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Santa Barbara

Unfachable: Transcending Time, Genre, and Space
in the Twenty-First Century Solo Recital.

A supporting document submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts
in Music

by

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September 2023

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September 2023

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in the Twenty-First Century Solo Recital.

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by

April Catherine Amante

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This document is dedicated in memoriam to the brilliant Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho, who we lost on June 2, 2023, at the age of 70.

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ABSTRACT

Unfachable: Transcending Time, Genre, and Space in the Twenty-First Century Solo
Recital.

by

April Catherine Amante

The intended audience for my document, *Unfachable*, is specifically educators and performers trained, or currently training, in the Western Classical vocal tradition, specifically in the United States and Canada. Its purpose is to give performers, coaches, artistic directors, and teachers permission to exercise their creative artistic agency within the Western Classical canon when programming, curating, and performing recitals. I approach this topic from my own positionality as a white, cisgender, heterosexual woman who has been trained in the practices of Western art singing. I am interested in how and why the standard solo vocal recital came to be, why it declined in popularity by the end of the twentieth century, and how we can reconceptualize its purpose as twenty-first-century performers and educators.

I consider how the Western constructs of the Fach system, Eurocentric beauty standards, and the gender binary are potentially limiting a singer's artistry inside and outside of the opera theater. I draw from what Cathy Berberian left us with her 1966 manifesto, *The New Vocality* and some of Pierre Boulez's ideas about programming. I introduce my concept

of questioning the museum exhibition tradition, include excerpts from my interview with soprano Julia Bullock, and finally I build and perform a theatrical program with a narrative, incorporating my own poetry using Kaija Saariaho's *Lohn*.

I will show how time, genre, and space can be transcended using resources and tools, like audio engineering, electronics, videography, dance, and visual art. My hope is that *Unfachable* can serve as an early twenty-first-century manifesto to help singers curate personalized and creative recital programs, while also meeting academic requirements for a degree program. I also hope that it can serve as a catalyst for discussions moving forward, and that future students and teachers will continue to expound on the ideas I've gathered.

I extend an invitation for us all to keep questioning hegemonic constructs in the Western Classical tradition and explore where they could be limiting the full potential of our individual creative agency and our fullest ways of being.

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I. History of the Recital

The concert recital was not developed suddenly, or in a vacuum of one specific time or place. Recitals for singers have historically been comprised of song and song cycles, as opposed to operatic arias. Cyclical masses and cycles of madrigals had always existed. In the early nineteenth century, music sponsorship shifted from an aristocratic patronage system to upper-middle class parlors and salons. The Industrial Revolution brought the advent of mass-produced pianos that became very popular in these homes, so the market for songs skyrocketed in the 1800s. After the Enlightenment, the Romantic period hearkened back to aesthetic ideals of Medieval period, including turning inward from the linear logic of the Age of Reason, and towards mystical circles, the supernatural, Gothic architecture, connection with nature, stretching boundaries, merging art forms, and inexpressible extremes. Romantic song cycles were first composed around the 1790s and became a mature genre by the 1840s thanks to the conscious development of German poets and composers in order to establish a uniquely German national literary and musical tradition. German composers tried to distinguish their cycles with descriptive titles like *Liederkreis* (lied cycle), *Blumenkranz* (flower wreath), *Liederroman* (lied novel), *Liederspiel* (a dramatic play consisting of *Lieder*), or *Liederzyklus* (lied cycle).¹ A few composers in history preferred the intimate, small scale form of the *Lied* (German song) like Robert Franz and Hugo Wolf, but most importantly the *Lied* influenced the larger forms of composers like Franz Liszt and Richard Wagner of the New German School who desired Program Music, rather than

¹ Ruth O. Bingham; Parsons, James. *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004 p. 101

Absolute Music. Program Music has an implicit literary or extra-musical text connection, whereas Absolute Music was instrumental music without text connection for the music's own sake, not intended by the composer to have any extra-musical meaning. The New German School continued to influence the Lieder of the late Romantic and early contemporary Gustav Mahler and Richard Strauss in the twentieth century.

A. The Inception of the Recital and its Traditions

During the Biedermeier period of history in the early Romantic post-Napoleonic era (1815-1840), Europe was redrawing its map, while Franz Schubert was busy redefining the Lied. Johann von Goethe (1749-1832) and his mentor, Joann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) were determined to collect and give voice and a national identity to the German folk in the eighteenth century. This unique voice was inspired by the simple German folk song. Goethe made German poetic verse simpler with 4 quatrains of ABAB or ABCD rhyme schemes, as opposed to the earlier more complicated religious poetry of Friedrich Gottlob Klopstock (1724-1803).² This led to the simple, vocally led melodies of Carl Friedrich Zelter and Johann Friedrich Reichardt of the Second Berlin school, in addition to the strophic ballads of Carl Loewe (1796-1869). By the time Schubert was composing, strophic song with singable melodies and simple accompaniments were the preferred stylistic traits of German folk song.³ Concurrently during the Biedermeier period, members of middle and upper-middle class society were turning away from the public sphere, which was marked by a hostile political atmosphere, and finding solace in their homes and drawing rooms. This

² See Appendix, p. 94 for an example of this excerpted from Hallmark, Rufus E. *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1996. p. 5

³ Or at least the eighteenth and early nineteenth century recreations of it.

period has been described as a resignation from the antagonistic outer world and a retreat into gentle, delicate, and sentimental music in the home. As a result of the increased availability of industrial strength pianos in private homes and more music being composed for and performed by amateurs, the simple Lieder where the voice is king and the piano accompaniment merely serves to support the vocal melody were the most popular in salons and amateur middle-class spaces.

Virtuoso violinist Nicolo Paganini used dazzling technique and charisma to captivate audiences in Europe and the United States between 1810 and 1835. The culture he created of showmanship, virtuosity, and earning hefty sums for his performances, influenced other Classical virtuoso players like Franz Liszt and Clara Wieck-Schumann to follow suit. Virtuosity also dominated the opera stage with the “prima donna” and the impresarios who hired them, like soprano Giuditta Pasta, who influenced the musical styles and roles created by Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti.⁴ In the 1830s, the reigning musical virtuoso, Clara Wieck-Schumann, played flashy music to please the capitalistic concert hall, performing variations on the most popular arias of the day. But in the 1840s and 1850s her recital repertoire changed, now including works by Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and her husband Robert Schumann. Her recital programming choices helped facilitate these repertoire changes in the piano recital. Like her husband, she sought to elevate and wean the public away from the tastes of superficial appeal of pure virtuosity for its own sake. She and Franz Liszt both used their prestige as performers to change habits and the taste of the public. In this way, the touring virtuoso performers of the nineteenth and early twentieth

⁴ Frisch, Walter. *Music in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2013. p. 5

centuries heavily shaped the standard of the concert recital performance in Western art music traditions.

The midpoint of the nineteenth century marked a dividing point in musical culture. Because of the fallout of the unsuccessful European revolutions of 1848 and also in light of new developments in science and technology, the early Romantic worldview (the graceful resignation) yielded to attitudes exemplified by nationalism, historicism, materialism, capitalism, and realism.⁵ Germany in particular yearned to continue to establish its own national artistic identity through the Lied to set themselves apart from the French, the English, and the Italians. The Lied continued to be the perfect medium for the romantic marriage of poetry and music that the New German School and beyond yearned to still revel in and stretch to fit larger spaces and include more forces.⁶ It could be argued that all these aforementioned countries had birthed their own individual song identities: England had lute songs, France had the Chanson, and the composers of the Florentine Camerata in the sixteenth century conceived of operatic arias and ariettas predicated upon their imagined, idealized recreation of ancient Greek musical drama. However, Franz Schubert (1797-1828) revolutionized the complexity of the song with the text painting and integral descriptive qualities essential to the meaning of the poetry in the accompaniment and the vocal melody like no other composer before him had done. The artistic sophistication required of both the singer and the pianist to perform the Lieder of Schubert and his contemporary Schumann is unlike anything required of the folklike simple melodic songs of England, France, or Italy.

⁵ Ibid p. 8

⁶ Any discussion of Lieder would be remiss without including the expansive orchestral arrangements of Gustav Mahler and Richard Strauss in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Perhaps it is this required musical sophistication and Schubert's desire to bring the Lied into the professional sphere that adds to the inaccessible, stuffy formality of its performance history and the fascination with the virtuoso? Lawrence Kramer, for instance, writes that:

Since the latter half of the nineteenth century, lieder have been commonly performed in a concert setting: singer and pianist dressed more or less formally, the singer standing, facing the audience, and performing from memory, the pianist seated at right angles to the audience before the keyboard. Visual aids are kept to a minimum...only the facial expression and body language of the singer and ideally a printed text/or translation in the program...given these stringent constraints, it is a tribute to the power of the material that anyone should be willing to invest the time and effort needed to become an accomplished lied singer.⁷

Kramer goes on to detail the essential skills required for a recitalist, which are very similar to the list that Shirlee Emmons and Stanley Sonntag present in their book, *The Art of the Song Recital*—a text adopted by singers trained at music schools and conservatories across the United States:⁸

1. A well-trained and reasonably beautiful voice
2. Advanced musicianship
3. An attractive and vital personality
4. The ability to project and communicate
5. The ability to think and perform on many levels
6. The ability to go beyond what can be taught
7. Versatility of styles (for the American singer)
8. Musical and literary insight
9. Musical and literary imagination
10. Good health and the determination to keep it⁹

⁷ Kramer, Lawrence; Hallmark, Rufus E. *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1996 p. 314

⁸ Emmons, Shirlee, and Stanley Sonntag. *The Art of the Song Recital*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1979 p. 21

⁹ This book was written in 1979 before the general public would question “good health” having fatphobic connotations, insinuating that fat singers cannot be worthy of love or romance onstage. The Eurocentric beauty standard is that fat bodies are not “good” bodies, which Sonya Renee Taylor discusses in her book, *The body is not an apology: The Power of Radical Self-love*. Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2021.

These ideas, particularly the tenth, gained prevalence in the twentieth century when the opera industry encouraged opera singers to compete physically with famous Hollywood and film stars. From a modern perspective of a future educator who cares about their students' mental and physical wellbeing, I would edit the tenth to say, "the ability to be in tune with one's body to take care of themselves physically and mentally, effectively regulating their nervous system and staying well-resourced."

The size of performance halls in the United States has been increasing for over a century, and these spaces are harder to fill if the artists are not famous (or in the case of Western Classical music, "opera-famous") stars with international resume credentials.

Emmons and Sonntag argue that:

In its purest form, the song recital is truly a product of the twentieth century. The practice of arranging songs in chronological order was pioneered by Marcella Sembrich. Fine artists like Elisabeth Schumann, Askel Schiotz, Lotte Lehmann, Elena Gerhardt, and Alexander Kipnis preferred to sing the great songs of Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms in place of arias. American artists Mack Harrell and Marian Anderson...continued the practice. Recitalists in the forties, fifties, and sixties Jeannie Tourel, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Peter Pears, Kathleen Ferrier, Gerard Souzay, Judith Raskin, Janet Baker, Shirley Verrett, and Hermann Prey limited their recitals almost exclusively to song literature.¹⁰

Marcella Sembrich (1858-1935) was a shining example of a singer who fit Kramer's ten criteria for a successful recitalist. She was a Polish virtuoso coloratura soprano who enjoyed an international operatic career and "on retiring from opera [in 1909, she] continued a series of song recitals that became noted events in New York, lasting until 1917, her sixtieth year."¹¹ Although there are a few criticisms of certain technical aspects of Sembrich's

¹⁰ Emmons, Shirlee, and Stanley Sonntag. *The Art of the Song Recital*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1979 p. 6

¹¹ Steane, J. B. *The Grand Tradition : Seventy Years of Singing on Record*. 2nd ed. Portland, Or: Amadeus Press, 1993 p. 67

singing considered “limitations” in some of her recordings like stiffness and uneven vibrations (vibrato),¹² there is more praise of her vocalism than criticisms. I don’t think that her success in recitals was coincidental: She played both the violin and piano at a high level and was known for her excellent musicianship and effective story-telling in folk songs that brought both humor and grace. Any recital that effectively draws in an audience of active listeners includes a variety of moods, feelings, and messages to communicate in addition to the necessity of a variety of cultures, languages, and styles.¹³ The following changes were being pioneered between the years of 1909-1917 that eventually became part of the academic standard:

Sembrich came to dominate the concert stage in both the United States and across Europe. Sembrich spent almost a decade touring as a concert singer, expanding the format of the song recital. She is one of the first singers of international repute to begin including folk songs on her song recitals, a tradition that remains alive today.¹⁴

The following image is from the New York Tribune in 1913;¹⁵ it describes her program and includes a list of her songs, ending with folk songs that are close to her heart.

¹² Ibid, pp. 68-69

¹³ There are certain caveats to this declaration; later in this chapter there is an example of an all-French language program, but it is beautifully crafted to fit a larger storyline narrative. If the element of variety in language or style period is missing, then other creative programming or storytelling elements must be present to create audience investment.

¹⁴ Hutcheson, “Marcella Sembrich”

¹⁵ "MME. SEMBRICH'S RECITAL." *New - York Tribune (1911-1922)*, Mar 23, 1913

FIGURE 1. MME. SEMBRICH'S RECITAL *NEW YORK TRIBUNE* (1911-1922) MAR. 23, 1913

MME. SEMBRICH'S RECITAL
New York Tribune (1911-1922); Mar 23, 1913;
 ProQuest Historical Newspapers: New York Tribune / Herald Tribune
 Pg. 4-5

MME. SEMBRICH'S RECITAL.

The managers of Mme. Marcella Sembrich's last song recital, which will take place in Carnegie Hall next Tuesday afternoon, have indicated that the programme is to be made up of songs which have won the largest measure of popular favor heretofore. But there are some new features to which attention may well be called. One of these is the old English song "Willow, Willow, Willow," which dates back at least to Queen Elizabeth's time, and was introduced by Shakespeare in the last act of his "Othello." The dramatic significance of the song led both Rossini and Verdi to include it in their operas on the Shakespearian subject. Verdi's treatment of the song is extremely beautiful, but it is a question whether any setting which the words have received can be considered the equal of the old song as it was heard in Shakespeare's time and as it was sung then.

The printed programme announces a group of folksongs as the final section of the programme. Mme. Sembrich's introduction of this feature into the concert activity of the country is not likely soon to be forgotten. Her example has been followed, but never in the serious and extended manner in which it was introduced. She purposes, it would seem, to continue it by the inclusion in her programme next Tuesday of a Creole song new to the public. The list of her songs is as follows:

Nymphs and Shepherds.....	Purcell
Oh, Willow, willow, willow.....	18th Century
Quel ruscetto.....	Paradies
Willst Du dein Herz.....	Bach (?)
Mermaid's Song.....	Haydn
Frühlingstraube.....	Schubert
Die Lotusblume.....	Schubert
Volkstiedchen.....	Schumann
Wie Melodien zieht es.....	Brahms
Liebeshymnus.....	R. Strauss
Niemand hat's gesehen.....	Loewe
Pastorale.....	Biseli
L'Oiseau bleu.....	Balczon
On tak mienie lubi (in Russian).....	Tschikowsky
Prasnicka (in Polish).....	Mohlewsky
Es Blüht der Thau.....	Rubinstein
Frühlingssied.....	French Canadian
Gal lou la.....	Louisianian
Creole canço.....	Irish
The Coolin.....	Swedish
Florian.....	Greek
Aínsa kolmesou.....	Polish
Cos ja niehorosze.....	Polish
Maros vize folyik.....	Hungarian
Cziliag.....	Hungarian

In the early twentieth century, the added folk songs of an artist's native language and personal preference were a novel idea, but by today's standards this is still a standard, traditional program. Many classical programs performed by young voice students across the country begin with Henry Purcell and works from the sixteenth century and move fairly chronologically through the Baroque and early Classical (Bach and Haydn), onto German Lieder (Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms), then exploring other works from the Romantic

and late nineteenth century (Bizet and Strauss), concluding with folk songs.¹⁶ Stars from the Golden Age of opera like Sembrich were given a fertile ground for the success of their recitals during this time period, which assured the development of a standard that traditional opera fans would approve of and insist on for decades to come, and even now in the twenty-first century.

Marilyn Horne was arguably one of the most successful recitalists in the twentieth century during her long career. In the year 2000, Anthony Tommasini wrote a New York Times article about the Marilyn Horne Foundation and its work in giving young singers funded recital performance opportunities in an effort to resuscitate the art form. The article opens with “Marilyn Horne has been worried about the song recital for some time. As an art form it has been languishing...in the rest of the country (not New York) where the great singers used to come through regularly to perform at civic centers and in community concerts. These series largely do not exist anymore.”¹⁷ In the same article, Tommasini quotes the prolific American composer Ned Rorem agreeing, “there is not one singer in the world today who can earn a living primarily as a song recitalist...unless they have a reputation in opera. But in that case their recitals usually contain lots of arias, which is not the same thing.”¹⁸ In my teens and twenties, even my own private and university voice teachers told me that there was no money to be made in singing recitals. They were adamant that the only way to earn a living as a singer was to sing operatic roles. It is clear that even at

¹⁶ This sort of standard program is already beginning to become a relic in some spaces and institutions, yet there are still many prominent educators who hold strong to these conventions. However, I do acknowledge that the landscape is changing rapidly.

¹⁷ Tommasini, Anthony. “A Champion of the Song Recital Wins It a Few More Verses.” p. 43

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 44

the turn of the twenty-first century, the problem of the song recital becoming an ancient fossil of the past already existed. Horne also acknowledges the difference between the “diva recital” that Rorem described where the centerpiece of the recital are the arias to please the opera buffs, and a few well-known art songs might be sprinkled in between the arias. Paul Nelson, a professor of political science and director of the concert series at Middlebury College in Vermont (which has worked with the Horne Foundation) said, “The song recital is a tough sell, I think the art form got in trouble because it seemed to a lot of people a very formal and almost postured sort of performing. A picture had grown in people’s minds of large singers warbling away on a stage in languages the audience didn’t understand, and if they did see the texts, the English translations were ponderous and slightly funny.”¹⁹

Emmons and Sonntag cite many reasons for the decline of the solo song recital, including the fact that capitalistic, neoliberal American culture fetishizes fame, celebrity, glamorous lifestyles, and a “bigger is always better” mentality.²⁰ In the “old star system during the heyday of the solo recital in the 1940s and 1950s...before a recital Lily Pons would arrive at a city in her own railroad car...it was not unusual to see a concert artist arrive with her entourage, among which were a maid, a PR man, two Borzoi dogs, and a suspiciously unattached young male.”²¹ However, in the 1960s “reverse chic and total understatement” took over, and rock stars created entirely different definitions of glamor and fashion. At this time when records and television captivated all audiences, the song recital lost its glamor and became boring to an overstimulated public. Television also exposed audiences easily to

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 44

²⁰ Emmons and Sonntag didn’t use the words capitalist and neoliberal, these are my own additions. It was not appropriate to publicly question or offer any criticisms of these systems in 1979.

²¹ Ibid, p. 3

massive orchestras and ensembles, and since “bigger is better,” this was the most impressive to watch and listen to, instead of one solo singer and an accompanist. I argue that by incorporating more multimedia and variety into our concert recitals, we can recapture the modern twenty-first century audience, especially in the decade of the 2020s where much of the public is primed after a traumatic global pandemic to slow down, reflect upon the state of the world, take stock of how they really feel, what they really want, and be transported to another space to see other possibilities.

B. The Academic Standard and the Old Guard

The development of musicology as a discipline during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries led to the reification of certain white male Western Classical European composers like Beethoven, Bach, Brahms, and Mozart. These men were considered the epitome of musical genius—the pillars of the Classical canon. A corollary effect of the canon led to managers and committees pandering to the *very* best works by the *very* best composers.

The “old guard” in Western Classical music refers to the mindsets of singers, teachers, and coaches in the mid- to- late nineteenth century opera industry that are still carried over today.²² This would have been the heyday, a Golden Age, of superstar singers like German soprano Lilli Lehmann (1848-1929) and the Italian tenor Francesco Tamagno (1850-1905) who were in retirement around the infancy of the gramophone.²³ These singers, teachers,

²² See Figure 8 (below) for Cathy Berberian’s use of the term “old guard”, which Merriam-Webster dictionary defines as a noun to mean “the usually older members of an organization (such as a political party) who do not want or like change.

²³ Steane, J. B. *The Grand Tradition : Seventy Years of Singing on Record*. p. 25

and managers insisted rigidly upon only the operatic techniques passed down from their teachers and their teacher's teachers, which included only the operatic and Lieder repertoire by European white male genius composers, such as Schubert, Mozart, Verdi, and Wagner. Historically, the old guard are also the same members currently on the boards of opera houses who are often the most resistant to change, including DEI initiatives of Black, Indigenous, Latina/Latino and Asian representation, the inclusion of more modern opera, and even the modernized staging of old operas. Emmons and Sonntag describe how "rigid preservation of familiar repertoire by local concert organizations (instigated and promoted by big concert bureaus) has contributed...it was [the artist's managers] who approved the content of each program, often overriding the vociferous protests of singers, who were anxious to program music written before Bach and after Stravinsky."²⁴ These concert programs were restricted to only a relatively small handful of these European guest artists, "who often were not good recitalists, contributing their share to the weakening of the song recital. Americans are easily persuaded by hyperbolic publicity to regard only European superstars as worth hearing. Moderately successful American artists have a hard time surviving."²⁵

From a recital programming and musical curating standpoint, this problematic idea of *the very best works* assures the European white colonial hegemony of this musical style, which drives out other genres, styles, influences, and composers' cultures from across the world, marginalizing and infantilizing them. In Edward Said's article about why modern

²⁴ Emmons and Sonntag, p. 4

²⁵ Ibid, p. 4

artists should listen to the programming ideas of Pierre Boulez, he laments the unfortunate position of the US Western Classical music industry:

Give them what they want, say the impresarios and managers of, for instance, the Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic; if what ‘they’ want is an unending repetition of late-eighteenth-to late-nineteenth-century classics, ‘they’ shall get them, especially if ticket sales keep up. A glance at recent repertory performed at the Met or Carnegie...reveals an extraordinarily conservative policy of Austro-Germanic symphonies and sonatas and Italian operas, with a tiny hypo-critical sprinkling of one of Elliot Carter and a few Shostakovich or Messiaen works thrown in.²⁶

The old guard and the musicologists and theorists of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did a fantastic job of convincing American culture that works by the “very best” European masters are the greatest reason to buy pricey tickets to the concert hall. However, greater diversity of repertoire is only one piece to solving the puzzle of breathing modern life into Classical music.

If we want to see and hear more diversity and inclusion on performance stages, as most fields and institutions purport to desire post-2020, it's important to also consider visual diversity in the bodies of singers. Racism and fatphobia particularly have been long-standing sources of discrimination in the Western Classical music tradition, specifically in the casting of opera productions. In her book *Fearing the Black Body: The Racial Origins of Fat Phobia*, Sabrina Strings argues:

Two historical developments contributed to a fetish for svelteness and a phobia about fatness: the rise of the transatlantic slave trade and the spread of Protestantism. Racial scientific rhetoric about slavery linked fatness to ‘greedy’ Africans. And religious

²⁶ Said, Edward W. *Why Listen to Boulez?* p. 206

discourse suggested that overeating was ungodly...not until the early nineteenth century in the United States, in the context of slavery, religious revivals, and the massive immigration of persons deemed 'part-Africanoid', did these notions come together...fatness became stigmatized as both Black and sinful. And by the early twentieth century, slenderness was increasingly promoted in the popular media as the correct embodiment for white Anglo-Saxon Protestant women. Not until after these associations were already in place did the medical establishment begin its concerted effort to combat 'excess' fat tissue as a major public health initiative. In this way, the phobia about fatness and the preference for thinness have not, principally, or historically, been about health. Instead, they have been one way the body has been used to craft and legitimize race, sex, and class hierarchies.²⁷

An unfortunate aspect of film and television usurping the concert stage in the twentieth century also helped to reinforce and solidify cultural norms of racist colonial Eurocentric beauty standards and the patriarchy. I would like to invite those involved in the Opera and Western Classical music industries to not pander to the Eurocentric rhetoric that insists, "thin people are always healthy people." This is a dog whistle for thin, white, cisgender, non-disabled bodies being more worthy of love and respect, when being fat in itself is not always an indicator of bad health, and being thin is not always an indicator of good health either. Everyone in the Opera world and, by extent, the Western Classical music industry, should be asking ourselves the following question: How important is it for us to compete with patriarchal Eurocentric beauty standards if it means communicating to our artists that only certain bodies are worthy of being heard, hired, and loved?

Sonya Renee Taylor asserts:

Dr. Deb Burgard, a renowned eating disorders therapist and pioneer in the Health at Every Size (HAES) movement, co-created a brilliant animated video called "The Danger of Poodle Science" to explain body diversity and the perils of assessing health and wellness based on assumptions about size.²⁸ In it, Dr. Burgard details how absurd it would be if we assessed the health of all dogs by comparing them to the size and health

²⁷ Strings, Sabrina. *Fearing the Black Body : The Racial Origins of Fat Phobia*. New York: New York University Press, 2019, p. 12

²⁸ Burgard, "The Danger of Poodle Science."

of poodles...rather than acknowledging and basing research on the premise that diversity in weight and size are natural occurrences in humans, we treat larger bodies with poodle science and then pathologize those bodies by using the rhetoric of health...another sinister body shame tactic. Given that we can make no accurate assessment of any individual's health based simply on their weight (or photo on social media), it is evident that such behavior is not really about the person's health but more likely about the ways in which we expect other bodies to conform to our standards and beliefs about what a body should or should not look like.²⁹

All members of modern Western societies, regardless of race, gender or sexuality are indoctrinated into Eurocentric beauty standards from infancy, and it is our assignment to learn to love ourselves (and others) and see our intrinsic value outside of the cultural and social missives about who we are supposed to be and how our bodies are supposed to look.³⁰ I question if the prevalence of these beauty standards has led to a homogenization of opera theater and concert halls. They have certainly led to a lack of diversity, which, I would think has led to a narrower audience interest demographic and less visual and cultural variety.

From a financial standpoint, watching commercialized television and listening to commercial recordings at home is much more accessible to most of the working class than many Western Classical concert halls that charge ticket prices upwards of one hundred dollars. However, now in the twenty-first century, even watching and listening from home costs the public money with the never-ending barrage of competing streaming services. (A notable exception, of course, is commercialized television and YouTube with advertisements.) Emmons and Sonntag warned of the threat of media accessibility to the live concert experience in the 1970s: "Unless one has tasted the excitement of live performance with all of its attendant risks, what compelling reasons can be found for leaving the cozy hi-

²⁹ Taylor, Sonya Renee. *The Body Is Not an Apology, The Power of Radical Self-Love*, pp. 21-22

³⁰ Ibid, p. 35

fi room at home, where no one will challenge the favorite artist's interpretation...After all, how good can it be if it is not on a disc? Such attitudes are surprisingly prevalent today especially among the young, many of whom have never heard a live, unamplified performance of any kind, let alone a song recital.”³¹ Though published in 1979, it is shocking how much this sentiment still holds true today, especially after having lived through the COVID19 pandemic lockdown of 2020 when everyone got accustomed to only staying home with the comfort of their Wi-Fi. There is a certain modern visual and auditory comfort with technology, and I think we can bring some of that up from the couch into the concert hall to make our audiences more comfortable. I am confident that innovative artists can, as Emmons suggests, “put together a better product by improving our programming and our skills...to offer personal expressivity and the stylistic projection of the whole performer,”³² because I think enough people treasure the fragile, vulnerable unpredictability of a live performance that is so real, intimate, and human.

Since the song recital is most frequently seen now as a mode for college singers and instrumentalists to pass their performance requirements, the rigid structure of chronological composition order by time period and style/genre confinements are the standard. “The university is now the only place, economically feasible, in which to restudy and revive the recital form. All means for dramatically extending recital repertoire are available in academe...Professor Lunkley, quoted, adds...’our efforts to support local concert presentations, particularly solo recitals, should never cease. We must accept the responsibility for helping our students see the diverse possibilities of song program planning

³¹ Emmons, Shirlee, and Stanley Sonntag. *The Art of the Song Recital*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1979, p. 5

³² Ibid, p. 6

and encourage them to find repertoire that is challenging, appropriate and stimulating for their audiences.”³³ The following is a sample Junior Recital for Soprano given by Carol Kimball in her book *Art Song: Linking Poetry and Music*:³⁴

Figure 2.– Sample Traditional Academic Junior Recital Program of an Undergraduate Soprano

Art Song: Linking Poetry and Music

JUNIOR RECITAL 4: SOPRANO
 ~ Program ~

I.	
<i>Se voi bramate</i> from <i>Il re Teodoro in Venezia</i>	Giovanni Paisiello (1740–1816)
II.	
<i>Nachtigall, op. 97, no. 1</i>	Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)
<i>An die Nachtigall, op. 98, no. 1</i>	Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
<i>An die Nachtigall, op. 46, no. 4</i>	Johannes Brahms
III.	
<i>Mandoline</i>	Gabriel Fauré (1845–1924)
<i>Les berceaux</i>	Georges Bizet (1838–1875)
<i>Ouvre ton cœur</i>	
IV.	
<i>The Blue Madonna</i>	John Jacob Niles (1892–1980)
<i>Come ready and see me</i>	Richard Hundley (b. 1931)
<i>Where the music comes from</i>	Lee Hoiby (b. 1926)

³³ Ibid, p. 301

It is clear that the standard chronological ordering of the composers (with the exception of a Brahms Lied before one by Schubert) and the general ordering of Italian, German, then French, and last, English, is in place. This program is meant to be appropriate for a beginning singer in their late teens or early twenties, in the first several years of their studies. In fact, this programming is more sophisticated and creative than is often seen on college and university programs because of the unifying nightingale subject that ties Group II together thematically.

I appreciate that the standard recital format has merit to a singer who is still learning musicianship skills, growing into their instrument, finding what lights their soul on fire, and what they desire to communicate with the world. The standard song repertoire of composers like Schubert and Debussy often performed at the university student level takes musical maturity and sophistication to sing, communicate, and collaborate with one's pianist. Any teacher of high school and beginning collegiate students knows that even this sample program might be too advanced for some young singers. Some teenage and early collegiate students are better suited to simpler melodic composers like Haydn, Robert Franz, the Italian Arie Antiche, and John Dowland in which they can ease into more sophisticated repertoire later in the program. In my own experience and seeing that of my colleagues as well, once we graduate from these institutions and move into the advanced or professional level, we still feel beholden to these restrictions when we curate our own programs, because many voice teachers promulgate the idea that "this is just the way it's done, and the way it has to be." Students rarely, if ever, see recital examples that are alternatives to help whet their

³⁴ Kimball, Carol. *Art Song : Linking Poetry and Music*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2013, p. 314

imagination. I believe it is the duty of educators to encourage their students to conceptualize what is possible beyond the academic standard as soon as they are ready. Joyce DiDonato's recent recital *Eden*, which has toured widely, provides a positive counterexample for young singers to the traditional chronological conventions of the recital. It begins with the twentieth century Charles Ives and ends with Gustav Mahler, with Baroque and Classical period repertoire throughout the core of the program.

Figure 3.— Mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato's recital program *Eden*, performed in Santa Barbara in 2023

Partners:

International Teaching Artists Collaborative
Botanical Gardens Conservation International

**With a special appearance by the
Music Academy Sing! Children's Chorus**

The *Sing!* program is open to students in Santa Barbara County 1st through 6th grade. Performance opportunities include concerts and collaborations with the Music Academy family of artists. Sing! rehearsals are offered at Adams, Canalino, El Camino, Franklin, Isla Vista, and Monroe Elementary Schools, selected in partnership with the Santa Barbara County Education Office.

"SEEDS OF HOPE"

Composed by the Children of the Canterbury Choir, Bishop Ramsey CE School, England, with Mike Roberts

Seed paper provided by GRUPO POSTA, containing Chamomile seeds, handmade using cotton fibers that have been discarded during industrial processes. The seeds have been specifically chosen for their ease of germination and for the benefits they offer to bees, butterflies and other insects.

Program

Charles Ives:

"The Unanswered Question"

Rachel Portman:

"The First Morning of the World"

Text: Gene Scheer

Commissioned by Linda Nelson in memory of her beloved Stuart

Gustav Mahler:

Rückert-Lieder: II. "Ich atmet' einen linden Duft!"

Text: Friedrich Rückert

Marco Uccellini:

Sinfonia terza (a cinque stromenti) op.7

Biagio Marini:

Scherzi e canzone Op.5

III. "Con le stelle in Ciel che mai" (Natività di Christo, per canto solo da cantarsi nel chitarrone)

Text: anonymous

Josef Mysliveček:

Aria: "Toglierò le sponde al mare" (Angelo di giustizia)

Libretto: Giovanni Granelli

Oratorio Adamo ed Eva (Part II)

Aaron Copland:

8 Poems of Emily Dickinson

for voice and chamber orchestra

I. Nature, the gentlest mother

Giovanni Valentini: Sonata enharmonica

Francesco Cavalli:

Aria: "Piante ombrose" (Calisto)

Libretto: Giovanni Faustini

Opera La Calisto (Act I, Scene 14)

Christoph Willibald Gluck:

Danza degli spettri e delle furie: Allegro non troppo

Opera Orfeo ed Euridice Wq. 30

Opera Ezio Wq. 15

Libretto: Pietro Metastasio

Christoph Willibald Gluck:

Recitativo accompagnato: "Misera, dove son!"

Christoph Willibald Gluck:

Aria: "Ah! non son io che parlo" (Fulvia)

George Frideric Handel:

Aria: "As with rosy steps the morn" (Irene)

Dramatic oratorio Theodora HWV 68 (Part I)

Gustav Mahler:

Rückert-Lieder

III. "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen"

Text: Friedrich Rückert

C. Transcending Time: Beyond Programming Standards and Fach

As for the title of this dissertation, “*Unfachable*,” this word is a play on the German Fach system, which is a system used mostly in European opera houses to categorize and classify opera singer’s voices according to weight, vocal color, range, character type, and comfortable tessitura. Examples of Fächer include subcategories of the four basic voice types: soprano, mezzo, tenor, and bass. A singer’s voice can fall into any of the following: dramatic tenor, *tenore leggero* (light lyric tenor), lyric soprano, *coloratura soprano*, contralto, light lyric baritone, etc. This system has merit in protecting a singer’s voice by preventing them from singing roles in large halls with orchestrations that are too big or inappropriate for the size of their voice. For example, it is a tragedy if a light lyric soprano is cast in a spinto (heavy) Verdi soprano role and harms their voice by having to push to project over a huge orchestra her instrument can’t handle. Even though she can sing this same role beautifully with a piano (or with a reduced orchestra in a small opera house), it becomes an entirely different matter with an orchestra, and the space of the house or hall is another factor.

The system was developed for ease of casting in repertory companies and in European Fest contracts, in which a singer is contracted for an entire season or series of productions. If a company will be producing Mozart’s *Die Zauberflöte* and Donizetti’s *L’Elisir d’Amore* in the same season, they will be looking to cast a different Fach of tenor (*tenore leggero*) than if they were casting Leoncavallo’s *Pagliacci* and Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* (a heldentenor or spinto tenor). In ways, this system protects singers by assuring that their voices will be appropriately cast in large theaters with orchestras. However, it can constrain possibilities as well. Modern American soprano Julia Bullock, for example, feels that this

system can be limiting and even dehumanizing when extrapolated outside the confines of the main stage of the opera house or symphony and their large orchestras.

I had the pleasure of interviewing Julia Bullock on February 14th, 2023, over Zoom. On her official website, the 21C Media Group describes her as:

An American classical singer who...is an innovative curator in high demand from a diverse group of arts presenters, museums and schools... her notable positions have included collaborative partner of Esa-Pekka Salonen at the San Francisco Symphony, 2020–22 Artist-in-Residence of London’s Guildhall School, 2019-20 Artist-in-Residence of the San Francisco Symphony, and 2018-19 Artist-in-Residence at New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art. Bullock is also a prominent voice of social consciousness and activism. As *Vanity Fair* notes, she is ‘young, highly successful, [and] politically engaged,’ with the ‘ability to inject each note she sings with a sense of grace and urgency, lending her performances the feel of being both of the moment and incredibly timeless.’ Honored as a 2021 Artist of the Year and ‘agent of change’ by *Musical America*, Bullock gave a Tiny Desk Home Concert in NPR Music’s special quarantine edition of the series in December 2020; NPR’s Tom Huizenga characterized it as ‘among the most transcendent musical moments I’ve experienced this year.’ She has held several important positions as a curator, including opera-programming host of the broadcast channel *All Arts*, and founding core member of the American Modern Opera Company (AMOC).³⁵

In our interview, we discussed the topic of the Fach system:

Me: What do you think about the Fach system? How has it served your career and artistry, and/or how hasn’t it served your career and artistry?

Bullock: Some opera houses are more adventurous than others, and some seek long-term relationships with their artists, whereas others are just seeking to fit you into a slot or shove you into a show that already exists. Almost every single opera project I’ve done has been a new production, so not just running into a three-day rehearsal

³⁵ Bullock, Julia. 21 C Media Group. “About”.

process and running onstage. That's not satisfying. I did some of that in musical theater when I was younger, but I haven't worked that way in Classical repertoire.

Me: It sounds like you prefer the process of being a part of creating something new (whether it's a world premiere or a new work), as opposed to fitting into boxes that already exist?

Bullock: Absolutely because it can be sort of dehumanizing. Even the metaphor of "fitting into a box": it's like an inanimate object trying to be squeezed into a space.

Me: Honestly that's how I feel about the entire Fach system in general!

Bullock: I agree, and it's fascinating too because most of the conductors I speak to or interviews I read go on and on about "we're missing the big stage personalities! We build projects around those people, and Julia it's so nice that you are one of those personalities!" My response to that is, "I think there are a lot of people who have tremendous gifts and skills but have been somehow coerced or forced into a system that doesn't give them any space to even express what they may not like about an existing production! Also, people just need to make money. I don't pretend like the circumstances of my career and musical life haven't been very lucky, and part of that is knowing where to lead myself which comes down to an intuitive sense that I always had when it comes to this aspect of my life. Not everyone can enter into their core desires that well and I'm not sure where that came from (I have some ideas), but it wasn't from a very happy place. It came from needing to create safe, happy experiences for myself because I wasn't getting them elsewhere. Thankfully, it has been in line with my passion. It's so sad to me, and it's really obvious when you go

to some performances and you see people who are clearly not able to bring their full selves into a piece, and honestly it's because it was never fully invited in the first place.

In their article “Ungendered Voice Types for a New Century”, trans nonbinary writer and equity specialist Aiden Feltkamp suggests the possibility of categorizing voices and roles based on range (1-12, going from the lowest notes in the bass clef to the highest in the treble clef), lyric ability vs. flexibility, dramatic vs light, and timbre descriptors such as warm, steely, bright, etc.³⁶ For example, the role of Queen of the Night (Mozart) would be flexible dramatic 12, and Don Giovanni (Mozart) is a lyric 4.

Figure 4.– Diagram of Ranges 1-12 of Feltkamp’s suggestion of an ungendered range-classifying system



³⁶ Feltkamp, Aiden. “Ungendered Voice Types for a New Century.” NewMusicUSA. February 5, 2019. <https://newmusicusa.org/nmbx/ungendered-voice-types-for-a-new-century/>

Each singer needs to categorize themselves, but Lawrence Brownlee could be considered a warm, flexible, light 5-6, and Stephanie Blythe as warm lyric dramatic 8-10. Furthermore, if a singer's voice (like Stephanie Blythe's) has changed its range category to include a much lower extension and it now fits a role traditionally performed as a different gender (like the traditionally male Gianni Schicchi), then she can be considered for casting of this role (she already performed it at San Diego Opera in February of 2023). This system is potentially freer of the gendered assumptions of traditional voice types that adhere to the male/female gender binary, which not all humans and bodies fit neatly into. Feltkamp acknowledges that this system might also be prone to prejudice and unconscious bias (which we all carry), but they rather put this forth as a thought experiment.³⁷

Moving forward, we can all do better in examining and identifying our own implicit, or unconscious biases, which we all carry. If we can do this as we make casting choices, we can uncover within ourselves the reasons why we assume certain roles have to be played by certain bodies or voices and by extension open our minds to other possibilities. In the section of their article entitled "Think outside the Box", Feltkamp writes: "Have you ever seen a goth Barbarina? How about a bisexual Tamino? If you can think outside the box about these characters, you can also think outside the box about the artists who play them.

We don't need cookie-cutter opera singers – we need artists. But they'll only thrive and perform if they're hired to do so. Don't settle. Instead, imagine."³⁸

Many concerts now take place in smaller halls or unconventional spaces, like libraries and parking garages. The limiting feeling of "fitting into boxes" is something modern singers can move away from when we focus on curating our own programs and creating our own physical spaces for performance. In rooms, theaters, and halls we can control aspects of

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ Ibid

the room to create acoustic effects (whether this be with amplification and electronics or without) and embracing the agency to unapologetically program song and concert repertoire where Fach doesn't matter because the orchestra factor has been removed. The assumption that certain Fachs only sing certain repertoire or composers, or only play certain character types, can be discarded in the recital. My colleagues and I have had musical discussions where we openly admit that our musical influences move far beyond the realm of the Western Classical canon of composers we studied at our universities. I compiled a small list of some of my favorite artists that influenced me during my formative years, including those I've heard my colleagues mention: Tori Amos, the Basiani Ensemble, Beyoncé, Stevie Wonder, Ella Fitzgerald, Green Day, Elliot Smith, Pink Floyd, Salvador Dali, Snarky Puppy, Edgar Degas, Jinkx Monsoon, and Meredith Monk. I wonder how much more creative (and by extension, enjoyable for both performers and audiences) concert recitals could potentially be if modern artists were given permission to incorporate some of their above influences, even if they otherwise mostly stick to the prescribed academic traditional recital model of the Old Guard?³⁹

We must keep reminding ourselves that despite what the old guard and older generations of singers tell us, there is no one right way to have a career, and there is no one path to success in singing. Individual singers' concert programs look different because every singer's musical journey and imagination is different.

As early as 1966, mezzo- soprano Cathy Berberian was one of the first artists to begin to

³⁹ Of course, performers are responsible for giving themselves this permission as they grow, but speaking from experience, this is easier to do if we have the artistic support of our teachers, coaches, and educational institutions.

think outside of the box of the heyday of the solo singer's recital, which I will describe in greater detail next in Chapter II. Even in their 1979 book, Emmons and Sonntag already were beginning to think in these innovative terms: "Including dance or poetry on a recital – Renaissance vocal music side-by-side with Renaissance dance, or poetry readings together with poetry set to music and sung – are extremely attractive programming ideas...Innovations with lighting offer other possibilities...Scriabin's 'Prometheus' was scored to include a keyboard of light, throwing colors on a screen...why not [implement] different lights for each group of songs?"⁴⁰ Here is another recital program from Carol Kimball's book, performed by Baritone Brandon Velarde, a professional artist, and world renowned pianist Graham Johnson in 2001 at the summer program Songfest:

⁴⁰ Emmons, Shirlee, and Stanley Sonntag. *The Art of the Song Recital*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1979, pp. 293-295

Figure 5.— Artists Recital performed at Chapman University July 8, 2001, by baritone Brandon Velarde and Graham

Johnson.

Appendix 3: A Selection of Various Recital Programs

BRANDON VELARDE, BARITONE
 GRAHAM JOHNSON, PIANO
Artists Recital: A Journey of French Song
 July 8, 2001
 SongFest, Chapman University
 Orange, California

HISTOIRES D'UNE LIAISON
 A Journey of French Song
 Love stories . . .

I. RENCONTRES
 Meetings . . .

Ou voulez-vous aller (Gautier)	Gounod
Le charme (Silvestre)	Chausson
Quand je fus pris au pavillon (d'Orleans)	Hahn
Le manoir de Rosemonde (Bonnières)	Duparc
Le roi s'en va-t-en chasse (Anon.)	arr. Britten

II. ENAMOURÉS
 In love . . .

Chanson d'amour (Silvestre)	Fauré
Offrande (Verlaine)	Hahn
Si tu le veux (Marsan)	Koechlin
Je tremble en voyant ton visage (Tristan l'Hermite)	Debussy
La maîtresse volage (Anon.)	Poulenc
Cœur en péril (Chalupt)	Roussel
Epipalnodie (Ronsard)	Leguérney

~ Interval ~

III. MARIAGES ET LUNES DE MIELS
 Marriages and honeymoons . . .

Le reveil de la mariée (Calvocoressi)	Ravel
Extase (Lahor)	Duparc
Le paon (Renard)	Ravel
L'île heureuse (Mikhael)	Chabrier
Phidylé (Leconte de Lisle)	Duparc

IV. LA CROISÉE DES CHEMINS...ET RÉCUPÉRATION
 Parting of the ways...and recovery

Infidélité (Gautier)	Hahn
L'impossible pardon (Debussy)	Debussy
Soupir (Prudhomme)	Duparc
Chansons pour Jeanne (Mendes)	Chabrier
Adieu from <i>Poème d'un jour</i> (Grandmougin)	Fauré
Colloque sentimental (Verlaine)	Debussy
La belle jeunesse (Anon.)	Poulenc

According to Kimball, “this was a program in one language [French], but the variety of composers created both balance and contrast. Any of the groups could stand alone on other programs but using a simple ‘love stories’ theme links the songs together by a slender thread that allows each part of the story to have vitality and contrast: boy meets girl, they fall in love, they marry, they separate, but live to love another day.”⁴¹ Kimball calls this a Storyline Recital, and I would think this concept could be extrapolated with some creative thought to more recitals to add intrigue for the audience. The issue of chronological order is somewhat irrelevant here because of the similarity of time period in all these French composers. Other innovative options she gives for Doctoral and professional artist level recitals include thematic recitals, recitals that contrast two song cycles, a musical theater program in recital format, and multi-media recitals that present a painting visually with a group of songs.

If artists consider my own concept that I am calling The Museum Exhibition Tradition, and how we can challenge it in our programming, this can be an effective way to transcend time in recital programs. When displaying visual art, museums tend to group pieces by style or chronological order, but I contend that they could, and occasionally do, mix style periods if they wove the pieces together using a narrative or theme. In recital performance, a variety of time periods, languages, and styles woven together by a narrative can be just as effective as separate sets, or collections, organized chronologically.

Below is an image of a programmed concert recital given at the Ojai Music Festival in 2022, taken from their website.

⁴¹ Kimball, Carol. *Art Song : Linking Poetry and Music*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2013, pp. 342-343

Figure 6.– In June 2022, this program was presented at the Ojai Music Festival

Featuring AMOC, Ruckus, and Friends

Program to include:

Act I: Ruckus & AMOC

Celeste ORAM *A Tuning Tune* World Premiere

Girolamo FRESCOBALDI *Canzona Terza a due Bassi*

Sigismondo D'INDIA *Infelice Didone*

ORAM *Attuning Tune* World Premiere

VIVALDI *Sonata VI in B-flat for Cello, RV46, Op. 14: Preludio*

VIVALDI *Qual per ignoto calle*

Philip GLASS *Liquid Days*

GLASS *The Encounter*

Act II: AMOC

John CAGE *She is Asleep*

Nina SIMONE *Revolution*

SIMONE *Four Women*

SCHUBERT *Ständchen*

Julius EASTMAN *Stay on It*

This summer festival in Southern California uses the following formula: “Each year a music director is given the freedom and resources to imagine four days of musical brainstorming. Some have approached their task with caution, fearing that Ojai might be like other places. But, of course, it’s not. More often this unique blend of enchanted setting and an audience voracious in its appetite for challenge and discovery has inspired a distinguished series of conductors, performers, composers to push at boundaries and stretch limits.”⁴² The

⁴² AMOC. “About Us” . Ojai Music Festival

Music Director for the year 2022 was AMOC (American Modern Opera Company) led by Matthew Aucoin and Zack Winokur. Previous year's Music Directors have included John Adams, Barbara Hannigan, and Peter Sellars, all revolutionaries in the contemporary and modern Western Classical musical world. It is my belief that the special success of this festival doesn't have to be so unique, and that more festivals, organizations, and individuals could achieve these special results if their programming looked more like that of the program above, even without famous names.

With regards to the case of chronological programming and staying within the confines of the Museum Exhibition Tradition, it's clear that AMOC didn't follow these traditions at all: Girolamo Frescobaldi of the early Baroque period followed the Celeste Oram world premiere, which started the entire program. After some Vivaldi pieces they programmed Philip Glass before the intermission. John Cage opens the second half, followed by Nina Simone and then Schubert, which are all considerable leaps of period, style, and genre.

The AMOC seems to be following in the footsteps of Pierre Boulez (1925-2016) whose ideas of programming concerts thematically innovated the contemporary and modern music scenes for the better. In the following sample programs shared by Edward Said in his 1995 periodical in *The Nation* *Why Listen to Boulez?*, we see "each program had a rationale that held the various items together in such a way as to illuminate the compositions and elaborate a context. Boulez's concentration on our century's music gives the lie to the notion that 'modern' music is so difficult and rebarbative as to defy either comprehension or pleasure. Boulez's idea is to present the music as constituting a single cultural and aesthetic enterprise, with a number of different phases and styles, many of them still in evolution.

This is very far from what most performers trot out before audiences who...might just as well be gazing idly at one shop window after another on Madison Avenue.”⁴³

Program One comprised memorial and retrospective compositions: Ravel’s *Tombeau de Couperin*, a twentieth century ironic celebration of the eighteenth-century master—gallant, decorative, ceremonial. Boulez’s *Pli selon pli, Improvisation III*, was a stunning contrast in scale and power, based on one of the most difficult of Mallarmé’s sonnets, ‘A la nue accablante’, whose suggestion of apocalyptic devastation and sepulchral compression is met with a vast, unsettling score set for soprano...and orchestra. Webern’s *Six Pieces*, which record the death of the composer’s mother, and Berg’s *Violin Concerto*, whose occasion is...subtitled “to the memory of an angel”, concluded the program.

Program Two presented *Le Sacre du printemps*, Messiaen’s *Poèmes pour Mi* (sung by Maria Ewing, a dedicated performer of compelling honesty and high interpretive competence) and Boulez’s *Livre pour Cordes*, all of them early works of technical exploration and unique expressive force, the former competing with but not entirely mastering the latter. Program two shown a light on how twentieth-century modernists derived music from what Mann in *Dr. Faustus* called ‘speculating the elements’, elements musical and emotional: Messiaen’s particularly static, particularly ecstatic love poetry intended for his first wife is informed by the sacrament of Christian marriage, against which Stravinsky’s *Sacre*, with its Pagan ritual, is counterpointed.⁴⁴

Here are two distinctly different programs, both by the composer/conductor Boulez that showcase the ability to transcend time and genre by consciously programming thematic contrasts, whether they be related to time period, space, emotion, culture, or belief system. Even though most of these works are instrumental, both solo singers and chorale ensembles would do well to pay attention to these contrasted pairings. Even modern, current arts organizations like the Los Angeles Master Chorale are consciously pairing older works of the traditional Western Classical canon, like the Fauré Requiem with a world premiere by

⁴³ Said, Edward W. “Why Listen to Boulez? p. 209-210

⁴⁴ Ibid, pp. 208-209

Reena Esmail, a living Indian-American woman composer who “works between the worlds of Indian and Western classical music.”⁴⁵ Said continues later with:

Boulez’s enterprise is to restore the experience of music to the realm of intelligent critical reception by placing his own music as well as that of his contemporaries in an expanded context...[works like *Pli selon pli*] gain in power and intelligibility when experienced in the presence of other twentieth-century works that are reactions...to other attempts to render terror, sorrow, and awe. And performances such as Boulez’s force open the self-satisfied little boxes in which lazy audiences and unenterprising concert organizers have placed classical music...For Boulez, music can be a form of resistance to the crassness and superficiality of mass culture...on the other, Boulez is a composer interested in the past as something requiring constant revision, and in constructing the cultural present.⁴⁶

Cathy Berberian, who I will discuss at length in Chapter II, had a similar idea about programming avant-garde works and her own compositions with her ex-husband and frequent collaborator, Luciano Berio, in-between and next to works that were more familiar and easier for an audience to swallow, so that the modern piece would not feel so unfamiliar. Boulez and Berberian also seem to share similar sentiments about fluidly connecting the past and the present (the ancient and the modern) fluidly, which we will see in Berberian’s manifesto *The New Vocality*.

⁴⁵ Esmail, “Bio.”

⁴⁶ Said, Edward W. “Why Listen to Boulez?”, p. 210

II. *The New Vocality* and Cathy Berberian

Cathy Berberian (1925-1983) was an American-Armenian mezzo soprano, trained in both Western Classical singing and dance. She moved to Milan to train and study voice there, and while searching for a pianist with whom to make a recording, she found Luciano Berio (1925-2003). They instantly formed a partnership based on a connection of intensity, drive, ambition, and love of contemporary music. Never a woman to follow traditions without questioning them, she had her own unique ideas for recital programming innovation that compliment Boulez's: "Cathy Berberian says that she always takes care to program an easy-to-take group on either side of a new or particularly difficult work—thus insuring a just hearing for the composition by avoiding the tensions and defense mechanisms that could accumulate in an audience if preceding works were also difficult."⁴⁷

Figure 7. Cathy Berberian, photographed during rehearsals for a BBC Symphony Concert Broadcast on Radio 3. Reproduced with permission by the British Broadcasting Corporation.



⁴⁷ Emmons, Shirlee, and Stanley Sonntag. *The Art of the Song Recital* p. 296

A. Her 1966 Manifesto, *The New Vocality*

*La nuova vocalità nell'opera contemporanea (1966)*⁴⁸ was originally written in Italian but was translated into English by author, researcher, and singer of Classical and Contemporary music, Francesca Placanica.⁴⁹ It was the first twentieth century performance manifesto, and it is not simply a discussion on extended techniques.⁵⁰ *The New Vocality* lends itself easily to mixing styles and genres in the same program, because it was Berberian's philosophy that the best way to expose audiences to avant-garde works was to intersperse or pair it with more accessible repertoire. If the unheard, avant-garde pieces have a certain amount of impressive vocal virtuosity, they will pique audience's interest, which is important because oftentimes experimental and unheard compositions run the risk of being hermetic and isolating to the general public. In *The New Vocality*, she explains how composers were performers and performers were composers before publishing companies existed, and before the written word became more legitimate than oral tradition in the Western world.⁵¹ Both she and Berio agreed it's a shame that the Western Classical vocal tradition and the members of its 'Old Guard' regard the human voice as something to be put away in a metaphorical instrument case after it's finished being used in the concert hall. In reality, we use the voice all day every day, talking, arguing, crying, laughing, and shouting.

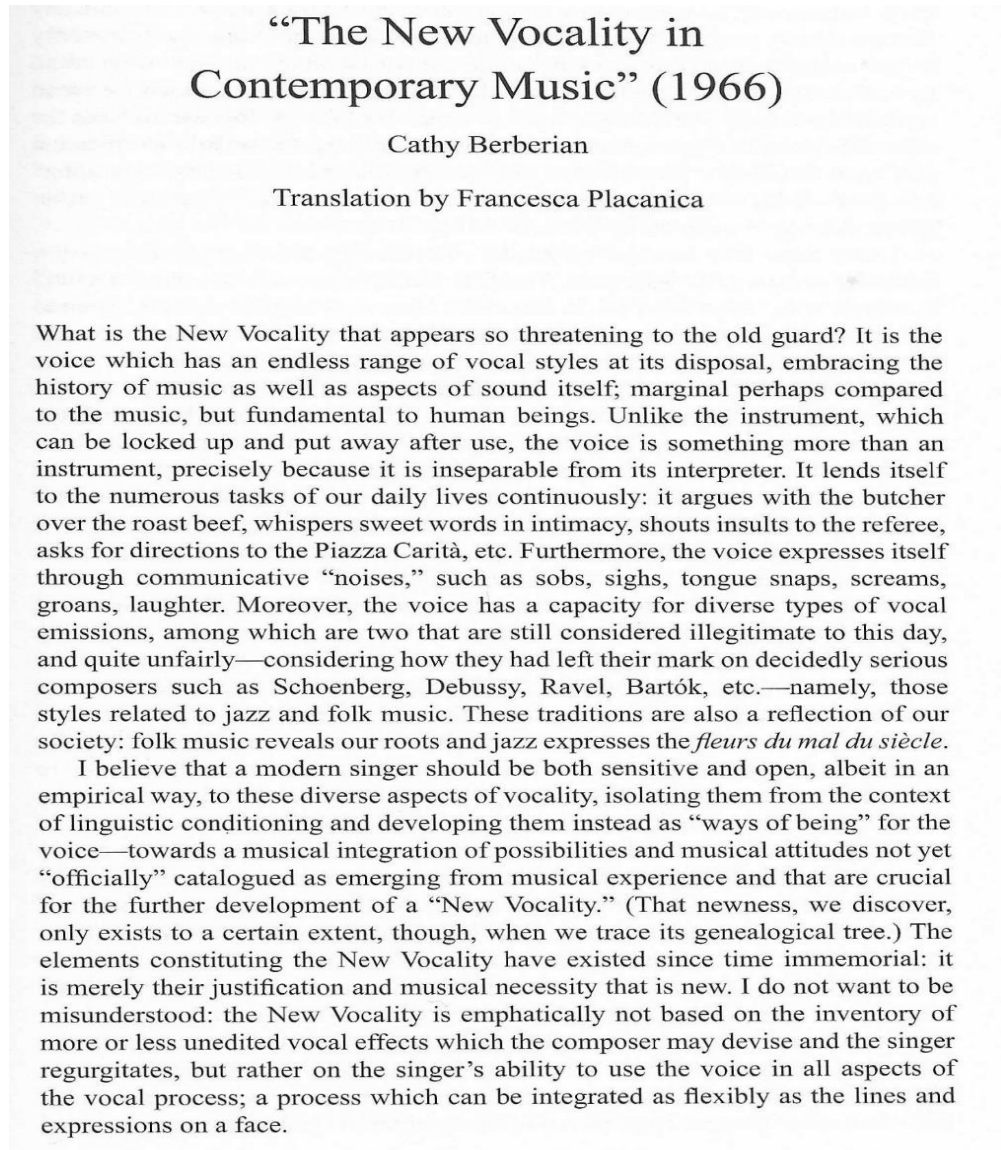
⁴⁸ "Opera" in this context refers to the Italian meaning of a work of art—specifically a work of music (in Contemporary Music)

⁴⁹ Karantonis, Pamela, Francesca Placanica, Anne Sivuoja-Kauppara, and Pieter Maria Gabriël Verstraete. *Cathy Berberian : Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*. pp. 47-49.

⁵⁰ "Extended techniques" generally is the term for unconventional or non-traditional methods of playing or singing music, most often (but not exclusively) used in contemporary and modern avant-garde or experimental music.

⁵¹ Karantonis, Pamela, Francesca Placanica, Anne Sivuoja-Kauppara, and Pieter Maria Gabriël Verstraete. *Cathy Berberian : Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*. pp. 47-49.

Figure 8. Page 1 of Cathy Berberian's *The New Vocality* translated into English by Francesca Placanica in Chapter 1, Part I of the book *Cathy Berberian: Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*



The “New” Vocality isn’t actually advocating for any new use of the voice. It should go without saying that any use of the voice that hurts or fatigues the singer should be removed from the singer’s performance toolkit for the safety, longevity, and necessary maintenance of personal boundaries of their instrument. Berberian’s manifesto advocates for

an understanding of the past, while living in the present and looking toward the future. She uses Monteverdi and the *Seconda prattica* and *Recitar cantando* as an example: in the ancient eras of song, performance practice dictated what could be improvised in performance, and these composed improvisations of ornaments and new melodies became the composition. *The New Vocality* is advocating the application of these same methods of the spirit of improvisation to modern, new, and avant-garde music, and it also advocates for integrating visual art, mime, and dance into performances. In Francesca Placanica's interpretation of *The New Vocality*, she writes, "Berberian regarded performance as an extraordinarily intense and creative act, and invited modern singers to train toward a fully artistic experience on stage, incorporating dance, theater, and the visual arts in their performances...her beliefs, presented in her essay, indicate a claim to philosophical dimensions inasmuch as the voice is a way of being in the world, as well at the center of a work that combines all elements of the arts."⁵²

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with the growth of publishing companies, a division grew between the performer and the composer. Composers like Verdi no longer wanted performers to improvise or create their own ornaments in arias; only to stick with what was written on the page. To compose was masculine and commanded authority, while to perform was feminine, or 'less than'. This is just one example of how assigning male or female gender binary meaning to skills or traits limits artists. Luciano Berio was always given the title of composer and creator, even though Cathy Berberian's voice and dramatic choices were an integral part of the creation of pieces like *Sequenza III (1966)* and Cage's *Aria (1958)*. Recent feminist scholarship has tried to credit Cathy Berberian equally with the

⁵² Ibid p. 61

composition of these works, at the very least as a co-composer and co-creator. The New Vocality advocates for a break from the tradition of the operatic old guard, to reimagine sound, the voice, and its toolbox of capabilities in different spaces than the opera house or the for-profit concert hall.

Beyond the use of the voice, Berberian also mentions the solo vocal recital specifically. She reminds us that the solo vocal recital especially is an even newer tradition than the virtuoso instrumental recital, and began including famous opera stars like Enrico Caruso, to give them a vehicle (often called “traditional soirées”) to sing some arias and songs while including one symphonic movement and various flashy spectacles like the famous dancing horses of Vienna.⁵³ When this tradition became an obsolete fossil, it morphed into the solo vocal recital of the days of Lotte Lehmann (1888-1976) and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (1925-2012).

Berberian’s diagnosis of the situation is echoed by more recent writers, including Emmons and Sonntag, who make similar observations about the diminishing relevance of the solo recital today:

For a brief period in America the recital flourished in the persons of such greats as Lehmann, Tourel, and Frijsch. For the past several decades the solo recital, instrumental as well as vocal, has been in decline...entire seasons may pass with no more than one or two exciting recitals...the ingredients and techniques of the song recital are poorly understood by the general public. Too frequently, recitals are musically skilled and sophisticated, but dramatically haphazard and amateurish. Lacking entertainment value, such recitals do not compare successfully with other twentieth century forces and trends. Either the song recital must carve out a contemporary niche for itself, or it runs the risk of either disappearing from the professional concert stage, or at best mutating into total elitism practiced only by European specialists. It should no longer be viewed as a ‘snob’ occasion or a ‘status’

⁵³ Ibid p. 48

evening but, in the words of the English novelist Henry Green, as ‘a long intimacy between strangers’.⁵⁴

Today, even this type of traditional recital has become somewhat obsolete outside of universities and conservatories for the repertoire of the modern singer and the attention span of modern audiences, so it will need to keep evolving. I like to think it has already begun but can still be taken much further. Cathy Berberian discussed exactly this in her 1966 Manifesto *The New Vocality*, including ideas of how to remedy it. I suspect that because the original manifesto (*La nuova vocalità*) was written in Italian and because Cathy Berberian wasn't widely known outside contemporary twentieth century music circles, *The New Vocality* never received much traction in Western Classical Music, and now she is all but forgotten or unstudied in most vocal programs.

B. The Legacy of Cathy Berberian in Modern Music

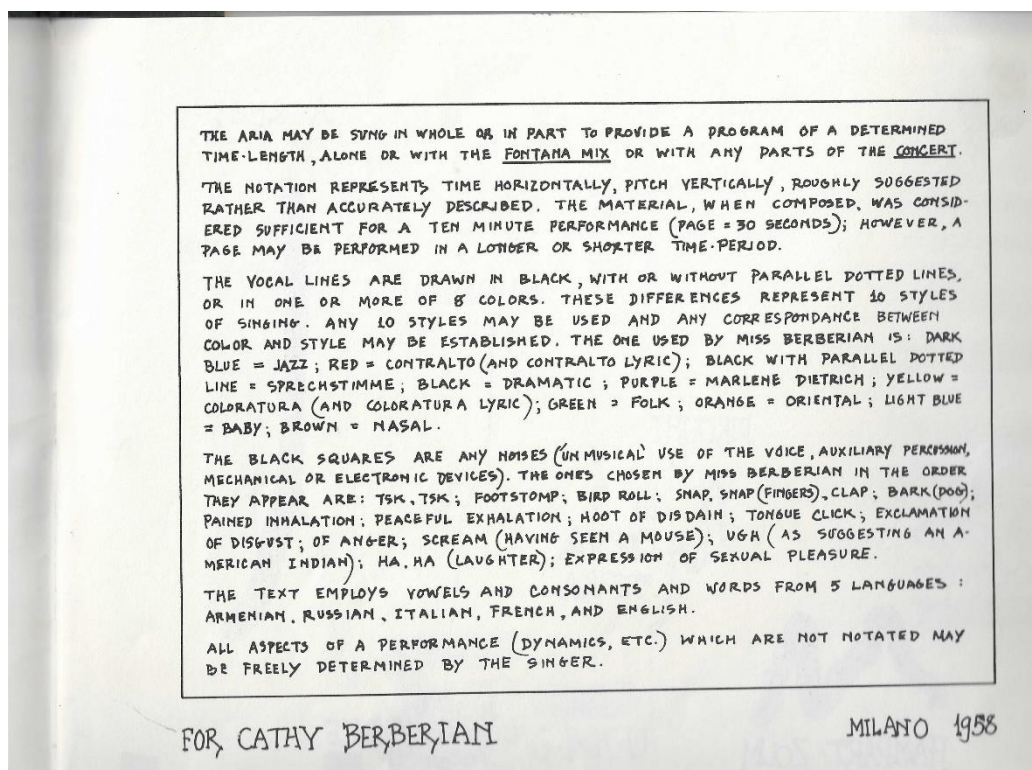
Luciano Berio and Italian composer, Bruno Maderna (1920-1973), built a recording studio, the Studio di Fonologia, in Milan at the Radio Audizioni Italiane (RAI). In her early years of motherhood, before Berio forced her to “choose between music and babies,” she was able to “do little things for the radio.”⁵⁵ At the studio, they built nine oscillators that gave them the ability to record different sound samples at once. Cathy was a brilliant vocal mimic of sampled audio and synthesized sounds, and she became well known in her circles for the ability to vocally transition rapidly between various sounds, phonemes, or samples.

⁵⁴ Emmons, Shirlee, and Stanley Sonntag. *The Art of the Song Recital* p. 3

⁵⁵ Osmond-Smith, David. “The Tenth Oscillator: The Work of Cathy Berberian 1958-1966 from Tempo Number 58.” In *Cathy Berberian : Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*. p. 21

This earned her the nickname “the tenth oscillator.”⁵⁶ This also fed into her uncanny ability to transition rapidly from one vocal style, voice, or genre to another. She struck up a nice friendship with John Cage (1912-1992), whom she met at the Darmstadt Festival in Germany (a world-renowned summer contemporary music festival). Berberian does credit her good friend and collaborator, John Cage, in *The New Vocality*. Her tenth-oscillator abilities became a private joke between them, which he turned into his piece written for her, *Aria*, where the singer has to choose between ten vocal styles. In Cage’s Forward of the score, written in Milan in 1958 (noted ‘For Cathy Berberian’), he writes:

Figure 9. The forward of John Cage’s *Aria*, written in 1958

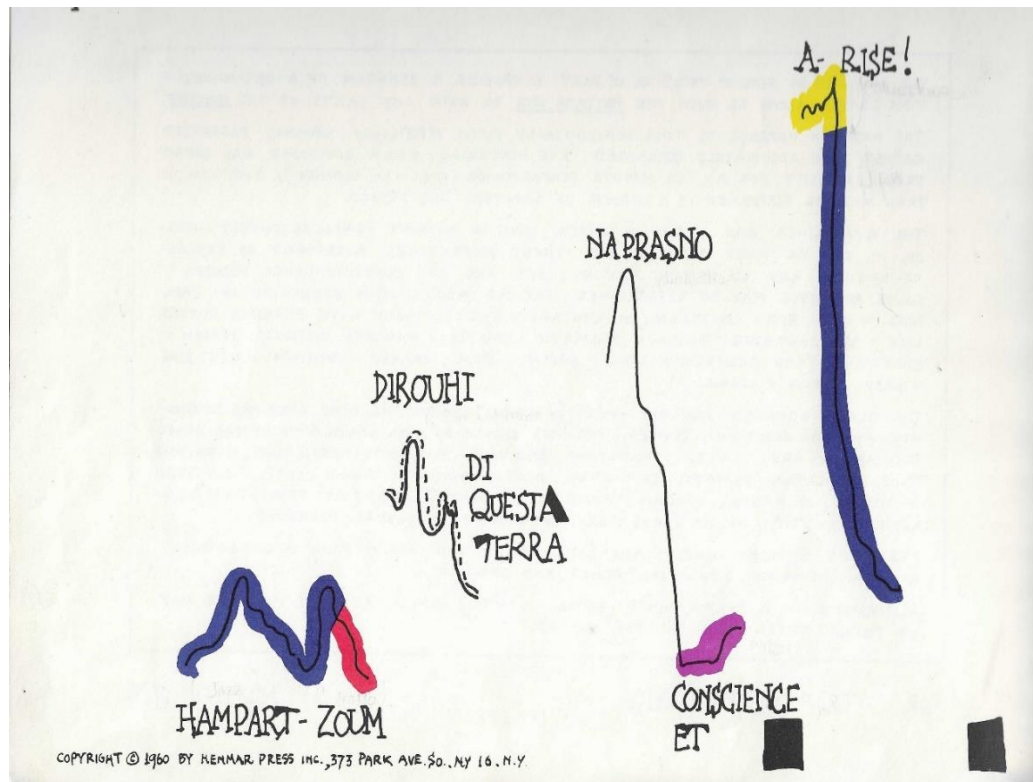


⁵⁶ Ibid p. 21

Graphic scores like Cage's *Aria* allow for maximum creative agency when it gives singers the literal choice of "style of singing" ten times over to accompany its corresponding color. I would like to challenge conservatories and universities to present all of their voice majors with this score, or one similar to it, before they graduate—if only as a creative vocal exercise. My guess is that most singers trained in Western Classical institutions would not know how to respond to the open invitation of this sudden license to their personal creativity. This is a creative muscle singers should learn to exercise, particularly how to exercise it within the essential bodily knowledge of their own physical limitations and boundaries.

The pages look like a rollercoaster of colors and words in Armenian, Russian, Italian, French, and English:

Figure 10. *Aria* score page 1



Since this piece was written for Berberian, these are the five languages in which she felt most comfortable. Whether the words and lines are high or low are meant to suggest a comfortable top, middle, or bottom of the individual singer's range. This gives even more credence to the idea that no two performances from different voices would sound the same. At the very least, this piece can teach students their stylistic preferences and comfort levels they default to, which can in turn be a potential opportunity for growth. There is an entire untapped body of works for unaccompanied voice that can be found in the Programming Resources list in the Appendix.

Four of Berberian's qualities stand out amongst those who she influenced (namely, Pamela Z, Meredith Monk, and Joan La Barbara): her vocal virtuosity, her talent for improvisation, her sense of humor and wit, and her ability to switch seamlessly between styles/genres.⁵⁷ If it weren't for these aspects of her musicianship and personality, pieces like *Aria*, *Stripsody*, and *Sequenza III* would not have come into existence. Her performance of *Aria* and her own piece, *Stripsody* helped her reach international fame, but her husband, Luciano Berio was never quite comfortable following her down this path of her mature vocal idiom.⁵⁸ Eventually they clashed in their marriage, had their differences, and ironically he moved to Massachusetts (where Cathy was born) to be with his new wife and teach at Tanglewood, and Berberian stayed in Italy.

⁵⁷ Karantonis, Pamela, Francesca Placanica, Anne Sivuoja-Kaupala, and Pieter Maria Gabriël Verstraete. *Cathy Berberian : Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*. pp. 185-203.

⁵⁸ Osmond-Smith, David. "The Tenth Oscillator: The Work of Cathy Berberian 1958-1966 from Tempo Number 58." In *Cathy Berberian : Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*. p. 31

One point on which both Berio and Berberian agreed was in regard to the power of the onset of sounds and individual phonemes, which are a large part of the inspiration for *Sequenza III*. After their divorce, Berio was commissioned to write *Sequenza III* for Berberian for the Bremen festival. There is a certain unpredictable, new, and fresh quality to the attack of a sound that has just begun, and this includes the sound of laughter. Berio told a story about how he remembered living next door to a clown when he was a boy. He recalled that he didn't know whether to laugh or to cry when he saw this clown, so he laughed and cried at the same time.⁵⁹ This was one of his inspirations for *Sequenza III*: It begins with the performer walking out onstage while the audience is applauding, immediately muttering to herself. As soon as the applause stops, she starts alternating between fragments of singing and bursts of laughter. It is not tonal, nor are the sung portions notated on a traditional five-line treble clef staff.

⁵⁹ Lyotard, Jean-François, Adam. Krims, and Henry James. Klumpenhouwer. *Music/ideology : Resisting the Aesthetic : Essays*. Amsterdam: G + B Arts International, 1998. p. 27

Figure 11. First page of Berio's *Sequenza III* (1966)

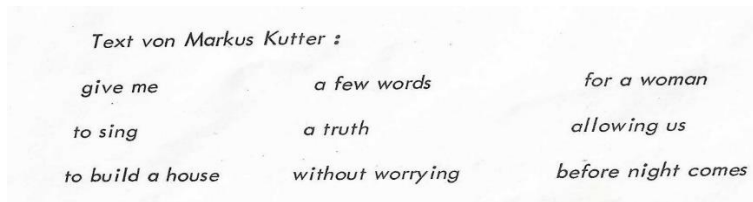
Berio and Berberian once had a recording session in which she laughed so hard and so long that her ribs and sides hurt, and her diaphragm “was bruised for two days”.⁶⁰ There is also an element pointed out by François Lyotard that laughter has historically been a tool for audiences to ridicule the performer if the performance is bad or mediocre. To hear the laughter turned back onto the audience from the singer is jarring and upsets the conventions of the capitalist, traditional for-profit concert hall.⁶¹ The laughter is a new flavor of vocal virtuosity, and the continuous transitions between it— speech, sung fragments, whispers, and body percussion— are all elements of The New Vocality.

⁶⁰ Osmond-Smith, David. “The Tenth Oscillator: The Work of Cathy Berberian 1958-1966 from Tempo Number 58.” In *Cathy Berberian: Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*. p. 26

⁶¹ Lyotard, Jean-François, Adam. Krims, and Henry James. Klumpenhouwer. *Music/ideology: Resisting the Aesthetic: Essays*. Amsterdam: G + B Arts International, 1998. pp. 27-34

The text of *Sequenza III* is by Markus Kutter, a Swiss poet who lived from 1925-2005, is designed to be easily fragmented: “give me a few words for a woman to sing allowing us to build a truth without worrying before night comes.”

Figure 12. Text of Luciano Berio’s score *Sequenza III*







In the score proper there is no punctuation, and the phonemes like “to/co/for/us” are fragmented across the piece. Berio wanted universal words, like ‘woman’ and ‘night’ for the audience to grab onto for structure. The score’s forward includes four detailed instructional guidebook pages for the singer to explain the meaning of the non-traditional symbols in the score. At the bottom of this page, the description explains how laughter is articulated by (L.), while mouth clicks, cough, snapping gently with fingers, hand over mouth, tremolo, and hands down all have their own separate symbols.

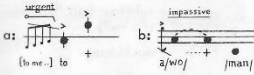
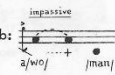


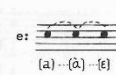
Figure 13. Instructional Guide at the beginning of Berio's *Sequenza III*

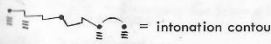
The performer (a singer, an actor or both) appears on stage already muttering as though pursuing an off-stage thought. She stops muttering just before the subsiding of the applause of the public; she resumes after a short silence (at about the 11" of the score). The vocal actions must be timed with reference to the 10" divisions of each page.

- = sung tones
- = whispered, unvoiced sounds } to be held to next sound or to 7, 1
- ♣, Φ = sung and whispered sounds as short as possible

 = different speeds of periodically articulated sounds
 = can be performed as fast as possible
 = as fused and continuous as possible
 etc. = all grace notes as fast as possible

Although the borderline between speaking and singing voice will often be blurred in actual performance, the vocal actions written on one line (a) are "spoken" while those written on three or five lines are "sung". On three lines, only relative register positions are given (b); dotted lines indicate notes of exactly the same pitch (c). On five lines (d) precise intervals are given, but their pitch is not absolute: each sequence of intervals (between "spoken" sections) can be transposed to fit the vocal range of the performer; dotted lines indicate that the change of vocal colors on the same pitch must occur smoothly and without accents (e).

a: 
 b: 
 c: 
 d: 
 e: 

 = intonation contour

The text is written in different ways:

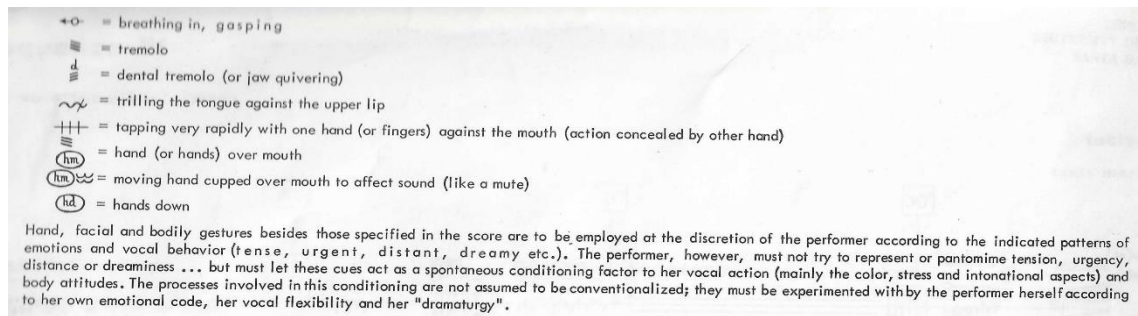
- 1) Sounds or groups of sounds phonetically notated: [a], [ka], [u], [i], [o], [ø], [ait], [be], [e], [E] usw.
- 2) Sounds or groups of sounds as pronounced in context: /gi/ as in give, /wo/ as in woman, /tho/ as in without, /co/ as in comes etc.
- 3) Words conventionally written and uttered: "give me a few words" etc.

Sounds and words lined up in parenthesis as $\left(\begin{smallmatrix} a \\ to \\ me \end{smallmatrix}\right)$ must be repeated quickly in a random and slightly discontinuous way.

Groups of sounds and words in parenthesis as (to me...), (be/la...), (/co//ta/...) etc. must be repeated quickly in a regular way. At 15" of the score, for instance, (to me...) to is equivalent to to me to me to; at 30", ((e) (a)...) (a) is equivalent to (e)(a) (e)(a) (e) (a); at 1' the group (/ta/(a) be...) must be repeated as many times as possible for about 2".

At the end of all the instructions, Berio specifies that “hand, facial and bodily gestures...are to be employed at the discretion of the performer...however, [the performer] must not try to represent or pantomime tension, urgency, distance, or dreaminess...but must let these cues act as a spontaneous conditioning factor to her vocal action and body attitudes...the processes involved in this conditioning are not assumed to be conventionalized; they must be experimented with by the performer herself according to her own emotional code, her vocal flexibility, and her “dramaturgy”:

Figure 14. Permission in writing from Berio for the performer to follow her own creativity within the boundaries of her own voice and body.



Ideally, no two performances of this piece would sound or feel the same to an audience. Similar to John Cage’s *Aria*, each singer would make their own individual choices that suits their voice and body. Graphically notated, non-traditional scores like Berio’s and Cage’s in the mid-twentieth century were a huge step in a new, modern direction to give singers permission to honor their creative agency. In Chapter III, we will see that Kaija Saariaho’s *Lonh* includes a similar instructional guide, especially in regard to the difference between the sung tones vs. the whispered/unvoiced sounds.

C. Bringing The New Vocality into the Twenty-First Century

1. Curating Programs from an Intersectional Lens

I sincerely doubt Cathy Berberian was aware of the concept of intersectionality, especially since the term wasn’t coined until 1989, six years after Cathy Berberian’s death, by race scholar and Black feminist activist Kimberlé Crenshaw. However, even if Berberian wasn’t alive during the inceptions of third-wave feminism, I assert that by curating our recital programs by taking into consideration the intersectional identities of the composers, her ideas can be adopted to our modern world and taken even further. Intersectional feminism includes and centers the voices of Black, Indigenous, Asian, Latinx, disabled,

transgender activists who have been historically excluded and silenced.⁶² The more intersecting identities of race, class, gender, sex, and ability a person has, the more marginalized they are in our Western societal systems. Intersectional feminism aims to dissolve the system of patriarchy entirely and has no desire for proximity to androcentricity.⁶³

As a cisgender woman, it would be unlikely that Cathy Berberian would have considered race, class, sexuality, disability status, or neurodivergence in her programmatic choices of composers during her lifetime.⁶⁴ Therefore, moving forward, another element we can add into *The New Vocality* in the twenty-first century is consciously attempting to divest from the hegemony of the colonial patriarchy of the androcentric field of composition. We can honor the intersectional identities of all women and non-binary composers, and not just the most well-known white women composers with close proximity to famous male composers, like Clara Wieck-Schumann, Fanny Hensel Mendelssohn, and Alma Mahler. In the Programming Resources in the Appendix, there are several websites that contain databases of compiled works by composers with historically excluded marginalized identities, some even organized alphabetically or by time period.

⁶² Crenshaw, Kimberle. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991): 1241–99. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>. p. 1244.

⁶³ Androcentric, as opposed to gynocentric, means a field dominated by and centered around men. Unlike Indigenous cultures, Western society has spread globally, through colonization, the rigid construct of the male/female gender binary that corresponds directly to genitalia. This binary has been historically weaponized to oppress and marginalize women (the "lesser" gender) which is why we see androcentricity reign supreme in all fields, including the arts, of patriarchal Western colonial societies.

⁶⁴ Although as a woman, it's very likely she may have considered gender or sex in her programmatic compositional choices, or at least been aware of the oppression and opposition she faced as a woman in the patriarchy

According to the archives of recital programs at the National Gallery of Art⁶⁵ in Washington D.C., only thirty-six of two-hundred sixty-nine solo song recitals performed here from 1942-2018 included at least one song by a woman composer. Although there was a slight increase in the programming of woman composers from the years 1957-1975 (which does correspond with the time frame of second-wave feminism), it presented as only one or two songs in a program of otherwise all male composers of the Western Classical canon, like Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Fauré, Aaron Copland, and Gershwin. The most frequently programmed were single songs by two Black women composers, Margaret Bonds (1913-1972), followed by Florentine Price (1887-1953). American spirituals written and arranged by Black composers were especially popular in the mid-twentieth century and, as Andrea Tucci points out in her dissertation, Black and female composers were expected to write only smaller works.⁶⁶ Only two recitals featured three works by women, and they occurred in 1995 and 2012 performed by mezzo-soprano Sharon Mabry and soprano Jessica Jones, respectively. The National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. has compiled an archive of scans of its printed concert programs from its first season in 1942 until the 76th season in 2018. These weekly programs are free to the public and consist of a variety of performing forces from solo artists to ensembles, local and international, instrumental, and vocal. Some headlining names of these valuable primary sources of the past include prestigious singers such as Martina Arroyo, Emma Kirkby, and Arleen Auger. This archive is available on their website to browse, search, and download.

⁶⁵ National Gallery of Art. "Concert Programs Archive". Accessed June 4th, 2021. <https://www.nga.gov/research/gallery-archives/concert-programs-archive.html>

⁶⁶Tucci, Andrea. "A Studio of One's Own: Rewriting the Western Classical Singer's Undergraduate Curriculum with an Intersectional Feminist Lens." Order No. 27837911, Northeastern Illinois University, 2020. p. 29

Both the first and second waves of the Feminist movement in the early and mid-twentieth century failed to achieve equity beyond cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied white women achieving the same power as white men in the system of the patriarchy—in fact, it didn't even successfully achieve this goal. Betty Friedan's *Feminist Mystique* spoke most to the lives of middle-class white housewives, championing liberation from their home life duties of being married to working husbands and the hard work of mothering children with very little help. While this movement was important for the purpose of women seeking freedom beyond being relegated only to 1950s housewives and achieving equality to white men, it failed to broaden its ideas to intersect with racism, ableism, fatphobia, women's agency, and the fact that the gender binary is in itself a construct of colonial patriarchal structures created to oppress women.

Without intersectionality, the push for cisgender, middle-class women's liberation is simply white feminism, not intersectional feminism, in which achieving equality to white men is not true liberation from the power hierarchy of the patriarchy. The second-wave made a valiant effort to prove that women are equal to men, yet intersectional and twenty-first century feminists and activists would argue that reaching the same oppressive position on the “measuring stick,” or “ladder”⁶⁷ of the male colonial patriarchy should not be an ideal; rather, the ideal is to divest from and dismantle the measuring stick entirely, as is

⁶⁷ I first heard author and activist Sonya Renee Taylor speak about “the ladder” of white supremacist delusion, and compare it to a pyramid scheme, in which white people invest in systems that promise them power and wealth but offers no sustainable returns.

pointed out by Indiana University Music Theory professor Marianne Kielan Gilbert in her journal article “*The Woman in the Music (On Feminism as Theory and Practice)*.”⁶⁸

We have the scholarship of bell hooks to thank for the term “imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy”. George Yancy, author, and Philosophy Professor at Emory University, interviewed bell hooks for the New York Times in 2015:

George Yancy: Over the years you have used the expression "imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy" to describe the power structure underlying the social order. Why tie those terms together as opposed to stressing any one of them in isolation?

bell hooks: We can't begin to understand the nature of domination if we don't understand how these systems connect with one another. Significantly, this phrase has always moved me because it doesn't value one system over another. For so many years in the feminist movement, women were saying that gender is the only aspect of identity that really matters, that domination only came into the world because of rape. Then we had so many race-oriented folks who were saying, "Race is the most important thing. We don't even need to be talking about class or gender." So for me, that phrase always reminds me of a global context, of the context of class, of empire, of capitalism, of racism and of patriarchy. Those things are all linked -- an interlocking system.

In order to effectively include the historically excluded women’s compositional voices into the Western classical canon—and not just as others, tokens, or an exception—modern singers must have the curiosity and freedom of choice to be able to curate programs that include their compositions next to and alongside the traditional canon in performance, as Berberian would have done, to ease the audience into the new music.⁶⁹ Incorporating this

⁶⁸ Kielan-Gilbert, Marianne. "The Woman in the Music (On Feminism as Theory and Practice)." *College Music Symposium* 40 (2000): 62-78. Accessed June 7, 2021. p. 77

⁶⁹ “New music” in this case meaning new and unfamiliar to an audience’s ears, not “new music” in the strict sense of contemporary or modern compositions.

into our programming and curating, we can begin the process of climbing off the ladder of the androcentric hegemony of the “masterworks” in Western Classical music.

2. Creative Collaboration with Other Art Forms

Even though Cathy Berberian championed the goal of collaborating with other art forms in *The New Vocality* in 1966, it is a relatively rare occurrence that we see or hear about voice recitals that integrate visual art or dance. This kind of artistic integration and collaboration is still seen as an avant-garde practice in a recital. Julia Bullock spoke in depth about her experience, and how meaningful it was in her career:

Me: What has been your favorite, most rewarding musical project you were involved in so far, and why?

Bullock: My residency with the Metropolitan Museum of Art was satisfying and great and part of that was because of the woman who runs the Met Live Arts Program, Limor Tomer. She invited me for the residency (it was also my first residency). She set the bar so high for what collaboration means, and what open communication means when you're working with a performing artist and obviously she had her own ideas and didn't go with every single thing that I proposed but she made a lot of time to hear me out and tried her best to respect my vision, so we ended up coming to a lot of shared visions for things, which is the ultimate feeling when you're in a collaborative relationship with a presenter. She came to my first recital tour back in 2014, and because of the second half of that program, which focused on themes surrounding objectification and exploitation of Black women in particular. I opened with songs that Josephine Baker made very famous, then shifted

into tunes by Montsalvatge and then some Civil Rights songs and a spiritual. It was really because of that second half that Limor called my manager at the time and invited me to perform at the Met Museum. She invited me to take a tour, walked me through every gallery of the museum where they've had performances in the past and sent me some proposals. Her words were, "dream as big as you want". I proposed a project and had a meeting with their curatorial team with the Latin American department at the Met. Because the project had to be postponed twice because of other performance opportunities, Limor proposed that I come for a season instead of one single performance. It was the coolest, most extraordinary invitation. It wasn't presented to me as "you're entering into one of the most important visual arts institutions in the world:" it was just "dream as big as you want". What I felt comfortable proposing, and what we were able to put together in this residency felt like a natural extension of the work that I was already doing. Dream projects that couldn't have happened anywhere else. I had read some books about the history of the museum and the exhibitions that they had put on and compared that to my own history— where I felt we were, and where there were some parallels, or conflict, or further conversation. I proposed projects I felt could happen in that space and time frame with artists who were available, so some of it was about the logistics of the situation but in general I had a thirteen-page proposal and could have done two seasons of programming. It was centered around the Black American experience, but another season could have been centered around women and colonization. Every issue when it came to that museum also, whether it was appropriating art, stealing art, or misrepresenting artists but also trying to have a collection that is

comprehensive of human history. This is a tall order at the Met Museum and I think at the time the people there were trying to reckon with the history challenges of that museum in a real way, which was very exciting to me as well. I never would have thought much about these things if I hadn't been given this invitation. What's nice is that the projects that came out of this have had a life now. They have found other places to be performed and presented in other places across the world.

3. Versatility, Artistic Individuality, and Transcending Genre

Continuing in my interview with Julia Bullock, I posed the question, “Do you have any thoughts or feelings (positive or negative) about your career being labeled “unconventional” in interviews or articles? What do you think that label implies about the artistry of a modern singer?” This was her response:

It's so funny, in any interviews when they say that particular word to me, or “non-traditional” I always say “I find that word so interesting that you select, because I find my career to be very much in the legacy of my very favorite artists, even in the realm of Classical Western European music. Whether it was the composers or the performers themselves, they simply followed where their desires and inspirations led them. In terms of choosing roles or what pieces to sing or how to program or where to go, there was such a wide range of repertoire that was covered. Singers in particular who I love (including Shirley Verrett, Regine Crespin, Frederica Von Stade, Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, and Nina Simone)– they didn't limit themselves in terms of repertoire. They weren't assigned some Fach when it came to operatic roles. It was what inspired them and what they felt they could embody onstage (along with

their vocal prowess, of course) but it came almost more down to a question of temperament, not trying to fit into some mold. I think being “non-traditional” or “unconventional” is just coded language for “not being white,” and also not following orders. I went into the arts to liberate myself, not to limit myself. So, it’s some term that helps people in a quick moment categorize something that they have no reason to categorize. Even Marilyn Horne, if you look at her career, started with providing voices for Hollywood films, and then ended up becoming one of the great Rossini singers. If you look at Leontyne Price’s discography, she covered a lot!

If we all, as a collective of singers, banded together in a commitment to showcase our unique personalities, voices, interests, and interests in a variety of styles and genres in our programs, imagine what a powerful statement that would make against the old guard tradition. Bullock’s observation about the identifier “non-traditional” being coded language for “not white” speaks volumes about which groups of people get to gatekeep what is conventional vs. unconventional, and who gets to decide which boxes, if any, an artist fits into. In 2023, it is not too late for us to be the ones to lead by example for the future generations of singers.

Kaija Saariaho’s *Lonh*, composed in 1996, is a rarely performed piece for soprano and electronic accompaniment, and includes many similar elements of the *New Vocality* that Berberian, Berio and Cage forged in the mid twentieth century. I will show how a versatile program can be built around *Lonh* if we focus on its greater emotional theme, take composer’s intersectional identities into consideration, and incorporate visual art and dance. All at once, *Lonh* fuses the forward-moving technology of its time with the medieval yet timeless subject matter of a wandering troubador suffering from unrequited love. Saariaho

incorporates late twentieth-century vocal techniques that Berberian championed, yet still requires the Western Classical vocal technique from the soprano voice in antique Dorian melodic framework. In the next chapter, we learn how Saariaho felt discouraged from participating in the Western Classical industry as a young woman with non-traditional musical ideas because she never saw herself represented while studying music history in school. As Berberian and Boulez championed: Let us not be afraid of the new and different, but let's mix and match it with the traditional repertoire. We can do this while also being cognizant of the intersectionality of the voices we are choosing to be heard.

III. Kaija Saariaho's *Lonh*

Kaija Saariaho (1952-2023) was a highly sensitive child who listened to J.S. Bach regularly and played violin. Because she was often ill, she spent a good deal of time indoors, loving the delicate patterns the sunlight made on her bedroom floor. She also loved taking walks in the woods after the rain near her home in Finland; she was influenced by the soundscape of this atmosphere in her future compositions: the earth damp after the rain, bird calls, the wind, and the rain, where “the forest was like a great echoing hall”.⁷⁰

She grew up with the male composer Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) as the quintessential model of a Finnish composer; because of his masculine image with a pipe, she felt that since she didn't fit this mold, she could never be a composer. As her biographer, Pirkko Moisala reports, “For Kaija, at that time, a real composer was a decidedly serious, male character: ‘It was totally unlike my own image [of a composer], both externally and internally. The things you read about great composers as a child...these were the thoughts which paralyzed me,

⁷⁰ Moisala, Pirkko. *Kaija Saariaho*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009. pp. 1-2

because I did not imagine fulfilling these images'... the curriculum of music history and the standard repertoire of concerts did not include women composers, not even Clara Schumann or Barbara Strozzi.”⁷¹ This is an example of how the traditional, patriarchal hegemony of Western Classical music initially discouraged a young musician with one marginalized identity (in this case, a woman) from following her voice. As a result of the lack of intersectional identities of composers included in her education, she developed some anxiety around the need to mask her femininity in order to be considered a “real” or “serious” composer. As a young child, she actually felt that the female poets and authors like Sylvia Plath (1932-1963) and Anaïs Nin (1903-1977) were more natural artistic role models for her than the traditional male composers. Fortunately, when she was at school in the Sibelius Academy in the late 1970s, her composition teacher Paavo Heininen (b. 1938) encouraged her to “find her own musical language”, and given that support, she was able to introduce the creativity from her childhood into her compositions. “All those colors, seeing, hearing, and living in the intermingling dimensions of all the senses, zooming in and out, making great, free associations”.⁷²

She was trained in the Central European avant-garde traditions, serialism, and post-tonal twentieth century techniques, but she felt the most at home in the influence of the Spectral composers Gérard Grisey (1946-1998) and Tristan Murail (b. 1947), who were in turn influenced by Olivier Messiaen. She always felt a great artistic connection with Messiaen and was influenced particularly by his use of bird calls in his compositions. Although Spectralism is not strictly a compositional technique, it is rooted in 1970s France with the

⁷¹ Ibid p. 4

⁷² Ibid p. 6

idea of getting back to the basics of sound with sonographic mathematical representations of the overtone spectra and properties of sound.

Knowing Saariaho's love of the delicate patterns of sunlight, sounds of the sea, and the sounds of nature on the walls of the forest, it seems natural that she would find calm, peace, and a sense of home with this sound universe. In France, she felt she could escape from the cold, uptight atmosphere of Finland that expected something "great" from her, especially as an introvert and an archetypal artist. She felt Parisians gave more value to their senses, like scents and wine, which somehow "relaxed and gave [me] a freedom...and more space to breathe."⁷³ As a highly sensitive person myself who places importance in the pleasure of sensory information, I know the sense of relief that comes with relaxing into your environment when it feels good to your nervous system.

When she arrived in Paris in 1982, she began taking computer music courses at IRCAM (the Institute for Research and Coordination of Acoustic Music) in Paris, which was a program set up by Pierre Boulez.

⁷³ Ibid p. 10

Figure 15. At studio 8 of IRCAM, surrounded by computers (Paris, 1983). Photo: Jean-Baptiste Barrière






In Paris, IRCAM gave Saariaho the opportunity to explore her love and interest in the possibilities of the human voice in greater depth. She was able to work on developing an innovative program called *Chant* where she fed phonemes into the program to create and process sounds. She loved creating harmony and structure by means of using analyzed sound phenomena, which come from the Spectral world, whereas her use of concrete natural or electronically modified sounds (like whispers and bird song) comes from musique concrète. “Saariaho usually processes recorded concrete sounds electronically instead of using them in their pure form. She may also create synthetic sounds that are like concrete or instrumental sounds. In her opinion, ‘the natural sounds—the wind, the sea—are the most beautiful sounds that a human being can hear; perhaps from this experience I was fascinated by producing similar kinds of sounds which, even distantly, remind me of the sounds of nature.’”⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Ibid p. 13

The end result is that there is nothing robotic about the soundscape; it feels human and natural, and it breathes easily with the singer. Judith Lochhead notes that *Lonh*, although it doesn't have traditional musical binary, ternary, or sonata form, uses the technê⁷⁵ of "radiance" to create structure. (She calls it "sonic radiance," but I call it "otherworldly".) Just one of the several ways she evokes this radiance is with the moments of high pitches where high partials of the voice create the sonic luminance, especially on important words like "remember," "God" and "Afar".⁷⁶

Here is an image of the notes in the forward of the *Lonh* score; if we compare and contrast these to Figure 7 of Cathy Berberian's *Aria*, we see the similarities of both composers denoting the notational differences between whispered, spoken, or sung phrases (or any combination of the above), or how much vibrato is desired.

Figure 16. Descriptions of notation markings in the score for the soprano in *Lonh*

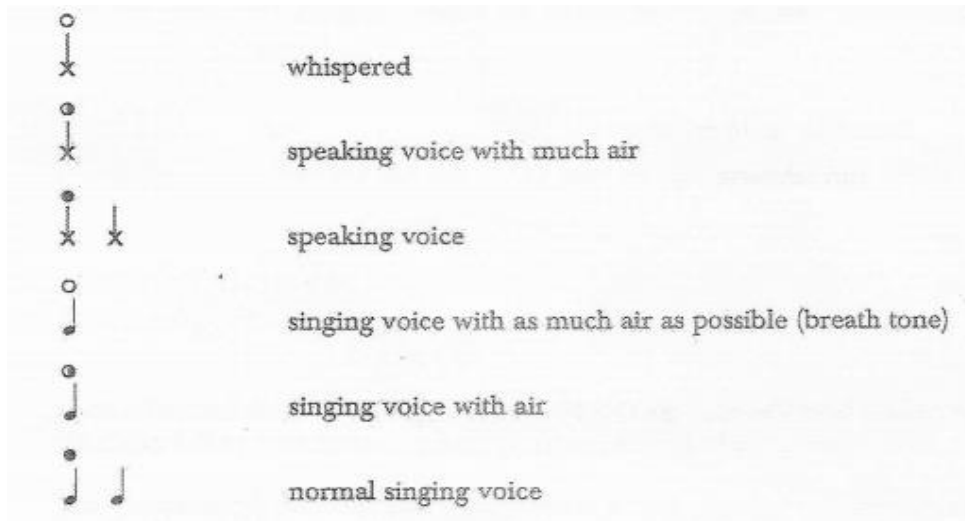
NOTATION	
	change very gradually from one phoneme or one way of singing (etc.) to another
	diminuendo al niente
	crescendo dal niente
S.V.	senza vibrato
molto vibr.	molto vibrato
vibr. ord.	the usual vibrato of the performer
When vibrato markings are not specified, singers may use their usual vibrato, or a vibrato of their choice for a specific passage.	
The semitone glissandi should always be sung very evenly, without vibrato or accentuation, unless specially indicated. If there is no <i>sforzato</i> marking, the grace note at the end of the glissando will be unaccented.	
Trills and mordents should always be sung up a semitone, unless marked otherwise.	

⁷⁵ A term that means the manifestation of reality through technology and theory. It is the concept of technology helping theoretical knowledge let reality emerge; both praxis and theory lets a new reality emerge.

⁷⁶ Lochhead, Judith. "Technê of Radiance: Kaija Saariaho's *Lonh*." In *Reconceiving Structure in Contemporary Music: New Tools in Music Theory and Analysis*, 105-22. New York: Routledge 2016. p. 121

Saariaho and Berberian (and by extension, Berio) seemed to share many of the same fascinations and loves about the wide expressive potential of the human voice. Saariaho in particular wanted to create an atmospheric space where intimacy could be reverberated throughout, so she employs a great deal of whispering and various degrees of whispered/sung combinations as well:

Figure 17. Instructional guide on whisper notation in the *Lonh* score



Saariaho plays with the space between the medieval era and the twentieth century because the diatonic, D Dorian modal soprano melody sounds medieval in context of the electronic sounds surrounding the voice. At the same time, the modal melody of the soprano line requires the vocal sounds and colors that any modern twenty-first century Western Classical soprano needs: trilling, full vibrato, and at times full, forte operatic singing. The soprano line sounds almost improvisatory at times with the extreme vocal and tonal flexibility it requires, requiring less vibrato, whispering, and half-singing/half-whispering (see Figure above), all of which is included in the gamut of the human vocal experience that Cathy Berberian championed in *The New Vocality*.

It's important to note that Saariaho didn't want to be boxed into the label of just a "computer composer," nor known for being a "woman composer." Similar to singers who struggle with not wanting to be boxed into the Fach system, she didn't want labels to put limitations on her compositional possibilities. As a result of the self-image conceptions she battled with because of the constraints of the Western classical patriarchal hegemony, not only did she compare herself to portraits of Beethoven and Sibelius in her early years, but she also assumed her music would never be dramatic enough for an opera. Little did she know, this would change when she heard the American soprano Dawn Upshaw (b. 1960) in Messiaen's 1983 opera *St. François d'Assise* at the Salzburg Festival. The production was staged by the revolutionary contemporary American stage director Peter Sellars (b. 1957), who is known for his socially conscious conceptions of staging music theater and always seeking to connect the divine with humanity. After seeing this production and Sellars' staging of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, she was convinced that by collaborating with him and Upshaw, her music could dramatically suit her first opera in which she desired to explore the themes of love and death.

The sixteen-minute *Lonh* was used as the conceptual blueprint for *L'amour de loin* (2000), Saariaho's opera in five acts that premiered at the Salzburg Festival. Like *Lonh*, electronics are used throughout, but unlike *Lonh* the opera has three separate characters that are each assigned their own unique sonority on top of the B flat pedal tone used throughout: Jaufré, based on the original troubadour, in Bordeaux, (a baritone) Clémence, Princess of Tripoli in Lebanon (a soprano), and a Pilgrim that moves in between them (a mezzo

soprano). The opera moves between the Western world (France) and the Eastern world (Lebanon).⁷⁷

Saariaho plays with the idea of cultural space and distance between the West and the East in the music of *L'amour de loin*, mostly in the ways the vocal lines and accompaniments contrast when the setting is in Tripoli vs. Bordeaux. However, Saariaho's main concern in *Lonh* is playing with the sounds of emotional space; the distance between the singer and their love from afar. The sonic landscape of the permutations of this distance occur within the unique space a singer gets to create.

A. Lonh (1996); Love From Afar

Saariaho found Jaufré Rudel's life story, the *vida*, in the Paris Library. He was a twelfth century medieval troubadour in Provençal France. He spoke the Occitan language, which is a dialect somewhere between modern French and Spanish. He wrote an original song, based on d modal harmony, that was drafted in his *vida* called "Lonh" in Occitan, which translates to "Love from Afar." Since it's a long poem, Saariaho didn't use all of the text, but excerpted sections of it and made the format a total of nine sections: a Prologue, seven middle sections, and an ending Tornada. The following image shows the text of sections I-IV. The text that is sung or spoken live by the soprano in performance is bolded. If the text is recited in the recorded fixed-media track it's italicized, and if the text is light gray, she doesn't use it at all in her composition. Meanwhile, if both the live soprano and the recorded fixed-media voice perform the text, it's in larger font (for example, "de loing" which means "from afar"). The Prologue, it is noted in the music, is the singer's choice to

⁷⁷ Calico, Joy H. "Composing Clemence in Love from afar." Contemporary music review 38, no. 3-4 (2019). p. 390

recite the text in either Occitan or English. Soprano Dawn Upshaw, in the original recording, chose her native language (English).

Figure 18. *Lonh*, Source Poetry: Jaufré Rudel, Lanquand li jorn son lonc en mai. Text and Translation from Treitler, 1992; quoted in Lochhead, this differs slightly from Saariaho's score.

<p>I Lanquand li jorn son loc en mai M'es bels douz chans d'auzels de loing, E qand mes sui partitz de lai Remembra-m d'un' amor de loing; Vauc de talan ebroncs eclis Si que chans ni flors d'albes pis No-m platz plus que l'invern gelatz.</p>	<p>When the days are long in May I like the sweet song of birds from afar; And when I have departed from there, I remember a love from afar; I go sad and bowed with desire So that neither song nor Hawthorn flower Please me more than icy winter.</p>
<p>II <i>Jamais d'amor no-m gauzirai</i> Si no-m gau d'est amor de loing, <i>Que gensor ni meillor non sai</i> <i>Vas nuilla part ni pres ni loing.</i> Tant es sos pretz verais e fis <i>Que lai el renc dels Sarrazis</i> FOS eu per lieis chaitius clamatz.</p>	<p>Never in love shall rejoice Unless I enjoy this love from afar, For nobler or better I do not know In any direction, near or far, Her worth is so true and perfect That there in the kingdom of the Saracens I would, for her, be proclaimed captive.</p>
<p>III Iratz gauzens m'en partraï Qan veirai cest'amor de loing, Mas non sai coras la-m veirai, Car trop son nostras terras loing: <i>Assatz i a portz e camis.</i> E per aisso no-n sui devis, Mas tot sia cum a Dieu platz!</p>	<p>Sad and rejoicing I shall depart When I shall see this love from afar, But I do not know when I shall see her For our lands are too far. Many are the ports and roads, And so I cannot prophesy, But may all be as it pleases God!</p>
<p>IV Be-m parra jois qan li qerrai Per amor Dieu l'amor de loing. <i>E s'a lieis, plai, albergarai</i> Pres de lieis, si be-m sui de loing. <i>Adones parra-l parlamens fis</i> Qand drutz loindas er tant vezis <i>C'ab bels digz jauzirai solatz.</i></p>	<p>Joy will surely appear to me when I seek from her For the love of God, this love from afar. And if it pleases her, I shall lodge Near her, although I am from afar. Then will appear fine discourse, When, distant lover, I shall be so close That with charming words I shall take delight in conversation.</p>

Sections V and VI are below. Less of the original text is used in these two sections, but it is significant to note throughout that Saariaho chose to set the text of Rudel, a male troubadour, with a soprano voice, inverting the gender expectations that might arise in connection with the quest for a distant love. According to author and SUNY professor Judith

Lochhead, “using digital technologies as a tool to enact a sonic design of radiance, Saariaho projects a premodern sense of longing as might have befit Jaufré in the twelfth century but a Jaufré embodied in the present through the female voice. Saariaho’s subtle maskings of the high degree of technological manipulation and of the gender inversion of the singing voice give the sheer beauty of *Lonh* a critical edge.”⁷⁸

V

Ben tenc lo seignor per vrai
 Per q’ieu veirai l’amor de loing,
 Mas per un ben qu m’en eschai
 N’ai dos mals, car tant m’es de loing
 Ai! car me fos lai peleris
 Si que mos fustz e mos tapis
Fos pelz sieus bels huoills remiratz!

I consider that Lord as the true one
 Through whom I shall see this love from afar
 But for one good that befalls me from it,
 I have two ills, because she is so far.
 Ah! Would that I might be a pilgrim there
 So that my staff and my cloak
 Might be seen by her beautiful eyes.

VI

Dieus qe fetz tot qant ve ni vai
E fermet cest’ amor de loing
 Me don poder, qe-l cor eu n’ai,
 Q’en breu veia l’amor de loing
 Veraiamen en locs aizis,
 Si qe la cambra e-l jardis
 Me resemble totz temps palatz.

God who made all that comes and goes
 And established this love from afar
 Give me the power, for the desire I have,
 Quickly to see this love from afar,
 Truly, in agreeable places,
 So that chamber and garden
 Might always seemsto me a palace!

Since my dissertation is about being “Unfachable” and simultaneously questioning and divesting from the hegemony of the systems of the old guard (i.e. the white supremacist imperialist patriarchy), while this gender inversion is a salient point by Lochhead, I think it behooves the twenty-first century artist to remember that the male/female gender binary is a Western colonial construct, and that a soprano voice doesn’t necessarily always mean a woman singing. Indigenous cultures have always conceptualized gender beyond the confines of human sex organs long before Western European countries colonized the Americas and

⁷⁸ Lochhead, Judith. “Technê of Radiance: Kaija Saariaho’s *Lonh*,” 121.

the global south, like the Two-Spirit people, and queer or transgender identities of the Māori people.⁷⁹

Since I am a cisgender, heterosexual woman, when I sing *Lonh*, my “love from afar” will be a male identifying person. The individual artist can and should feel the agency to choose whichever gender (or nonbinary) that feels real to them, regardless of the fact that “she” is so far, and “her” beautiful eyes are mentioned. I am choosing to collaborate with a dancer, as Berberian suggested doing with other art forms in *The New Vocality*, to add visual interest and the tangible humanity of a lover in the flesh for the audience to experience during the performance. There is no reason, especially given the female pronouns chosen by Rudel, that a soprano voice of any gender can’t choose any other gender identity. This gives even more universal interest to *Lonh* because a love from afar can be pursued and obsessed over by any gender or spirit.

I have heard transgender singer colleagues express that they felt excluded when applying for professional choirs, because they have to select a gender (male or female) in the application form, with no selection for nonbinary. I’ve also heard transgender members of labor unions say they felt excluded by specifically gendered language in pamphlets, like “each member will take his/her union card” etc., while it would be more inclusive to use the generic, universal, non-gendered “their.” These are small changes we can make to recognize the humanity of the nonbinary members of our communities. I would like to live to see the Western classical singing world include these options and broaden its scope of

⁷⁹ “Māori and Pasifika Gender Identities.” New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Te Manatu Taonga, Johanna. Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand – Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand, reviewed & revised 4 May 2021 with assistance from Gender Minorities Aotearoa, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/gender-diversity/page-4>.

understanding what is considered “standard”—or do away with the limiting systems that perpetuate “normal” or “standard” entirely.

Finally, in sections VII and the ending *Tornada*, the word that is intoned by both the singer and the fixed-media for almost two minutes is “amatz”, which means “loved”:

VII

Ver ditz qui m’apella lechai
Ni desiran d’amor de loing,
Car nuills autre jois tant no-m plai
Cum jauzimens d’amor de loing;
Mas so q’eu vuoill m’es tant ahis
Q’enaissi-m fadet mos pairis
Q’ieu ames e non fox amatz.

He speaks the truth who calls me greedy
And desirous of love from afar,
For no other joy pleases me as much
As enjoyment of love from afar;
But what I want is so difficult
For thus did my godfather decree my fate,
That I should love and not be loved.

Tornada

Mas so q’ieu vuoill m’es tant ahis
Toz sia mauditz lo pairis
Qe-m fadet q’ieu **non fos amatz!**

But what I want is so difficult
May the godfather be cursed
Who decreed my fate that I should not be
loved

The *vida* is about Jaufré Rudel, who longs to travel across the ocean to meet the woman he has never met but has fallen in love with. There is no “plot” in *Lonh*, except the nine stanzas of the *vida* that talk about how the singer longs for a love from afar when the days are long in May. Here, I will lay out specifically what each section means to me as an artist. This is a practice that would benefit every singer and actor for every piece they sing, because the more specific we can get with our emotional and character motivation, the more authentic the performance will feel for us and the audience.

Prologue: Speaking into the forest, to myself, “when the days are long in May...”, hearing my voice reverberate off the mossy tree trunks while reminiscing about the one I wish I could be with. The “radiance” that Judith Lochhead spoke of, which she calls “sonic radiance” (but I call “otherworldly”), is achieved through formal flickering across sections. For example, musical structure is created by the instances of the electronically sampled sounds; the bird songs and bass drum only appear in the Prologue and *Tornada* (beginning

and the end)—nowhere else. This creates associational relations between and across these two sections.

Section I: The same text but sung Occitan instead of spoken English. The D minor modal melody of Rudel's original song is introduced. Hearing my voice now reverberating stronger in the forest, enjoying the echoes, and praying the birds hear my song so they can carry it to my love somehow. The arc of the vocal line often resembles the route of flying birds. The following image, from Judith Lochhead's article, shows the direct comparison of the D minor melodic intervallic contour and range between Saariaho's melody in Section I and Jaufré Rudel's original twelfth century composition.⁸⁰ The minor 3rd of the original medieval troubadour song appears here, and shows that the vocal line of *Lonh* is based on modal rather than harmonic thinking.

⁸⁰ Ibid p. 115

Figure 19. D minor melodic contour comparison in Section I of Saariaho's *Lonh* to Rudel's original troubadour melody, quoted by Lochhead.

The image shows a musical score with two columns of music. The left column is titled 'Saariaho, Lonh Section I, Stanza I' and the right column is titled 'Jaufre Rudel Edition X, Bibliothèque nationale From Treitler 1992'. There are seven staves, numbered 1 to 7 on the left. The left column shows a melodic line with a wide interval and a long note, while the right column shows a more rhythmic and melodic line with many sixteenth notes.

Example 5.2 Comparison of Melodic Contours: Saariaho and Jaufre.

Section II: The sentiment of this section is, “I will never enjoy another love more than I enjoy this one, because I don’t know a nobler love anywhere else, near or far; I wish to be my love’s captive”. The quick sixteenth notes of the metal percussion give this section more movement, which is where I’m choosing to have the dancer enter. At this point, my fantasy becomes the forefront of my mental reality. They are alive, dancing clearly in my heart’s memory.

Section III: This section feels like a liminal space between where I am and where my lover is, both physically and mentally. The soft triplets in the percussion sound like train tracks, and I’m imagining what it would be like to travel to actually meet or see them. The

text fits this, essentially saying, “I don’t know when I will see them, for our lands are too far away...there are too many passages and ports but let everything be according to God’s will.” I know that I am taking individual artistic license by imagining train tracks from these triplets because I don’t know if that was Saariaho’s compositional intent. The cymbal with wood percussion occurs only in this section, which gives it formal salience.⁸¹ It is also my choice to conceive of “God” here as a non-gendered, energetic, invisible planetary force, instead of the traditional Christian concept of a monotheistic “God”, since I am not Christian or religious. This is also my own choice to make as an artist in my own recital program. An artist who is Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, or Buddhist might make a different choice (maybe to pray directly to their God in one of the sections), but that choice is not aligned with who I am as an artist or a person.⁸² There are also many who believe God is love, or God is nature and the earth.

Section IV: *Marked Sempre passionato*, this section with the recurring “*dieu platz/parra jois* (God’s will/will feel joy)” motive is one of the longest and most exuberant. The text proclaims, “I will surely feel joy when I ask for their love, and if it pleases them I will live near or far, and I will console myself with their beautiful words.” The intensity achieved by the repeating motive pointed out by Lochhead to create the sonic radiance is mostly at the end of this section. Musically it feels as if the train took me to an ocean of my fantasies of finally being with them in person that carries me—sometimes turbulently, other times lapping gently—to the shore where they live.

⁸¹ Lochhead, Judith. “Technê of Radiance: Kaija Saariaho’s *Lonh*,” 121.

⁸² Obviously if I were in a production with a stage director and they directed me to pray to God, I would come up with a character motivation or use my imagination to substitute something else here for different meaning. However, when it’s an artist’s personal recital, this choice is my prerogative.

Section V: Poco agitato, ma dolce with “continuous processed girls’ voices” written in the percussion line. This short section repeats “fos sieus bels huoills remiratz”, which means “could be seen by her lovely eyes”. This is the text Saariaho chose out of the original, in which I yearn and pine to be a pilgrim in their land, so that my stick and bundle could be seen by their eyes. Since the percussion still includes agitated sixteenth notes and incessant quintuplets and triplets underneath the lyrical vocal line, there is still a sense of unrest. I interpret this as having reached the shore but still not being able to find my distant love.

Section VI: This is the section where we hear a processed bell sound, time stands still, and everything stops. Molto calmo, espressivo, I address God (in my case, the power of the universal energies) directly, alone, crying out to nature now that I have traveled to my love’s land but I still can’t find them, begging, “God who made everything and formed this distant love, grant me the power of my heart soon to see the distant love, in a propitious place that will seem like a palace to me!”

The texture is sparse, almost a cappella except for the chimes that tone along with the singer’s wailing, lyrical, expressive melody, and still the continuous background voices on the sampled track. I like to think of these voices as a combination of voices of the people in my life who have told me how I should (or shouldn’t) feel about my love that I’ve never met, and the way I imagine my love’s voice sounds if they were speaking to me, distorted by the distance of my dreams. From this section until the end, more vocal reverb is used, which adds to the ethereal, spiritual feeling like both the singer and the audience is being transported to another realm, time, or space.

Section VII: “Car nuills autre jois tant no-m plai” translates to “for no other joy gives me so much pleasure,” and these are the only words Saariaho uses in this section. This

motive, like the parra jois motive, repeats incessantly while a low hum in the bass register grows louder and more relentless. For me this section is the manifestation of the obsession with distant love that never ceases. This obsession only strengthens my resolve to love them eternally. In the last system of this section, a dreamy, long, descending scale in the percussion seems to snap me back into reality for the Tornada.

Tornada: We land back in the “calmo” d minor mode of Rudel’s traditional composition; a return to section I. This image from Lochhead’s article shows the modal melodic collections of each separate section. Note the return to D Dorian mode in the Tornada, after having departed to different melodic contours, modes, and ranges in sections II-VII. This gives *Lonh* structural form that ties in the end to the beginning. The main melody in I, beginning on a D, suggests this mode throughout because the following sections begin on A or E, which further suggest somewhat dominant relationships.

Figure 20. Modal Collections and Range by Section of *Lonh*



Example 5.3 Melodic Structuring of Soprano Part by Section: Range, First and Last notes, Modal Collections.

This section also calls for slow whispers from the soprano of “Mas so q’ieu vuoill”, which means “but what I want,” and goes onto say “...is forbidden to me. So may my God be cursed who made me not to be loved.” I ask how, if God were so benevolent and loving,

why would God make me suffer this longing? Why would God make me long for a love that I will never have, making me unlovable? This section creates the technical challenge of alternating back and forth between whispering and lyrical wailing with trills, until the high, sustained “a-”s, which require very operatic, full vocalization, ending with a whisper of “-matz”. In this section I feel I am speaking to the God, “praying” internally for strength while I’m whispering, but crying out to the unknown, empty new land I’ve traveled to when I’m wailing, singing, and trilling; testing how far and where my voice reverberates in this new land. I’m hoping that they can hear me somehow, and that the louder I sing they will find me.

The emotionally specific section-by-section interpretations I’ve laid out here are a useful process for any singer of any genre, particularly in pieces or works with multiple sections or movements. There is an artistic freedom in discovering the translation of a piece in your own emotional and verbal vernacular, beyond what is literally on the page. If we have the freedom to assign our own specific meaning to details like the tempo changes from section III to IV, or what the sound of chimes represents, then our performances will feel more authentic and sincere to our audiences and to ourselves. The more emotionally specific we can be, the more we invite others to connect with our interpretation while inspiring them to create their own.

B. Transcending Space: Creating a Performance Space

One concept that keeps recurring in discussions of *Lonh* and Kaija Saariaho’s compositions is the idea of “space.” *Lonh* was composed in 1996, using the spatialization program at IRCAM. Saariaho wanted to move away from composing with tape, because she

felt it didn't give the singer enough "space to breathe".⁸³ Therefore, one of the challenges for the singer in singing this piece, is that the accompaniment consists of sampled sounds that need to be downloaded onto a laptop or tablet, and then the singer either needs to use a foot pedal to control when the accompaniment moves to the next section, or a sound engineer needs to control the laptop to move to the next section. These "cues" (there are nine of them in *Lonh*, one for each section) are essential to the performance of this piece, which is different from singing with tape, because that essentially just means singing to a pre-recorded background track. This does give the singer more breathing and vocal flexibility in the performance for creative license, but it is one more moving part to consider.

My choice is to hire a sound engineer who controls not only the timing of the cues, but also the levels of the microphone and sound, so that these are two fewer things for me to control while I perform. This is one way in which Saariaho is concerned with the concept of "space": she wants to give the singer enough musical time to breathe between sections, and to have a method of control over that period of time for which that space lasts. She avoids using too much rhythmic material in order to keep the electronics as flexible as possible for the singer to have more space.

Another way "space" is conceptualized is the physical space of the room, hall, or theater itself. Specified in the forward of the score, the singer also needs one or two microphones and two to four speakers, regardless of the size of the physical performance space. Saariaho's goal was for the singer to create their own atmospheric sound space, regardless of the physical size or acoustic of the space they perform in. The purpose of the

⁸³ From earlier in this chapter, Saariaho was quoted using this phrase to describe the freedom she felt in France vs. her native Finland but it also applies to how she wanted sopranos in *Lonh* literally feel like they have "space to breathe" in their singing.

microphone is for us to have control over the effect of the whispering being understood. For the whispered moments, the sound engineer simply turns the mic volume up very high, but for the effect of the infinite reverb, that particular effect is applied to the mic for those specified sections. This is especially useful on a performance tour, where the venues are constantly changing with every new tour location and acoustic consistency is unreliable.

The electronic accompaniment includes sampled sounds that run the gamut from nature sounds to percussion (wind, sea, rain, bird calls, chimes, cymbals, wood, mallets, a bass drum, a gong) and vocal whispers and utterances in French, English, and Occitanian. The accompaniment both supports the singer and responds to/ reacts to the main vocal melody, and if the acoustics of the physical space cannot be depended upon to naturally amplify this universe of nature and percussion sounds that are sometimes soft and muted, the microphones and speakers serve the purpose of the singer creating their own space. This has nothing to do with the size of the singer's instrument or if their voice is "loud enough"; concerns of sound volume in any space can be addressed by the sound engineer if there is amplification involved. Especially when the "infinite reverb" is required on the soprano line it is a haunting, otherworldly effect on the high notes that suspends time.

Lonh evokes the space of outdoor areas in which one sits, undisturbed by civilization, for undetermined periods of time. Oftentimes, both as the performer and the audience, we feel like there is no linear concept of time in this electronic soundscape. In blending the medieval sensibilities of the vocal line and the twentieth century sensibilities of the electronic part and amplification system, time between the twelfth century and the 1900s is transcended, as well as space.

Saariaho creates a changing, dynamic soundspace from section to section, where the sounds, instruments, and mood changes, and the audience doesn't always perceive the electronic sounds coming from the speakers, nor do they remember they're listening to electronics. If Cathy Berberian were alive in 1996 to hear Dawn Upshaw's performance of *Lonh*, I am confident she would have approved of the range of sounds and techniques used by her human voice, as well as the juxtaposition of the electronics and the medieval line. Dawn Upshaw described Saariaho's music as "living in sound and harmony" rather than thinking of her melodies horizontally.⁸⁴ This state of enjoying a sound world non-linearly is undoubtedly a hallmark of the Spectralist influence on Saariaho's compositions, and it can also be a meditative way to transcend time and space, even if only for sixteen minutes. I hope we can take inspiration from Upshaw's words to artistically live in our own sound and harmony and encourage our students to do the same. Through the process of finding our own specific narratives, programming versatile music that honors our various influences, unboxing⁸⁵ our voices and bodies from the Fach system, and not being afraid of tools that let us manage the sound in our performance venues, we create and take up our own powerful physical and emotional space as artists.

⁸⁴ Moisala, Pirkko. *Kaija Saariaho*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009. p.21

⁸⁵ My desire is to introduce a new verb into the operatic cultural zeitgeist of the twenty-first century: "unfaching." What I mean here is, unfaching our voices and bodies and unfaching ourselves by thinking beyond the Fach system when programming solo recitals.

C. *Lonh as a Centerpiece in a Recital Program*

I've built my recital program around a through-narrative of a lifetime of unrequited love, from the jaunty, silly, and hopeful stages of its infancy all the way to its bitter end. Carol Kimball would probably label it somewhere between a Storyline and a Theme recital because it presents an overall theme of unrequited love, but the order of the pieces also implies a story, or an emotional journey. The emotional content and quality of love changes as the recital moves from beginning to end. This through-narrative is bolstered by the heading titles I include introducing each piece and the inclusion of my own poetry.

I'm beginning with the lighthearted, innocent, almost theatrical text of Gabriel Kahane's (b. 1981) *You Looked Sexy* from his 2006 cycle *Craigslistlieder*. I'm including the standard Lied, Johannes Brahms' *Botschaft*, which is typically sung by lower voices; another example of how if a piece is transposed to fit a singer's range, there is no reason it needs to be relegated to a specific Fach. Rosephanye Powell is known mostly for her choral music compositions, but her song *I Want to Die While You Love Me* from her cycle "Miss Wheatley's Garden" should sit squarely in the song repertoire for lyric voices. Living composer Reena Esmail (b. 1983) expertly blends both Eastern and Western Classical music elements together in her music, particularly the gorgeous love song *Rosa de Sal* in which Pablo Neruda's Sonnet XVII is juxtaposed against the Hindustani Classical Raag,⁸⁶ Puriya Dhanashree. Lena McLin has written art songs in addition to her many spirituals that are criminally unknown; I will sing her haunting song *Silence* from *Songs of Love*. Even though I might not play the role of Desirée Armfeldt (an aging, mature woman looking back on her life) in Stephen Sondheim's *A Little Night Music* in my 30s, I feel an emotional

⁸⁶ A Raga in Hindustani Classical music is like the Western equivalent of a melodic mode or a scale

connection to the lyrics and the music of Send in the Clowns, plus I've changed the key from the original to one that suits the range of my voice right now. I've interspersed well known repertoire into a program with many others that are virtually unknown to the general public, giving them life and breath, as Boulez and Berberian both recommended.

It showcases my individual versatility and eclectic taste that includes music, modes, and concepts from the thirteenth century to the twenty-first century across continents with a variety of intersectional compositional voices. I'm also including one of my own personal poems that I will read. I have added the living composer's websites to my list of references.

Here is the program:

AMATZ
Soprano: April Amante
Piano: Mi-Young Kim
Sound Engineer: Raphael Radna

The Chance Encounter...
*from **Craiglistlieder***
You Looked Sexy

Gabriel Kahane (b. 1981)⁸⁷

The Hoping...
*from **5 Lieder Op. 47***
Botschaft

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

The Longing...
*from **Miss Wheatley's Garden***
I Want to Die While You Love Me

Rosephanye Powell (b. 1962)⁸⁸

The Obsession...
Lonh
Electronics: Raphael Radna
Dance: Jessie Cuevas

Kaija Saariaho (1952- 2023)

⁸⁷ Kahane, Gabriel. "Gabriel Kahane." Tumblr, Last modified 2009, <https://gabrielkahane.tumblr.com/>.

⁸⁸ Powell, Rosephanye. "Rosephanye Powell." Rosephanye Powell Composer Conductor Educator, accessed August 20, 2023, <https://www.rosephanyepowell.com/>.

The Deepest Love...
Rosa de Sal

Reena Esmail (b. 1983)⁸⁹

Poem: The Unfortunate Elephant Awkwardly Perched on the California Coast
-April Amante, ©2022

The Realization...
from **Songs of Love**
Silence

Lena McLin (b. 1928)⁹⁰

The End.
from **A Little Night Music**
Send in the Clowns

Stephen Sondheim (1930-2021)

This program centered around *Lonh* contains all the elements of Unfachability I have mentioned. It challenges the Museum Exhibition Tradition by stepping out of chronological order. It transcends time with the juxtaposition of the twelfth and twentieth centuries in *Lonh* and the Hindustani Raag against the Western Classical singing technique and Spanish poetry in Rosa de Sal. It transcends space with the use of electronics and amplification and transcends genre by mixing composers with differing intersectional identities, which naturally leads to a variety of languages, styles, and influences. By reading my own poetry, playing a mixed media video before *Lonh*, and working with a dancer on certain sections of *Lonh*, I'm incorporating other art forms and utilizing my own creative agency.

⁸⁹ Esmail, Reena. "Bio". Reena Esmail, Composer. Copyright © 2023 Reena Esmail.
<https://www.reenaesmail.com/bio/>

⁹⁰ African Diaspora Music Project. "Composers." *Lena Mae Johnson McLin | ADMP*. Videmus Inc., 2022. Last modified 2022. <https://africandiasporamusicproject.org/compser/lena-mae-johnson-mclin>.

IV. The Recital as a Creative Framework for the Twenty-First Century Artist

A. Sample Programs: More Possibilities

Here are two sample programs that use Kaija Saariaho's *Lonh* as a centerpiece. The first includes a through-narrative of a love story, beginning with *Lonh* and ending with Schumann's *Dichterliebe*. Two separate singers and two dancers could be used to tell this story and could be staged with the singers as well.

A Storyline Recital: Pairing Contrasting Time Periods and Languages with Two Singers and Two Dancers

Lonh

Kaija Saariaho (1952-2023)

Dichterliebe

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

1. Im wunderschönen Monat Mai
2. Aus meinen Tränen sprießen
3. Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne
4. Wenn ich in deine Augen seh
5. Ich will meine Seele tauchen
6. Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome
7. Ich grolle nicht
8. Und wüßten's die Blumen, die kleinen
9. Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen
10. Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen
11. Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen
12. Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen
13. Ich hab' im Traum geweinet
14. Allnächtlich im Traume
15. Aus alten Märchen
16. Die alten, bösen Lieder

The second is a theme recital based on the concepts from John Koenig's best-selling book, *The Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows*, that assigns real AND made-up words to humankind's strangest, most obscure feelings. Feel free to use either of these as templates or inspiration, and to insert your own choices of repertoire instead.

A Theme Recital: The Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows

Sequenza III

Luciano Berio (1925-2003) & Cathy Berberian (1925-1983)

Heartmoor: the primal longing for a home village to return to, a place that no longer exists, if it ever did; the fantasy of finding your way back home before nightfall.

I pastori

Ildebrando Pizzetti (1880-1968)

Austice: a wistful omen of the first sign of autumn—a subtle coolness in the shadows, a rustling of dead leaves abandoned on the sidewalk, or a long skein of geese sweeping over your head like the second hand of a clock.

Five Millay Songs

H. Leslie Adams (b.1932)

For You There Is No Song

Thrapt: awed at the impact someone has had on your life, feeling intimidated by how profoundly they helped shape your identity.

Gretchen am Spinnrade

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Heartworm: a relationship that you can't get out of your head, which you thought had faded long ago but is still somehow alive and unfinished, like an abandoned campsite whose smoldering embers still have the power to start a forest fire.

Lonh

Kaija Saariaho (1952-2023)

Justing: the habit of telling yourself that just one tweak could solve all of your problems.

Atwood Songs

Tania León (b. 1943)

Memory

Keir: an ill-fated attempt to reenact a beloved memory years later, returning to a place that once felt like home, only to find it now feels uncannily off, like walking through a wax museum of your own childhood.

**Four Late Poems and an
Epigram of Rainer Maria Rilke**

Oliver Knussen (1952-2018)

Altschmerz: a sense of weariness with the same old problems you've always had, the same boring issues and anxieties you've been gnawing on for decades, which makes you want to spit them out and dig up some fresher pain you might have buried in your mental backyard.

Meditation: Two Songs for Voice and Piano

Chen Yi (b. 1953)

Tiris: the bittersweet awareness that all things must end.

***Thematic Source Material:**

Koenig, John. *The Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows*. First Simon & Schuster hardcover edition. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2021.

A dictionary of newly created words by author John Koenig that shine light onto the shadows of our human experience that are often difficult to express or define.

B. Conclusion

What is the benefit of curating versatile recital programs? How does transcending genre, time, and space benefit our performances? The obvious answer is that it shows respect for a variety of languages, cultures, and identities of compositional voices that differ from one another, but we can dig deeper than that.

I asked Julia Bullock directly: Do you think artists have a responsibility to program composers with differing intersectional racial and gender identities?

Her response was:

I think for me, being an artist is being in a constant state of curiosity and a lot of the music I find is not because it's been tossed in my path; I've gone searching for it. I guess it is a cultural choice, but particularly for American artists we're living in a country

where there is such a breadth of experience and heritage in our land and you can certainly live in a bubble, but how cool if you can open your landscape and put in some time listening and looking. I'm grateful to some critics and music writers who have put together lists like "Best Composers of the last 50 years," or a list of women, or Black composers. There is always somebody on those lists whose music I don't know. I guess it is a responsibility if you identify as an artist. It's about asking, 'How do I identify as a musician? It's about collaboration and communication. It's about educating and engaging yourself AND those who are witnessing what you offer.

As modern artists living and working in a Western society, these interlocking systems of the imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy (which includes the gender binary and Eurocentric beauty standards) are the atoms that make up the air we breathe daily, in our art and in our lives. I question what could be possible if we can sit with the possibility that it is our artistic responsibility to use our intellectual curiosity to respect and represent a variety of languages, cultures, races, sexualities, and genres of composers and compositions in our programming, and in this way we will poke more holes in the polluted ozone of these interlocking oppressive systems. With art always comes risk, and we should give ourselves the permission to have the courage at the professional level to question the purpose of social constructs and unsettle the norms laid out by even our most beloved mentors and teachers when we suggest what can be within the realm of possibility in our recitals. We can create artistic programs and concerts that break free of the hegemony these systems have had on us and our artistic endeavors for far too long, and hopefully in doing so we can help to educate

the old guard and unruffle their feathers so they can fly with us into the future of expanded possibilities.

I will end with this Bullock quote from our interview:

I think schools could start teaching students how to start researching and also how to start programming in ways that excite THEM! That it's not just about fulfilling requirements for a jury or something, but you CAN fulfill your requirements and still entertain yourself and provide a tremendous experience for your audience if you want to curate and comprehensively think about the experience for people who are coming to hear the music.

I extend the invitation to all of us singers, voice teachers, artistic directors, and coaches to keep questioning traditions, social constructs, and musical constructs like the Fach system in the Western Classical tradition, and where they could be limiting the full potential of our individual creative agency. My hope is that my manifesto, *Unfachable*, is only the beginning—that it serves as a catalyst for more discussions moving forward in the twenty-first century, as *The New Vocality* did last century. I have compiled these ideas and resources in hopes that the next time someone curates a program, they will remember and utilize some of what they were inspired to try here. I sincerely hope that someday future students and artists will continue to add to the ideas I've gathered, especially when these concepts and ideas are no longer at the forefront of innovation, and there are new horizons to explore.

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Appendix

From pp. 5-6 of Rufus E. Hallmark's *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1996:

The crucial difference between Goethe's innovative lyric power and the older mode of poetry (as exemplified in the works of Friedrich Gottlob Klopstock, whose ecstatically poetic religious epic in classical hexameters had catapulted him to fame as the mid-eighteenth-century literary genius par excellence) may be seen in the juxtaposition of two lines from Klopstock's "Die frühen Gräber" of 1764:

O wie war glücklich ich, als ich noch mit euch
Sah sich röten den Tag, schimmern die Nacht.

O how happy was I when still in your company
I saw the day's red dawn, the shimmering night.

With the opening quatrain of Goethe's "Maifest" of 1771:

Wie herrlich leuchtet	How gloriously nature
Mir die Natur!	Glow for me!
Wie glänzt die Sonne!	How the sun sparkles!
Wie lacht die Flur!	How the fields laugh!

In Klopstock's poem there is antithesis, but in Goethe's there is reciprocity.

Programming Resources for Singers, Teachers, and Coaches:

1. Unaccompanied Voice. "Works for Unaccompanied Voice". Copyright © 2016 gezondheid6.

<https://ccmdl1eu.wordpress.com/2016/09/06/works-for-unaccompanied-voice/>

A list by Karen Mercedes, contralto, of works for unaccompanied voice. The works are separated not by language, time period, or composer identity, but by

the following range categories: Soprano, mezzo-soprano, or contralto, unspecified female voice, countertenor, tenor, baritone, bass-baritone, or bass, unspecified male voice, unspecified high voice, unspecified medium voice, unspecified low voice, and unspecified voice.

2. Oxford Music Online. "Women Composers by Time Period". Grove Music Online. Copyright © 2023 Oxford University Press.

<https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/page/women-composers-by-time-period>

This site offers an exhaustive list of linked biographies of women composers, from pre-medieval to contemporary. Another similar list is available, "Women Composers from A to Z".

3. Music by Black Composers. "Music by Black Composers". Classical Music from Africa and the African Diaspora. Copyright © Rachel Barton Pine Foundation.

<https://www.musicbyblackcomposers.org/resources/living-composers-directory/>

This site offers both a Living Composers Directory and a Historic Composers Directory, where links to the listed composer's websites can be found.

4. Institute for Composer Diversity. "Composer Diversity Database". Copyright © Fredonia State University of New York.

<https://www.composerdiversity.com/art-song-database>

Directly from the website: "This database contains the profiles of composers from historically excluded groups who have consented to being represented in our databases, and whose works you can find in the databases." They have a searchable database specifically for Art Song, and one for Choral Works as well.

5. The Living Composers Project. “The Living Composers Project.” Copyright © 2023 Ron Hannah and Dan Albertson. <http://www.composers21.com/>

Directly from the website: “The Living Composers Project is a nonprofit database, charting the lives and works of composers in the here and now, that has been under continuous development since 2000”. Composers and their dates are located easily either by surname or by country on the website’s homepage.