on

¹⁷³ Ibid., 47.

to earn a master's degree in music from the California State University at Long Beach in 1967.

In 1973, he earned a Ph.D. in music education from the Ohio State University. Adams has worked as a choral director, pianist, musical director, educator, arts advocate, and composer. Through his works, the influence of classical and contemporary genres can be heard.

Langston Hughes (1902–1967) was born in Missouri in 1902, is considered one of the most important writers of the twentieth century, published the first of his many poems, *The Weary Blues* in 1926. Hughes found comfort writing poetry that “depicts black American from a first hand perspective, uniting it with his love of music, specifically jazz and blues. He used the creative poetry of black language, blues, and jazz to construct an Afro-American aesthetic that rarely has been surpassed.”¹⁷⁴ His life and work, which included poetry, eleven plays, and prose, were highly influential in affecting the artistic composition of the Harlem Renaissance.

James Weldon Johnson (1871–1938) was born in Jacksonville, Florida in 1871. He was a civil rights activist, author, songwriter, lawyer, and educator. He is widely known for his composition, “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” that he wrote with his brother J. Rosamond Johnson. During this time, he also completed the book, “The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man,” which was originally published anonymously in 1912. Additionally, he is highly recognized for his leadership of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

¹⁷⁴ Allanda Constantina Small, “H. Leslie Adams’ Nightsongs: Poetry, Music, and Performance” (DMA diss., The University of Southern Mississippi, 2007), 16.

Nightsongs, originally titled *Six Songs on Text by Afro-American Poets*, was composed over a six-month period in 1961. Adams refers to the six songs as a “song group,” based on poetry of five different poets.¹⁷⁵ They are not linked necessarily in context, but all poets are associated with the Harlem Renaissance. “Prayer” is the first song in the group with poetry written in 1954 by Langston Hughes. The text expresses a personal struggle to understand the purpose of life, and turning to God for help. The verse is repeated without modulation and emotional direction is aided through dynamic contrast. “Sence You Went Away,” written by Johnson, is the fifth song in *Nightsongs*. This work creates a distinctive difference than the other poetry used in this song group. The style of the language is in a dialect that captures the character and time period.¹⁷⁶ This poignant poem reflects back on a love that went away. Adams states, “The song starts right out without an introduction, one of the few of my songs without an introduction. It’s a dramatic vignette with a little bit of sadness. But again, the richness of the harmony and lyricism show that it’s not sad, but rather more bittersweet.”¹⁷⁷

Henry “Harry” Thacker Burleigh (1866–1949), a baritone, composer, and arranger was born on December 2, 1866 in Pennsylvania. Burleigh attended the National Conservatory of Music in New York, which is where he began working with Antonín Dvorák in 1893. Burleigh played a crucial role in introducing Dvorák to African-American music, especially spirituals. In 1898, William Maxwell published Burleigh’s first art songs. Burleigh composed more than 300 songs, including his arrangement of

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 13.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 47.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 48.

spirituals for solo voice and choir. He was one of the first to arrange solo spirituals for the concert stage. Burleigh is an important figure in the recognition, acceptance, and accessibility of African-American art music.

Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809–1892) was born in England, 1809, being the fourth in a family of twelve children. His family life was one of great struggle, which he was able to escape in 1827 when he followed two of his brothers to Cambridge. His brothers were part of a poetry club, which was highly inspirational for his writing. Tennyson was first published in 1827 and became the poet laureate for Queen Victoria in 1850. One of his poems, “The Princess,” was a long narrative poem that was published in 1847, which explores gender roles, sometimes argued as an anti-feminist poem.

The song, “Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal”, includes text that is derived from a brief poem found within “The Princess.” It often employs indirect description that enhances the sense of eroticism. In “The Princess,” the woman is reading this tranquil and erotic poem in the presence of a man who has earlier professed his love for her. Overall there is a sense of being consumed by love with a suggestion of a romantic encounter. The accompaniment is very expressive and lush, while offering support to the vocal line. The song incorporates an octave range with various diatonic key changes, which supports the textual interpretation.

Howard Swanson (1907–1978) was an African-American composer born in Atlanta, Georgia. He graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Music with a Bachelor’s degree in music theory. In 1939, he received a fellowship that allowed him to study in France with Nadia Boulanger. By the age of 43, in 1950, he produced his first significant

composition “The Negro Speaks of Rivers,” poetry by Langston Hughes. Swanson’s musical style often incorporates the use of African-American elements.

The song, “A Death Song”, is considered a lullaby, although not as a song that lulls one to sleep but rather death. The rocking motion is portrayed by the accompaniment in a *leit motif* that is introduced in measures 1-2 and used throughout the song. According to Samuel A. Floyd, “the structure is that of a blues with two-measure statements by the voice followed by two-measure answers by the piano, the two “voices” calling and responding as in a traditional blues song.”¹⁷⁸ Floyd also considers the melody’s use of flatted thirds and sevenths as “expressive of melancholy and grief.”¹⁷⁹

Rosephanye Powell (b. 1962) was born in 1962 in Alabama. She obtained her Bachelor of Music Education degree, Masters and Doctor of Music degree in Vocal Performance by 1993. She is well known for her choral music compositions, but her compositional output also includes art songs and spiritual arrangements. Powell is currently an endowed professor of voice at Auburn University.

Georgia Douglas Johnson (1880–1966) was born in Atlanta, Georgia in 1880, becoming a strong presence during the Harlem Renaissance. Johnson graduated from Atlanta University and the Oberlin Conservatory of music, finally residing in Washington, D.C. She was one of the first African-American women poets to receive national acclaim, with her first publication in 1918 titled *The Heart of a Woman*. Historian James Weldon Johnson described her poems as “songs of the heart.” She

¹⁷⁸ Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States*, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 252.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

published four volumes of poetry in total, with *An Autumn Love Cycle* (1928) considered one of her greatest works.

Miss Wheatley's Garden contains three songs with poetry of three different poets. In the words of the composer, "Miss Wheatley is remembered for many first time accomplishments, including: first African American to publish a book; an accomplished African-American woman of letters; first African-American woman to earn a living from her writing. Because of these accomplishments, I thought it befitting to title the work *Miss Wheatley's Garden* in honor of Phyllis Wheatley's works which are the garden in which many generations of African-American women poets have blossomed."¹⁸⁰ The song, "I Want to Die While You Love Me", is derived from the poem of the same name found in *An Autumn Love Cycle* (1928) by Georgia Douglas Johnson. In this poem, she describes a day of passion in which she hopes to never die. Powell captures the essence of this passion through her beautiful song. She begins with a slow lilting feeling of a breeze, one in which she "marked it moderately slow, rather than slow, because it takes on a sadness not present in the poetry if sung too slowly."¹⁸¹

Her markings in the B section, "slightly agitated" and "serenely," help to depict the change of mood. There are frequent dynamic and tempo changes that also intensify the mood and climax, while returning to a beautiful 'final sound of the poetry' in the piano (mm. 56-58). In the words of Dr. Marcia Porter, "Powell's *Miss Wheatley's Garden* is a wonderful tribute to the legacy of Phyllis Wheatley. The texts are full of

¹⁸⁰ Rosephanye Powell, "Art Songs," *Rosephanye Powell*, accessed December 1, 2016, <http://rosephanyepowell.com/compositions/publishers/>.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

imagery and color, which Powell captures in her writing. The songs are well-crafted with warm harmonies and appealing vocal lines. The songs of Miss Wheatley's Garden are a delight to sing and are a great addition to the vocal repertoire."¹⁸²

Robert Lee Owens, III (b. 1925) was born in 1925 in Texas but his family moved to California shortly after his birth. His mother was an excellent pianist and Owens began piano lessons at the age of four, composing his first piano concerto at the age of fifteen. At a young age, Owens was drafted into the US Army where he was able to learn the German language from the prisoners of war. In 1946, Owens traveled to Europe and lived in Paris. After extensive training and artistic exploration, he returned to the US in 1957 to teach in Georgia and it was here where Owens first experienced a racially divided culture. In the summer of 1958, Owens was first introduced to the poetry of Langston Hughes.

The song, "Genius Child", is the last song in the five-song cycle *Mortal Storm*. In this cycle, Owens captures the essence of being human and all the "storms" that "mortals" may endure. Owens depicts a society of unrest and intolerance for those that show unusually advanced skills or talents. "From the moment the introduction begins, a frenzied, almost panicked, musical environment is present. The vivace triplet figures almost become too fast for the pianist to play as the poet scrambles to find a solution for this "genius child."¹⁸³ A child that is not praised for their intelligence, which Hughes often saw in the African-American community. There are a few sudden key changes in

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Jamie Reimer, "Fields of Wonder: Exploring the Langston Hughes Song Cycles of Robert Owens" (D.M.A. diss., University of Nebraska, 2008), 134.

the song that help to portray the text and feeling of unrest. The cycle concludes with a dramatic ending back in e-flat minor, with the return of the raging triplet figure accompaniment.

Tobacco (Graham Lee Hemminger)

Tobacco is a dirty weed: I like it.
It satisfies no normal need: I like it.
It makes you thin, it makes you lean,
it takes the hair right off your bean.
It's the worst stuff I've ever seen; I like it.

A Flea and a Fly (Anonymous)

A flea and a fly in a flue were imprisoned,
so what could they do?
Said the fly, "Let us flee."
Said the fly, "Let us flee," said the flea "Let us fly,"
So they flew through a flaw in the flue.

"Come, come," said Tom's Father (Thomas Moore)

"Come, come" said Tom's father, "at your time of life,
There's no longer excuse for thus playing the rake.
It is time you should think, boy, of taking a wife."
"Why, so it is, father, whose wife shall I take?"

Song of the Open Road (Ogden Nash)

I think that I shall never see
a billboard lovely as a tree.
Indeed unless the billboards fall
I'll never see a tree at all.

In The Springtime (William Shakespeare)

In the Springtime,
the only pretty ringtime
When birds do sing Hey ding—a-din ding,
Sweet lovers love the Spring
Sweet lovers love the Spring.

Chere, Mo Lemmé Toi (Creole Folk Song)

Chere, Mo lemmé toi
Chere, Mo lemmé toi
Oui, Mo lemmé toi,
‘vec tou mo coeur mo lemmé toi

Chere, Mo lemmé toi,
Chere, Mo fou pou toi
Oui, Mo lemmé toi comme ‘tit cochon lemmé
labou.

Si jamais mo pas lemmé vou,
Si jamais mo pas lemmé vou,
Mo prends couteau, Oui prends couteau,
et coupé mo vieux lacou.

Oh! Chere, Mo lemmé toi
Chere, Mo tou peu toi
Oui Mo lemmé toi, ‘vec tou mo coeur mo
lemmé toi
Oui, Mo lemmé toi comme ‘tit cochon lemmé
labou.

Dear, I Love You (Creole Folk Song)

Dear, I love you
Dear, I love you
Yes, I love you,
With all my heart I love you

Dear, I love you,
Dear, I’m crazy about you
Yes, I love you like (a) little pig loves
mud

If ever I not love you,
If ever I not love you,
I take knife, yes take knife,
and cut my old neck.

Oh! Dear, I love you
Dear, I’m everything for you
Yes I love you, with all my heart I love
you
Yes, I love you like (a) little pig loves
mud

Michieu Banjo (Creole Folk Song)

Gardez piti Mulatte la, Michieu Banjo,
Comment liinsolent!
Chapeau su' côté, Michieu Banjo,
Badine a la main;

Mouchoir dans so poche, Michieu Banjo,
Cigar dans so gros labouche.
Oh! Gardez piti Mulatte la,
Michieu Banjo,
Comment liinsolent!

Cheveux bien glacé, Michieu Banjo,
Crävat, roughe assez!
Panta lon plen plein 'tit Banjo,
Bottes qui apé fait "Crinc, crinc!"
Oh! Gardez piti Mulatte la,
Michieu Banjo,
Comment liinsolent!

Yeux qui apé roulé Michieu Banjo,
Fleur dans so boutonniere, 'tit Banjo,
Joué li meme capab,
Mais laid jus' comme le Diab'

Mister Banjo (Creole Folk Song)

Look after kid mulatto there, Mister Banjo,
How he is insolent!
Hat on one side, Mister Banjo,
Walkin' cane in hand;

Handkerchief in his pocket, Mister Banjo,
Cigar in his big mouth.
Oh! Look after kid mulatto there,
Mister Banjo,
How he is insolent!

Hair well smoothed, Mister Banjo,
Tie, red enough!
Trousers plenty plenty little Banjo,
Boots which go "Crank, crank!"
Oh! Look after kid mulatto there,
Mister Banjo,
How he is insolent!

Eyes that are rolling Mister Banjo,
Flower in his boutonniere, little Banjo,
He, himself can play,
But ugly just like the Devil

Compensation (Paul Laurence Dunbar)

Because I had loved so deeply;
Because I had loved so long;
God gave, in His great compassion,
The gift of song.

Prayer (Langston Hughes)

I ask you this:
Which way to go?
I ask you this:
Which sin to bear?
Which crown to put
Upon my hair?
I do not know,
Lord God, I do not know

Sence You Went Away (James Weldon Johnson)

Seems lak to me de stars don't shine so bright,
Seems lak to me de sun done loss his light,
Seems lak to me der's nothin' goin' right,
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me de sky ain't half so blue,
Seems lak to me dat ev'rything wants you,
Seems lak to me I don't know what to do,
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me dat ev'rything is wrong,
Seems lak to me de day's jes twice as long,
Seems lak to me de bird's forgot his song,
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me I jes can't he'p but sigh,
Seems lak to me ma th'oat keeps gittin' dry,
Seems lak to me a tear stays in my eye,
Sence you went away.

Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal (Lord Alfred Tennyson)

Now sleeps the crimson petal,
Now the white;
Now waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Now winks the gold fin in the porphyry font;
The firefly wakens: waken thou with me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake:
So fold thyself my dearest,
So fold thyself my dearest:
So fold thyself my dearest, thou,
And slip, slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me,
be lost in me, in me!

A Death Song (Paul Laurence Dunbar)

Lay me down beneath the willows in de grass,
Whah de branch 'll go a-sing-in' as it pass.
An' w'en I's layin' low
I kin hyeah it as it go sing-in';
"Sleep my honey, tak yo' res' at las'."

Lay me nigh to whah it meks a little pool.
An' de watah stan's so quiet lak an' cool.
Whah de little birds in spring ust to come an' drink an sing,
An' de chillen wadded on dey way to school.

Let me settle w'en my shouldahs draps dey load.
Nigh enough to hyeah de noises in de road.
Fu' I t'ink de las' long res'
Gwine to sooth my sper-rit bes',
Ef I's laying 'mong de t'ings I's allus knowed.

I Want to Die While You Love Me (Georgia Douglas Johnson)

I want to die while you love me,
while yet you hold me fair,
while laughter lies upon my lips and lights are in my hair.
I want to die while you love me.

And bear to that still bed, your kisses:
turbulent, unspent, to warm me when I'm dead.
And never, never see the glory, glory of this day
grow dim or cease to be, grow dim or cease to be.

I want to die while you love me.
Oh, who would care to live
'til love has nothing more to ask and nothing more to give?
I want to die while you love me.
And never, never see the glory of this perfect day,
the glory of this perfect day grow dim or cease to be!

Genius Child(Langston Hughes)

This is the song for the Genius Child.
Sing it softly, for the song is wild.
Sing it softly as ever you can lest the song get out of hand.
Nobody loves a Genius Child.
Nobody loves a Genius Child.

Can you love an eagle, tame or wild?
Can you love an eagle, wild or tame?
Can you love a monster of frightening name?
Nobody loves a Genius Child.
Nobody loves a Genius Child.

Kill him, kill him and let his soul run wild

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VITA

Nicole Michelle Sonbert

PLACE OF BIRTH

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

EDUCATION

Doctorate of Musical Arts in Vocal Performance, December 2017 (expected)
University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Master of Music in Vocal Performance, May 2010
East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina

Master of Music in Music Education, May 2010
East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina

Bachelor of Music in Musical Theatre Performance, May 2002
East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina

Bachelor of Music in Music Education, May 2002
East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina

PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS HELD

Learning and Engagement Manager – Seattle Opera
Seattle, Washington, January 2017 – present

Teaching Assistant and Graduate Assistant – University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY, August 2013 – December 2016

Guest Clinician, Voice – Paul Laurence Dunbar High School
Lexington, KY, August 2016 – December 2016

Musical Director – Community Chorus Project
Chapel Hill, NC, June 2011 – July 2016

Lecturer in Voice – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC, January 2011 – May 2013

Project Assistant – Videmus
Chapel Hill, NC, January 2011 – August 2013

Voice Instructor – Spoleto Study Abroad Program
Spoleto, Italy, July 2013

Guest Adjudicator/Clinician – Durham Music Teachers Association
Durham, NC, May 2012 – August 2013

Voice Instructor – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill High School Music Camp
Chapel Hill, NC, June 2011

Clinician – East Carolina University Choral Camp
Greenville, NC, June 2009 – June 2010

Graduate Teaching Assistant, East Carolina University
Greenville, NC, August 2008 – May 2010

Children and Youth Music Director – First Presbyterian Church
Greenville, NC, August 2009 – June 2010

Clinician – Pitt County Elementary All-County Chorus
Greenville, NC, March 2009

Clinical Teacher for Music Education – East Carolina University
Greenville, NC, August 2006 – June 2008

Choral Director – EB Aycock Middle School
Greenville, NC, August 2005 – June 2008

Choral Director – Wiley Middle School
Winston-Salem, NC, August 2002 – June 2005

Voice Instructor – Triple Threat Dance Center
Winston-Salem, NC, January 2004 – June 2005

Voice Instructor – Crystal Coast School of the Arts
Morehead City, NC, August 2001 – June 2002

SCHOLASTIC & PROFESSIONAL HONORS

Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition Finalist – University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY, August 2013 – June 2016

North Carolina's Mid-Atlantic Regional NATS
1st Place, Advanced College Women, Classical 2010
1st Place, Senior College Women, Musical Theatre 2000

Concerto Competition Finalist – East Carolina University
2010 Voice Department Winner, Competition Finalist
2001 Voice Department Winner, Competition Finalist

Pi Kappa Lambda, National Music Honor Society – East Carolina University
Greenville, NC, August 2009

My Teacher, My Hero, 1st Place Winner – EB Aycock Middle School
Greenville, NC, May 2006

Outstanding Senior Award – School of Music, East Carolina University
Greenville, NC, May 2002

Donna Dease Music Scholarship – East Carolina University
Greenville, NC, May 2001

East Carolina University School of Music Scholarship
Greenville, NC, May 2000