

OF MEMORIES AND DREAMS:

A SONG CYCLE

by

Patrick Vu

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for Departmental Honors in  
the Department of Fine Arts  
Texas Christian University  
Fort Worth, Texas

May 2, 2022

OF MEMORIES AND DREAMS:

A SONG CYCLE

Project Approved:

Supervising Professor: Martin Blessginer, D.M.

Department of Fine Arts

James D. Rodriguez, D.M.A.

Department of Fine Arts

Amina Zarrugh, Ph.D.

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

## ABSTRACT

Beginning from the Medieval period (c. 500-1400), the earliest forms of music, both secular and sacred, involved singing with or without instruments. While Gregorian chant and other styles of *a cappella*, or unaccompanied, singing pervaded the Catholic church, minstrels and troubadours traveled across Europe singing tales of love, heroic battles, and other stories as entertainment for the royal courts and their nobility. Eventually, composers and musicians began to group these vocal compositions into a set of related pieces. These collections served as the foundation for the development of the “song cycle,” a group or collection of songs that are related in some manner. They may be connected by but not limited to a unifying theme, an overarching plot line, a single mood or affect, or texts from a single poet. Because of their unified nature, the individual songs that comprise the overall song cycle, known as “art songs,” are designed to be performed sequentially and together.

In March 2020 at the start of the global COVID-19 pandemic, I began composing the first of four art songs that would eventually become *Of Memories and Dreams*, a song cycle for a soprano voice and piano. After completing the first piece, I spent the next eight months planning, finding poetry to fit the theme and story, and composing the song cycle. On April 23, 2021, the song cycle received its public premiere with Kathryn Piña, a fellow Texas Christian University student, singing soprano and myself accompanying her on the piano. This paper seeks to describe the inspiration behind the song cycle, the composition process, and an interpretive commentary and analysis over the four songs found in *Of Memories and Dreams*.

## Introduction

Vocal music distinguishes itself from other genres and forms of music through its ability to easily communicate a story. By nature, instruments can only create musical sounds, but voices can transmit words. Trouvères, troubadours, and minstrels from the Medieval period (c. 500-1400) carried the earliest forms of secular vocal music across the European mainland as they traveled to courts, singing lyrical songs accompanied by their lutes. For centuries, composers have transformed texts and poems into short vocal compositions in order to elevate their messages, stories, and emotional affects through music. Eventually, composers discovered a method to create a larger, multi-movement work by organizing songs that were related in some way; this new genre was the “song cycle.”<sup>1</sup> Today, composers continue to set texts, both poetry and prose, to form art songs<sup>2</sup> and complete song cycles for soloists and an accompanying instrument, usually piano. As a composer of primarily vocal music, I wrote numerous vocal compositions during the first three years of my college career, but I had never created a larger cycle with my songs. This was the next step in my development as a composer. Beginning in March 2020 as the world shut down due to the COVID-19 virus, I began planning and composing my first English song cycle, entitled *Of Memories and Dreams*. Serving as an artistic commentary and reflection over this creative project, this thesis paper discusses the inspiration for *Of Memories and Dreams*, describes the composition process, and provides a musical commentary about the work.

---

<sup>1</sup> A “song cycle” is a group or collection of vocal compositions that are related in some manner. They may be connected by but not limited to a unifying theme, an overarching plot line, a single mood or affect, or texts from a single poet.

<sup>2</sup> Art songs are compositions for solo voice and instrumental accompaniment. The term used to label these individual vocal compositions differ from the text’s language and the composer’s nationality. The term “lied” refers to a German vocal composition, and “mélodie” applies to a French vocal composition; songs that set English texts are called “art songs.”

## The Song Cycle: History and Relevance

The foundation for the development of the song cycle began in the Baroque period (c. 1600-1750) with the advent of opera in Europe. In the late sixteenth century, a group of intellectuals formed the Florentine Camerata and fostered a deep interest in ancient Greek theater and drama.<sup>3</sup> They discovered that the ancient Greeks recited their plays in a singing manner throughout the entire production, and they wanted to develop a new form of musical drama. Because of its direct influence from ancient Greek drama, subject matter and plots for these new operas stemmed from Greek mythology and legends. Early experiments in opera include Jacopo Peri's *Dafne* (1598), Peri's *Euridice* (1600), Giulio Caccini's *L'Euridice* (1602), and Claudio Monteverdi's famous *L'Orfeo* (1607).<sup>4</sup> The genre quickly developed, and composers began writing dramatic arias—vocal compositions that advanced the plot—in their operas and sacred oratorios. However, these songs were not considered art songs because of their ties to a larger staged dramatic work.

Composers soon discovered new ways to compose vocal music that was separate from operatic and theatrical productions. As a result, song cycles began to gain attention around the turn of the eighteenth century.<sup>5</sup> In order to extend the breadth and depth of the work, composers created song cycles with multiple movements, reflecting developments in instrumental music. Song cycles in the early Romantic period (c. 1800-1900) were considered thematic because composers derived each movement from a central idea.<sup>6</sup> As composers began writing thematic song cycles, the genre quickly grew in popularity, but composers began to develop the narrative

---

<sup>3</sup> Douglass Seaton, *Ideas and Styles in the Western Music Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 184.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 185.

<sup>5</sup> Susan Youens, "Song cycle," Grove Music Online, Oxford Music, January 20, 2001, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.26208>.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

cycle around 1815.<sup>7</sup> Notable composers that brought increasing attention to the genre during the nineteenth century include Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), Robert Schumann (1810-1856), and most importantly Franz Schubert (1797-1828). Schubert's narrative cycles *Die schöne Müllerin* (1823) and *Winterreise* (1828) both represent the pinnacle of the song cycle and serve as a staple in the genre. With about twenty movements in each, both cycles exclusively contain poetry by Wilhelm Müller (1794-1827) to create an extensive narrative surrounding themes of love, loss, and longing. Schubert transformed the song cycle into a prominent vocal genre, and composers today continue this tradition.

### ***Of Memories and Dreams: Early Stages of the Work***

During my college career, I wrote many independent and individual art songs, but these pieces never fit into a song cycle. Just as the famous and historic composers did, I love creating a story through music, and I wanted to do this with a song cycle, something I had never written. I felt that this was the next step in my development as a composer, so I challenged myself to compose an extended work. In March 2020, I suddenly found myself at home, isolated, and away from friends as schools across the world transitioned to online-schooling amid the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. To pass time and to cope with this shift, I invested time in reading poetry and composition. It was difficult to find motivation and inspiration to compose, but I soon discovered a beautiful poem entitled "On the Hill-Side" by Radclyffe Hall (1880-1943) that describes a memory of someone watching their love peacefully sleep in the sun.<sup>8</sup> Upon reading the story found in Hall's words, I felt an impulse to set this text to music, so I began composing this art song on March 21, 2020. I completed the piece nineteen days later on April 9, and I felt

---

<sup>7</sup> Youens, "Song cycle."

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix A for Radclyffe Hall's poem "On the Hill-Side."

refreshed and accomplished. I wanted to write more, and I repeatedly played through my new composition, trying to imagine a greater story that led into the lovely scene in Hall's poem. I quickly realized my composition "On the Hillside"<sup>9</sup> could become a movement in a larger work, so I started drafting ideas for stories I wanted to tell in my song cycle.

In a song cycle, composers have the ability to portray any kind of story and select poetry to fit their ideas. Common themes found in song cycles include, but are not limited to, love, relationships, nature, and life. Hall's "On the Hill-Side" targets themes of love and trust, and because I already completed my setting of Hall's text, I could begin forming a story and find poems that contained similar themes to complete my song cycle. After reflecting on the compositional structure and the tone profile of "On the Hillside," I decided to place this piece at the end of the cycle. Because it describes a lovely scene between two partners, I decided that the song cycle would be most effective as a narrative cycle rather than thematic. For the story, I initially searched for poems to create a story that followed a relationship between a couple starting from the initial meeting and attraction, to courtship, and then to a committed romantic relationship; "On the Hillside" completes that final scene in this storyline. For weeks, however, I could not find texts to fit this storyboard.

In Hall's "On the Hill-Side," she includes a subheading that simply states: "A memory." Rather than presenting this text as the culmination of this couple's relationship, I wondered how the story would develop if Hall's story was a distant memory, implying that the couple separated years ago; this memory of their time on a hillside serves as a beautiful memory of their time together before they broke apart. I saw potential in this new take on the storyline because it accesses my favorite emotional feeling in art: *saudade*. A potent feeling of longing, nostalgia,

---

<sup>9</sup> N.B.: When referencing Radclyffe Hall's poem, the title includes a hyphen as in "On the Hill-Side." My musical composition used in the song cycle eliminates the hyphen and is entitled "On the Hillside."

and bittersweetness, “saudade” comes from Portuguese and Brazilian cultures and appears as a major theme in many art forms. While characteristically Portuguese and Brazilian, the feelings of “saudade” are universal. I thought that if I framed the story found in “On the Hill-Side” as a memory, the audience might allow themselves to become emotionally invested because they most likely can relate to the feelings of longing and nostalgia. Consequently, I could leave a larger emotional impact. Quickly and with a newfound sense of excitement, I searched for texts to match this reimagined story.

In addition to creating a narrative song cycle, I wanted to unify my song cycle in another manner. Radclyffe Hall was a female poet, and I decided to set poems exclusively written by female writers in order to unify the perspective of the main character in the story. Additionally, this decision guided me to compose the song cycle to fit a female soprano voice rather than a tenor or bass. I began looking for texts written by female writers, and I needed three more poems to complete this four-movement narrative cycle. Historically, composers frequently composed music to poems written by their contemporaries. In his *Die schöne Müllerin* (1823) and *Winterreise* (1828), Schubert set his *lieder* to poems written by Wilhelm Müller, a contemporary of Schubert.<sup>10</sup> Just as historic composers set texts written by living poets, I wanted to support my artistic friends and continue this tradition. Setting contemporary poems written by living writers also allows the song cycle to remain authentic and current. In addition, the song cycle’s message becomes accessible because the poetic language is contemporary and colloquial. As a result, the audience can relate and connect with the cycle on a deeper level when they understand that the work is a product of today’s creativity. At TCU, I had two friends and colleagues who wrote poetry, and I asked them to share their work with me.

---

<sup>10</sup> The term “lieder” is the plural form of “lied,” and it refers to a vocal composition that uses a German text.



Alexandra Josephine Ameel (b. 1998), an electrical engineering major from the TCU class of 2021, lived down the hall from me in Milton Daniel Hall during our first year in college and wrote poetry. A living poet, she started writing poems in high school and continued throughout her college career as a hobby and a creative outlet. She has released six collections of poetry as a self-published writer, and she used to sell copies to her friends at TCU. In 2019 at the beginning of my junior year, I purchased a copy of her first collection *Forget-Me-Not* (2019) to support her, but I quickly found her poetry touching and beautiful. This collection contains poems written during high school and discusses the transition from high school to college. Characterized by short and concise poems using colloquial language, Ameel explores sentiments associated with “saudade” in her love poems. The language is direct and allows the reader to connect with her and her words. I felt moved by her work and asked for permission to set her texts to music. She excitedly and enthusiastically agreed because she had never had her work set to music before, and as a gift, she sent me a copy of her second collection *Cardiology* (2020). By the time I started *Of Memories and Dreams*, I had already set four Ameel poems to music. We established a supportive creative relationship backed by trust and encouragement for each other as we continued to work together. I asked her to incorporate her poetry into my song cycle because I wanted to create a work that people can relate to and understand. Ameel’s words would allow that connection to form. I chose to set the poems “Honey” from *Forget-Me-Not*<sup>11</sup> and “Iris” from *Cardiology*<sup>12</sup> as the second and third movements of the song cycle.<sup>13</sup> These poems fit the overall storyline because the speaker recalls memories of a person the speaker had a particular romantic interest for; the protagonist cannot stop thinking about their romantic interest, creating

---

<sup>11</sup> Alexandra J. Ameel, “Honey,” in *Forget-Me-Not* (self-pub., Barnes & Noble Press, 2019), 23.

<sup>12</sup> Alexandra J. Ameel, “Iris,” in *Cardiology* (self-pub., Barnes & Noble Press, 2020), 53.

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix B for these two poems written by Alexandra J. Ameel.

tension that would provide momentum for the narrative cycle. However, I still needed a poem to begin the cycle and properly prepare the story.

Lydia Marshall, a music education major from the TCU class of 2021, shared some of her work with me, but she also informed me that poetry and writing has run through her family, with distant connections to the renowned American poet Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) and direct relations to Helen Lowrie Marshall (1904-1975), Lydia's great aunt. During my sophomore year at TCU, Lydia gave me a rare copy of Helen Lowrie Marshall's *Close to the Heart* (1958)<sup>14</sup>, one of the few published collections of Marshall's poetry. Lyrical and full of beautiful language, I enjoyed reading Marshall's work and immediately thought of ways to set her words to music. I marked three poems from that collection to save them for the perfect project. One of the poems, entitled "Spring Heart Cleaning," fit the song cycle's narrative perfectly because it discusses the memory of a loved one, either romantic or familial, and how the speaker attempts to clear their heart of memories and artifacts that remind them of their loved one.<sup>15</sup> However, they are ultimately unsuccessful, and as a result, the memories, embodied by the next three movements of the cycle, begin to reappear in their heart.

While I found the four poems I needed for my project, I had to comply with copyright law in order to legally complete my song cycle. Because my art songs use intellectual property that belongs to other artists, I am legally required to obtain permission before I can set their texts to music. As a young composer, I was always told to find poetry in the public domain because it is always easier and free to use.<sup>16</sup> I had never set texts protected by copyright law before, so I

---

<sup>14</sup> Helen L. Marshall, "Spring Heart Cleaning," in *Close to the Heart* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1958), 19.

<sup>15</sup> See Appendix B for Marshall's "Spring Heart Cleaning."

<sup>16</sup> "Public Domain" refers to any creative work or materials that are no longer protected by intellectual property laws like patents, trademarks, and copyrights. These works are open to public use and distribution. While there are many contingencies and other factors that affect copyright law, a work is typically protected for 70 years after publication unless the copyright has been renewed.

consulted my composition professor at TCU, Dr. Martin Blessinger, for advice and suggestions for obtaining legal permission. He shared his experience with contracts and helped me draft a contract of my own, outlining financial shares, transfers of rights, and publishing agreements. Because Ameel was a close friend, I did not have trouble reaching out to her and asking her to sign the contract. However, after Helen Lowrie Marshall died in 1975, the rights to *Close to the Heart* remained under the Marshall estate now run by her daughter, Annie Ahern. I faced a little more difficulty contacting her and reaching an agreement, but after a couple email exchanges, I finally secured permission to set Marshall's poems. With these contracts, I could legally set my four selected texts and continue with my project, *Of Memories and Dreams*.<sup>17</sup>

### **I. “Spring Heart Cleaning” - Analysis and Commentary**

The first movement, “Spring Heart Cleaning,” begins the narrative with Helen Lowrie Marshall’s beautiful text. In this story, the protagonist—whom I will refer to with feminine pronouns because all these poems are written by female poets—reluctantly attempts to clear the memories of her past relationship from her heart, but when she finally succeeds, the memories of her past lover begin flooding back in. To depict the emptiness of her heart, I composed “open” and vague harmonies at the opening introduction to the song cycle (Figure 1). With intervals of a fifth, these harmonies feel uncertain and vague, but they are not unsettling because the dissonances are colorful; they cannot be definitively labeled as one single chord. The protagonist appears stuck and struggles to process their emotions.

In measures 14 through 15, on the words “Of memories and dreams,” the tempo and the harmonic rhythm slow down, and the rhythmic motive emphasizes the weak beats of the measure, breaking up the natural momentum of the music (Figure 2). I wanted to emphasize this

---

<sup>17</sup> See Appendix B for the compiled texts arranged in work order.

moment with a slower tempo because when somebody reflects on memories, they are often still and alone with their thoughts. Additionally, the stillness brings attention to the text from which the title of the project comes from in Marshall's poem.

**Open and spacious, with rubato** (♩ = c. 65)

Voice

I cleaned my heart out

Piano

*mp* *semplice*

**Figure 1.** Spring Heart Cleaning m. 1-3: Open-sounding harmonies in introduction

*poco rall.* *a little slower...* *poco rall.*

13 hoard Of mem - o - ries and dreams I'd

Pno.

*poco rall.* *p* *poco rall.*

**Figure 2.** Spring Heart Cleaning m. 14-15: “So Still” Rhythmic Motive

Because the protagonist strips away memories from her heart, I incorporated motives that appear in other movements in the song cycle to portray those memories. Chronologically, I wrote “Spring Heart Cleaning” last, so I was able to pull music from the other three movements and insert them throughout the opening piece. However, I referenced “On the Hillside,” the final movement, most frequently because these two pieces bookend the song cycle. This allowed me to effectively create a cohesive and well-structured musical arc. The rhythmic motive found in

measure 14 and 31 of “Spring Heart Cleaning” (Figure 2) appears throughout “On the Hillside” on the words “so still,” emphasizing the lack of momentum in this musical moment.<sup>18</sup> In measures 18 through 19, a fluttering and meandering solo melody in the piano serves as a transition into a sweeping ostinato pattern, but the melodic contour of the piano line depicts a memory of a butterfly, flying about and reminiscent of the scene illustrated in “On the Hillside.” This pattern from “Spring Heart Cleaning” is a direct copy, albeit transposed, from measures 18 and 19 of “On the Hillside” as if the protagonist is reflecting on the memories she shared with her beloved (Appendix D).

Following this “butterfly” motive, the piece transitions to the middle section beginning in measure 20, and the piano accompaniment transforms into faster, sweeping gesture as the singer describes how she courageously “cleared each room and swept [her heart] clean” until her heart stands bare and empty of all memories (Figure 3).<sup>19</sup> The sweeping ostinato illustrates the movement of a broom moving back and forth. At the conclusion of this middle section, both the aforementioned open harmonies and the rhythmic motive from Figure 2 return; I present each of these ideas in response to the words “bare” and “memory” respectively, mirroring their first appearance in the piece. This allows the listener to link emotional and narrative ideas and develop a musical understanding of the piece.

Following the climax of the opening movement on the words “I saw,” the memories begin to flood back into her heart. In measure 39, the piano takes over and presents a vague quartal harmony twice.<sup>20</sup> The repetition emphasizes the importance of this motive because it references the main theme found in the final movement; However, it is only a fragment of that

---

<sup>18</sup> Refer to Appendix C to view the “So Still” rhythmic figure in both “Spring Heart Cleaning” and “On the Hillside.”

<sup>19</sup> Marshall, 19.

<sup>20</sup> Quartal harmonies are harmonies that are constructed with intervals of a perfect fourth. This strays away from traditional tertian and triadic harmonies. Composers from the Impressionist period (c. 1890-1930) used quintal and quartal harmonies to paint and create scenes through music.

theme.<sup>21</sup> On the words “You’d crept back in,” the voice literally creeps back in in measure 41 to complete the theme from “On the Hillside,” further linking these bookended movements together (Figure 4). To create an additional level of meaning, the piano’s “open” harmonies from the introduction also creep back in and return in measure 42 to provide closure for this first movement. The accompaniment fades away until all that is left is two individual notes that outline a descending minor-third interval (Figure 4). This interval prepares the listener for the main theme of the second movement, “Honey,” built around the minor-third interval. I began “Spring Heart Cleaning” on September 21, 2020, and I finished composing it on November 11, 2020, marking the completion of my song cycle.

The image displays a musical score for measures 22-25 of the song "Spring Heart Cleaning". It consists of two systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment (Pno.).

- System 1 (Measures 22-23):** The vocal line begins with the lyrics "ra - geous - ly, I cleared each room And". The piano accompaniment features a sweeping, arpeggiated accompaniment in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand. The piano part is marked *mf*.
- System 2 (Measures 24-25):** The vocal line continues with the lyrics "swept it clean, I cleared each room with". The piano accompaniment continues with the same sweeping, arpeggiated accompaniment in the right hand and eighth-note bass line in the left hand.

**Figure 3.** “Spring Heart Cleaning” m. 22-25: Sweeping piano accompaniment

<sup>21</sup> See Appendix E to view the comparison of the quartal harmonies between “Spring Heart Cleaning” and “On the Hillside.”

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Spring Heart Cleaning" from measures 38 to 46. It consists of two systems of music. The first system (measures 38-41) includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "saw, You'd crept back". The piano part has dynamics: *rall.*, *f*, *rall.*, and *mf*. A boxed section in the piano part covers measures 39-41. The second system (measures 42-46) also includes a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part has dynamics: *p*, *poco a poco dim.*, and *PPP*. A boxed section in the piano part covers measures 43-45, with the instruction "repeat until bass is almost inaudible".

Figure 4. "Spring Heart Cleaning" m. 38-46: Ending

## II. "Honey" - Analysis and Commentary

Setting Alexandra J. Ameel's "Honey" from her collection *Forget-Me-Not* (2019), the second movement narrates how the protagonist cannot stop thinking about her past lover. She expresses her frustration, but ultimately, she admits that she does not mind having them in her thoughts. Honey has a sticky texture, and the thoughts of her failed relationship linger in her brain like honey. However, honey is sweet, and the protagonist in the narrative realizes that she does not resent her experiences. Instead, she allows herself to reflect on the memories that return to her after she failed to empty her heart in the previous movement.

To depict her thoughts, I composed an ostinato<sup>22</sup> of conjunct eighth notes that runs for all but four measures of the piece (Figure 5). This ostinato, played in the pianist's right hand, is contained within the left hand's chord as if her thoughts were embedded into her brain (Figure

<sup>22</sup> An ostinato is a repeated motive or phrase in music.

6). Additionally, the pianist reads both hands read in bass clef, and the notes are lower in register. With the pedal, they sound muddy and thick as if the piano were creating the consistency and texture of honey.

When the singer enters in measure 2, the first interval matches the last minor-third interval heard in “Spring Heart Cleaning.” In measure 4, the text repeats to emphasize how she cannot rid her past lover from her thoughts, but in this reiteration, I vary the repetition and allow the phrase to develop by raising the starting note. Both opening melodic skips return to the A to highlight how the protagonist is “stuck” (Figure 5). Frustration begins to develop in measure 7 as the singer’s melodic range extends upward beyond the staff and the text continues to repeat. Quickly, however, the range reaches its lowest point in measures 12 through 14 as the singer expresses their reluctance to move on from their previous relationship (Figure 6). The lower range mimics their natural inflection of speech, allowing the singer to communicate directly and intimately. The second time the singer presents the words “We both know that’s not true,” the melody is transposed downward by a whole step to portray how the protagonist feels defeated.

The opening section returns in measure 16, defining this piece’s musical structure as ternary form.<sup>23</sup> In the last measure, the ostinato pattern finally comes to a stop, and the final chord does not cadence to an F major tonic. Instead, the piece lands on the subdominant chord, a B ♭ major triad; the second movement feels incomplete, implying that the protagonist still feels unsettled and has not come to terms with their past relationship.

Using only three lines of text, “Honey” is the shortest and least complex of the four movements. In the narrative, this movement acts as the protagonist’s response to the observation

---

<sup>23</sup> Ternary form follows an ABA pattern in which a large “A” section begins and ends a piece with a contrasting “B” section in between.



that the memories have not gone away despite trying to clear her heart in the first movement. I began composing this movement on April 30, 2020, and I completed the piece on June 7, 2020.

**Deliberately** (♩ = c. 60)

*dolce*

Voice

You're stuck in my brain.

Piano

*pp*  
*con pedale*

*p*

4

You're stuck in my brain. I

Pno.

*mp*

*poco dim.*

**Figure 5.** “Honey” m. 1-6: Ostinato pattern and opening melody

*freely*

12

both know that's not true. We both know that's not true.

Pno.

*p* *semplice*

*pp*

**Figure 6.** “Honey” m. 12-14

### III. “Iris” - Analysis and Commentary

The third movement in the cycle, “Iris,” sets another poem written by Ameel and presents a memory of the couple’s playful disagreement over the significant other’s eye color. The protagonist insists that their lover’s eye color is hazel, but they claim their eyes were brown. Because this poem explores eye color, I wanted to incorporate sweet-sounding dissonances in order to create colorful harmonies. These dissonances include chordal sevenths, added tones, and suspended tones. The main melodic theme of this movement comes from the pentatonic scale and appears throughout the entire piece (Figure 7).<sup>24</sup> I used the pentatonic melody to derive my theme because it generates a pleasant and soothing quality to the piece.

The image shows a musical score for the first six measures of the piece "Iris". The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb major). It begins with a rest in measure 4, followed by the lyrics "You claimed your eyes were brown, \_\_\_\_\_". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). It features a pentatonic opening theme in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include "dim." and "mp".

**Figure 7.** “Iris” m. 4-6: Pentatonic opening theme

Although I wrote the piece in E ♭ major, I wanted to avoid tonicizing E ♭ major until the word “hazel.” Instead, I decided to hint at Eb major by inserting a C minor chord on the word “green” in measure 11 (Figure 8). C minor is the relative minor key to E ♭ major, and I composed the C minor chord to lead the music towards tonicizing E ♭ major. Because the protagonist sees this “hint of green” in their partner’s eyes, she can say with certainty that their eyes are hazel, and as a result, I present an E ♭ major chord for the first time in measure 13 on

<sup>24</sup>The pentatonic scale is a five-note scale that developed in ancient civilizations and still continues to be used today. Most lullabies and folk songs use the pentatonic scale because of its sweet and lyrical qualities.

the word “hazel” to emphasize her confidence (Figure 8). Additionally, the piano accompaniment rhythm accelerates, and the dynamics raise in volume at this compelling moment.

The musical score for "Iris" measures 10-15 is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 10-15) shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand. Dynamics include *poco dim.*, *mp*, and *rit.* The tempo marking is *a tempo*. The lyrics are: "hint of green, that hint of green that made them ha - zel, ha - - - zel." The second system (measures 13-15) shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand. Dynamics include *mf* and *f*. The tempo marking is *a tempo*. The lyrics are: "ha - zel, ha - - - zel."

**Figure 8.** “Iris” m. 10-15: C minor and E  $\flat$  major

After the momentum dies away, the singer sweetly repeats “your eyes were hazel” over beautifully dissonant chords played in the piano. In measure 22, the piano accompaniment changes and plays the familiar “so still” rhythmic motive first presented in “Spring Heart Cleaning” shown in Figure 2. The rhythmic motive represents the stillness the protagonist has when reflecting on that specific memory and when she first noticed their eye color. Figure 9 exhibits the rhythmic motive in “Iris.” I wanted to reference this motive throughout the cycle to link the whole work together and create cohesion between the movements.

20 **Freely**  
*dolce*  
 ha - zel. Your eyes were ha - zel, ha - zel, your eyes were

Pno. *mp* *p* *pp delicato*

**Figure 9.** “Iris” m. 20-22: “So Still” Rhythmic Motive

In the final moments of “Iris,” the melodic theme emerges once more before ending on a quartal harmony in the right hand (Figure 10). This chord references the quartal harmonies in “Spring Heart Cleaning” and “On the Hillside,” but this voicing is notably the exact same as the first sonority in the next and final movement of the song cycle.<sup>25</sup> Like the link between the first and second movement, the final chord in “Iris” allows for a seamless transition between this movement and the final movement, “On the Hillside.” A week after completing “Honey,” I started composing “Iris” on June 13, 2020, and I completed the piece on July 11, 2020.

43 *a tempo*  
 fire - fly.

Pno. *mp* *a tempo* *mf* *rit.*

**Figure 10.** “Iris” m. 43-46: Ending and quartal harmony

<sup>25</sup> See Appendix E to refer to and compare the quartal harmonies found in “Spring Heart Cleaning” and “On the Hillside.”

#### IV. “On the Hillside” - Analysis and Commentary

The final movement, “On the Hillside,” explores another memory in this narrative. This piece highlights themes of love and trust and serves as the most powerful memory in the song cycle. In her poem, Radclyffe Hall creates a lovely and simple scene of two lovers on a hillside, lying in the sweet sunlight. While one of them falls asleep, the other describes the astounding beauty around them. Hall describes how the protagonist’s heart beats faster and fervently as she watches her partner sleep peacefully, but through all this inner excitement, she lets her lover sleep undisturbed. Ultimately, the song cycle fades away as the protagonist falls asleep with their partner.

The piece begins with quartal harmonies that blur any tonic and create a hazy atmosphere. These quartal harmonies are a transposed version of the chords found in measure 39 of “Spring Heart Cleaning.”<sup>26</sup> Although more subtly, I reintroduce the “So Still” rhythmic motive in measures 5 and 6, but the harmonies change unlike previous movements (Figure 11). When the harmonies change, the pianist’s hands begin to cross over one another, and the hand position becomes slightly unconventional. In these two measures, the thumbs cross each other and act as the physical embodiment of the narrative’s couple as they lie on the hillside. Throughout the piece, the pianist’s hands mirror and intersect one another as if the couple were cuddling and facing one another in this intimate story. Like “Honey,” the hand positioning of the piano accompaniment symbolically illustrates the narrative in *Of Memories and Dreams*.

After the piano introduction concludes, the singer presents the main theme. Beginning in measure 7, the theme comes from an A  $\flat$ -major pentatonic scale, similar to the theme in “Iris” (Figure 12). Again, the pentatonic melody creates a calm and gentle mood to match the pleasant scene in Hall’s text. Like the introduction, the chords played in the piano accompaniment mirror

---

<sup>26</sup> Refer to Appendix E to see the quartal harmonies in “Spring Heart Cleaning.”

each other to symbolize the couple on the hillside. Displayed in Figure 12, these harmonic figures and shapes can easily be seen in measures 7 through 9 by looking at the intervallic relationships in the two hands of the piano. First presented in “Spring Heart Cleaning,” the “So Still” rhythmic figure finally appears in its correct place in measures 10 and 11 on the words “So still” (Figure 13).

Delicately ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 55-60$ )

Piano *pp dolce* *p* *rall.*

4 *dolce* *poco rall.*  
Mm Ah

Pno. *pp* *a tempo p* *sotto voce* *poco rall.*

Figure 11. “On the Hillside” m. 1-6: Opening introduction

7 *a tempo*  
You lay so still in the sun - shine, So still in that hot sweet hour, so

Pno. *mp a tempo*

Figure 12. “On the Hillside” m. 7-9: Opening pentatonic melody

The image shows a musical score for two staves. The top staff is a vocal line in 5/4 time, starting at measure 10. The lyrics are: "still, so still in that sweet". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment, also in 5/4 time, starting at measure 10. It is marked with a piano dynamic (*p*) and the instruction *delicato*. The accompaniment features a rhythmic motif of eighth notes in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The tempo/mood instruction *poco cresc.* appears in the second measure of the piano part.

**Figure 13.** “On the Hillside” m. 10-11: “So Still” Rhythmic motive

In addition to this rhythmic figure, the fluttering “Butterfly” melodic theme from “Spring Heart Cleaning” also returns in this movement in measures 18 through 20.<sup>27</sup> In this section, the meandering right hand is the only moving line under a sparse left-hand accompaniment. This allows the listener to focus their attention towards the melody and understand the text painting; as the butterfly moves, the protagonist remembers how partner rested so peacefully that a butterfly landed on their hand, mistaking it for a flower. After the cadence at measure 21, the piano introduces a new accompanimental figure that returns later in the piece.<sup>28</sup> Marked by deep resounding harmonies and crossed thumbs, this accompanimental figure appears when the narrative suggests that the protagonist’s partner is sleeping.

In measure 25, the pentatonic melodic theme returns, but the mood quickly shifts. Throughout this setting of Hall’s text, the protagonist discusses her perspective and what she sees, but in the second stanza of the poem, she begins to describe how she feels internally. The change in perspective calls for a change in music, so I created an ostinato marked by faster rhythms and low sonorities (Figure 14). Reminiscent of the ostinato pattern found in “Honey,”

<sup>27</sup> Refer to Appendix D to see the “Butterfly” motive in both “Spring Heart Cleaning” and “On the Hillside.”

<sup>28</sup> Refer to Appendix F to see the new accompanimental figure in comparison to when it returns in the coda.

the pianist also reads both hands in bass clef, and the text discusses what the protagonist feels. Her heart beats faster, and she feels her blood rushing through her veins. Marked by the “*poco a poco accel. e cresc.*,” the tempo slowly speeds up to match this image.<sup>29</sup> In measure 36, the section arrives at the climax, and the quartal harmonies from the piano introduction return; this moment is structurally similar to the climax in “Spring Heart Cleaning.”<sup>30</sup> The climax slowly dies down as the protagonist repeats the text over a reiteration of the main pentatonic theme played in the piano accompaniment. Then in measure 42 of “On the Hillside,” the “So Still” rhythm appears for the last time, and this statement of the rhythm mirrors the transition in “Spring Heart Cleaning” at measure 31.<sup>31</sup>

**Figure 14.** “On the Hillside” m. 27-28: Faster piano ostinato figure

The coda begins soon after in measure 44 when the protagonist explains that her partner slept peacefully and undisturbed. Taken from measure 21, the piano brings back the “Sleep” accompaniment, and the protagonist sweetly addresses her partner and repeats the word “sleep.” Eventually, the piano accompaniment rises in pitch, and in the final moments of the song cycle, the protagonist follows her lover and slowly drifts off to sleep. To conclude the work, I allow the

<sup>29</sup> “*Poco a poco accel. e cresc.*” means to slowly speed up and increase in volume.

<sup>30</sup> See Appendix E to compare the quartal chords following the climax in both “Spring Heart Cleaning” and “On the Hillside.”

<sup>31</sup> See Appendix G to view the “So Still” pattern used as a transition in “Spring Heart Cleaning” and “On the Hillside.”



pianist's hands to cross and mirror one another.<sup>32</sup> Once in this final hand position, the left-hand thumb repeats the same note with a rhythmic pattern derived from the “So Still” figure, as if it were a heartbeat (Figure 15). When notating the score, I added an extra measure of rest to symbolically illustrate that the couple are sleeping together on the hillside.

I began composing this movement on March 21, 2020, and I completed the composition on April 11, 2020. While this is the first movement I completed, I placed “On the Hillside” last in the narrative because of its peaceful and pleasant ending.

The image shows a musical score for the ending of the piece "On the Hillside" (measures 54-58). It is written for Piano (Pno.) and consists of three staves: a treble clef staff at the top, and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). Measure 54 is marked with a treble clef and a key signature change to three flats. The right hand (RH) plays a melodic line starting with a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes. The left hand (LH) plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The score includes dynamic markings: *pp* *morendo* in measure 54, and *ppp* *al niente* in measure 58. The piece ends with a final rest measure.

**Figure 15.** “On the Hillside” m. 54-58: Ending

### Performance and Publication

On April 23, 2021, *Of Memories and Dreams* premiered at the PepsiCo Recital Hall at Texas Christian University (TCU).<sup>33</sup> At the performance, my friend Kathryn Piña sang soprano while I accompanied her on the piano. The performance was given in fulfillment of Kathryn Piña’s junior recital credit for her bachelor’s degree in vocal performance from TCU.

Throughout the rehearsal process, I attended some of her voice lessons to help play piano and offer artistic insight into the project to help Kathryn and her professor interpret the score.

Following the semester-long rehearsal schedule, we delivered a heartfelt and powerful performance for a large audience. Afterwards, I received numerous compliments and comments

<sup>32</sup> See Appendix H to view a diagram illustrating the final hand position of the song cycle.

<sup>33</sup> See Appendix I to find a QR Code linked to the premiere performance of the work.

about the work, and many music students expressed their interest in singing movements from the cycle for future performances.

Beginning in the summer of 2020, I established a relationship with the Savannah VOICE Festival after writing an art song entitled “Letter to a Young Artist” (2020). A non-profit arts organization in Savannah, Georgia founded in 2013, the Savannah VOICE Festival fosters classical vocal excellence through concerts, events, and educational programs throughout their community in Georgia. Early in 2021, they put me in contact with Dr. Robert Peavler, a professor of voice at Eastern Michigan University, and Dr. Peavler asked me to submit a few compositions to his “call-for-scores” announcement. Dr. Peavler was seeking pieces to create eight anthologies of new music entitled *Modern Music for New Singers: 21st Century American Art Songs* under the publisher North Star Music. His goal was to create two volumes for each voice part (soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, and bass/baritone) with accessible music for the developing classical singer. I submitted eight art songs, two of which included “Spring Heart Cleaning” and “On the Hillside.” Of the eight pieces I submitted, North Star Music accepted two of my compositions to include in their anthologies; “On the Hillside” was one of the two. Thankfully, this publishing company allowed me to retain my copyright ownership over the work rather than transferring all ownership to Dr. Peavler and his publishing house.

Because of its exposure and distribution through North Star Music, “On the Hillside” has received performances outside of Texas. Professor Jonathan Walker-VanKuren, an assistant professor of voice at Lebanon Valley College in Pennsylvania, sent me a video recording of his student performing “On the Hillside” at a student recital on March 1, 2022. I found his student’s performance absolutely beautiful, and I noticed she interpreted the piece very differently. Her performance focused on different words and utilized slower tempos to tell the story. Unlike other

forms of art, music can only be transmitted when there is a performance of some kind, and I find it fascinating that different performers can interpret music and perform it as their own. I am very grateful that pieces from *Of Memories and Dreams* have spread out and reached people across the country. In addition to its art song setting, “On the Hillside” has also been able to survive in different forms.

In addition to art song composition, I am very passionate about writing music for choirs. As I was preparing *Of Memories and Dreams* for Kathryn, I questioned whether any of these four movements could be transformed into a choral composition. I tinkered around with various movements, but finally in December of 2020, I began an arrangement of “On the Hillside” for a mixed chorus. I maintained the original melody line, but I passed it across different voices in order to create a conversation between the couple in the poem’s story. The first instance of the “So Still” rhythmic motive, I eliminated the piano and allowed the choir to sing those words on that rhythm instead, unaccompanied. At the end, I also extended the coda and repeated the word “sleep” in order to allow the piece to fade out gradually over a longer period of time. All voice parts sing “sleep” together in unison, but eventually, the tenors and basses take over as if the treble voices fell asleep. Then the tenors and basses fade out as well. This extension allows the listener to more fully understand the intimate scene in Hall’s poem. Three months after I began, I completed the choral arrangement of “On the Hillside” on March 18, 2021. The piece received its world premiere on April 21, 2022 at the newly inaugurated Van Cliburn Concert Hall at Texas Christian University with a performance by the University Singers, conducted by Dr. Sheri Neill and accompanied by William Talyor. Soon, I hope to arrange the first movement from *Of Memories and Dreams*, “Spring Heart Cleaning,” for a treble chorus to continue to develop and expand the reach of my song cycle.

## Conclusion

For centuries, composers have found innovative ways to combine text and music. Throughout my college career, I spent most of my time composing individual art songs, but I had not ever written a multi-movement song cycle. When life changed at the beginning of the pandemic, I found myself alone with more time to read and compose. After finding Radclyffe Hall's "On the Hill-Side," I decided to invest time in planning, developing, and composing a song cycle. I worked for eight months before completing *Of Memories and Dreams*, a four-movement narrative song cycle which sets poems from three different female poets. Five months after completing the work, I premiered the cycle at Texas Christian University and had the opportunity to share this beautiful narrative between a couple and the time they once shared together.

## Bibliography

- Ameel, Alexandra J. "Honey." In *Forget-Me-Not*, 23. Self-published, Barnes & Noble Press, 2019.
- Ameel, Alexandra J. "Iris." In *Cardiology*, 54. Self-published, Barnes & Noble Press, 2020.
- Marshall, Helen L. "Spring Heart Cleaning." In *Close to the Heart*, 19. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1958.
- Seaton, Douglass. *Ideas and Styles in the Western Music Tradition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Youens, Susan. "Song cycle," Grove Music Online, Oxford Music, January 20, 2001.  
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.26208>
- "What is art song?" Cincinnati Song Initiative. Accessed March 27, 2022.  
<https://www.cincinnati-song-initiative.org/what-is-art-song>.

Appendix

**Appendix A - “On the Hillside” by Marguerite Radclyffe-Hall**

**“On the Hill-Side”** by Marguerite Radclyffe-Hall (1880-1943)

You lay so still in the sunshine,  
So still in that hot sweet hour—  
That the timid things of the forest land  
Came close; a butterfly lit on your hand,  
Mistaking it for a flower.

You scarcely breathed in your slumber,  
So dreamless it was, so deep—  
While the warm air stirred in my veins like wine,  
The air that had blown through a jasmine vine,  
But you slept – and I let you sleep.

## Appendix B - Complete List of Poems

**“Spring Heart Cleaning”** from *Close to the Heart* by Helen Lowrie Marshall (1904-1975)

I cleaned my heart out yesterday.  
I steeled myself to throw away  
Quite all the precious, foolish hoard  
Of memories and dreams I’d stored

Courageously, I cleared each room  
And swept it clean with Reason’s broom,  
Till every little nook was bare  
And not a single memory there.

No dream—no musty might-have been—  
And then I saw—  
You’d crept back in.

**“Honey”** from *Forget-Me-Not* by Alexandra J. Ameel (b. 1998)

You’re stuck in my brain.  
I wish I could get rid of you,  
but we both know that’s not true.

**“Iris”** from *Cardiology* by Alexandra J. Ameel (b. 1998)

You claimed your eyes were brown, but I saw  
that hint of green that made them hazel.  
A shade of in-betweens.

***On the Hill-Side*** by Marguerite Radclyffe-Hall (1880-1943)

You lay so still in the sunshine,  
So still in that hot sweet hour—  
That the timid things of the forest land  
Came close; a butterfly lit on your hand,  
Mistaking it for a flower.

You scarcely breathed in your slumber,  
So dreamless it was, so deep—  
While the warm air stirred in my veins like wine,  
The air that had blown through a jasmine vine,  
But you slept – and I let you sleep.

## Appendix C - The Use of the “So Still” Rhythmic Motive

“Spring Heart Cleaning” - Measure 13-15:

13 *poco rall.* *a little slower...* *poco rall.*

hoard Of mem - o - ries and dreams I'd

Pno. *poco rall.* *p* *poco rall.*

“On the Hillside” - Measure 10-11:

10 still, so still in that sweet

Pno. *p delicato* *poco cresc.*



## Appendix D - Appearances of the “Butterfly” Melodic Motive

“Spring Heart Cleaning” - Measure 18-19:

Pno. *mf*

“On the Hillside” - Measure 18-20:

Pno. *mp*

Freely *molto rall. dolce*

close; a but-ter-fly, a but-ter-fly lit on your

*delicato* *molto rall.*

Appendix E - Use of Quartal Harmonies

“Spring Heart Cleaning” - Measure 38-41:

38 *rall.* *freely*

saw, You'd crept back

Pno. *rall.* *mf*

“On the Hillside” - Measure 34-39:

34 blown through, blown through a jas - mine vine,

Pno. *f*

36 *Freely* *Tempo I°*

The warm air, it

Pno. *f* *p colla voce*

## Appendix F - "Sleep" Accompaniment Figure in "On the Hillside"

"On the Hillside" - Measure 21-23:

Tempo I°

21

hand, Mis - tak - ing it for a flow'r. Mm

Pno.

*mp dolce*

3

"On the Hillside" - Measure 44-47::

Freely, tempo I°

44

*dolce*

slept, you slept, Mm and,

Pno.

*mf*

## Appendix G - Use of “So Still” Figure as a Transition

“Spring Heart Cleaning” - Measure 30-33:

30 *A little faster* (♩ = c. 70)

sin - gle mem - 'ry there, No dream,

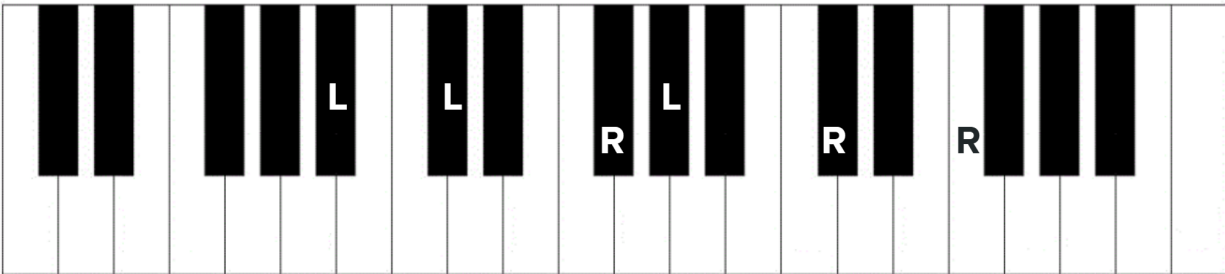
Pno. *p*

“On the Hillside” - Measure 40-43:

40 *freely*

stirr'd, in my veins like wine, But you

Pno. *pp*

**Appendix H - Diagram showing the final hand position**

In this diagram, the letter “L” correlates to the left hand while “R” signifies the right hand. The intervals mirror each other (in this instance, minor and major thirds are all considered thirds). The thumbs on both hands intersect to depict the couple as they cuddle on the hillside.

**Appendix I - QR Code linking to the Premiere Performance (Artifact)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8odCXc2dgM>

# Of Memories and Dreams

*A song cycle for high voice and piano*

Music by  
Patrick Vu



*For Kathryn Piña*

**I. Spring Heart Cleaning**

Text by Helen Lowrie Marshall (1904-1975)

**II. Honey**

Text by Alexandra J. Ameel (b. 1998)

**III. Iris**

Text by Alexandra J. Ameel (b. 1998)

**IV. On the Hillside**

Text by Marguerite Radclyffe-Hall (1880-1943)



***Spring Heart Cleaning*** by Helen Lowrie Marshall (1904-1975)

I cleaned my heart out yesterday.  
I steeled myself to throw away  
Quite all the precious, foolish hoard  
Of memories and dreams I'd stored

Courageously, I cleared each room  
And swept it clean with Reason's broom,  
Till every little nook was bare  
And not a single memory there.

No dream—no musty might-have been—  
And then I saw—  
You'd crept back in.

***Honey*** by Alexandra J. Ameel (b. 1998)

You're stuck in my brain.  
I wish I could get rid of you,  
but we both know that's not true.

***Iris*** by Alexandra J. Ameel (b. 1998)

You claimed your eyes were brown, but I saw  
that hint of green that made them hazel.  
A shade of in-betweens.

I know you said your eyes were nothing special,  
but when I looked at them, I wanted to capture  
that color in a jar like a firefly.

***On the Hillside*** by Marguerite Radclyffe-Hall (1880-1943)

You lay so still in the sunshine,  
So still in that hot sweet hour—  
That the timid things of the forest land  
Came close; a butterfly lit on your hand,  
Mistaking it for a flower.

You scarcely breathed in your slumber,  
So dreamless it was, so deep—  
While the warm air stirred in my veins like wine,  
The air that had blown through a jasmine vine,  
But you slept – and I let you sleep.

For Kathryn Piña

# SPRING HEART CLEANING

Helen Lowrie Marshall  
(1904-1975)

for solo voice and piano

Patrick Vu  
(b. 1998)

Open and spacious, with rubato (♩ = c. 65)

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'Open and spacious, with rubato' with a quarter note equal to approximately 65 beats per minute. The piano part is marked *mp semplice* in the first system, *p* in the second, and *rall.* in the third. The voice part has lyrics: 'I cleaned my heart out', 'yes - ter - day. I cleaned my heart out yes - ter - day,', and 'yes - ter - day. I steeled my-self to throw a - way Quite'. The piano part features various textures, including chords, arpeggios, and melodic lines, with dynamics like *poco cresc.* and *rall.* indicated.

Voice

Piano

Pno.

Voice

Piano

Pno.

Copyright © 2020 Patrick Vu (ASCAP).

"Spring Heart Cleaning," *Close to the Heart* Copyright © 1958 by Helen Lowrie Marshall,  
text used with permission. All rights reserved.

SPRING HEART CLEANING

12 *a tempo* *poco rall.* *a little slower...*

all the pre - cious, fool - ish hoard Of mem - o - ries and

Pno. *mf a tempo* *poco rall.* *p*

15 *poco rall.* *a tempo* *poco rall.*

dreams I'd stored.

Pno. *poco rall.* *mp a tempo* *poco rall.*

18 **Freely, not rushed**

Pno. *mf*

20 **With motion** (♩. = c. 60) *espressivo*

Cou - ra - geous - ly, cou -

Pno. *p* *mp*

22 ra - geous - ly, I cleared each room And

Pno. *mf*

24 swept it clean, I cleared each room with

Pno.

26 *slowing down . . .* Rea<sup>2</sup> son's broom, Till ev - ry nook was

Pno. *molto rall.*

28 **Freely, not rushed** bare And not a sin - gle mem - 'ry

Pno. *mp*

SPRING HEART CLEANING

A little faster (♩ = c. 70)

31

there. No dream, no mus - ty

Pno. *p*

35

might - have been, And then I saw, I

*molto rall.* *a tempo* *rall.*

Pno. *molto rall.* *poco f* *rall.*

38

saw, You'd crept back

*rall.* *freely*

Pno. *f* *rall.* *mf*

42

in.

*p* *poco a poco dim.* *repeat until bass is almost inaudible* *ppp*

Pno.

# HONEY

for solo voice and piano

Alexandra J. Ameel  
(b. 1998)

Patrick Vu  
(b. 1998)

**Deliberately** (♩ = c. 60)

**Deliberately** (♩ = c. 60)

*dolce*

Voice: You're stuck in my brain.

Piano: *pp con pedale*, *p*

4

Voice: You're stuck in my brain. I

Pno.: *mp*, *poco dim.*

7

*espress.*

Voice: wish I could get rid of you, I wish I could, I

Pno.: *mp*, *mf*, *rit.*

10 *a tempo* *rit.* *freely*

wish I could get rid of you, but we both know that's not true.

Pno. *p a tempo* *rit.* *p semplice*

13 *rit.*

We both know that's not true.

Pno. *pp* *rit.*

16 *a tempo*

You're stuck in my brain. You're stuck in my

Pno. *p a tempo* *mp*

19 *rit.*

brain.

Pno. *rit.* *p a tempo* *non rit.*

# IRIS

Alexandra J. Ameel, alt.  
(b. 1998)

for solo voice and piano

Patrick Vu  
(b. 1998)

Not too slow (♩ = c. 75)

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It begins with a tempo instruction: "Not too slow (♩ = c. 75)". The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into three systems. The first system shows the voice part with a whole rest and the piano accompaniment starting with a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The piano part is marked *mp dolce*. The second system starts at measure 4, with the voice line containing the lyrics "You claimed your eyes were brown, \_\_\_\_\_". The piano accompaniment includes a *dim.* marking. The third system starts at measure 7, with the voice line containing the lyrics "you claimed your eyes were brown, but I saw that". The piano accompaniment includes a *mf* marking and a *sotto voce* instruction. The score concludes with a change in time signature to 3/4.



10 *rit.*

hint of green, that hint of green that made them

Pno. *poco dim.* *mp* *rit.*

13 *a tempo*

ha - zel, ha - zel.

Pno. *a tempo* *mf* *f*

16

I saw that hint of

Pno.

19 *rit.* **Freely** *dolce*

green that made them ha - zel. Your eyes were ha - zel, ha -

Pno. *mf* *rit.* *mp* *p*

22

zel, your eyes were ha - zel.

Pno. *pp* *delicato* *p*

Tempo I° *rit.*

25 I saw that hint of green, a shade of in - be - tweens. I

Pno. *poco cresc.* *mp* *rit.*

29 *a tempo* *rit.*

know, I know, I

Pno. *mf* *a tempo* *cresc. poco a poco* *rit.*

Meno mosso

32 know you claimed your eyes were noth - ing spe - cial, you claimed your

Pno. *f* *poco dim.*

34 *rit.* *a tempo*

eyes were noth - ing spe - cial, but when I looked at them,

Pno. *rit.* *mf a tempo*

37 when I looked at them, I want - ed to

Pno. *mp* *poco cresc.*

40 *rit.*

cap - ture that col - or in a jar like a

Pno. *mp* *p rit.*

43 *a tempo*

fire - fly.

Pno. *mp a tempo* *mf rit.*

For Alyssa  
**ON THE HILLSIDE**

for solo voice and piano

Radclyffe Hall  
(1880-1943)

Patrick Vu  
(b. 1998)

Delicately (♩ = c. 55-60)

The musical score is arranged in three systems. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a 4/4 time signature. The voice part is silent, while the piano accompaniment begins with a *pp dolce* dynamic. The second system starts at measure 4, where the voice enters with the lyrics "Mm" and "Ah". The piano accompaniment continues with a *p* dynamic and includes a *poco rall.* marking. The third system starts at measure 7, with the voice singing "You lay so still in the sun - shine, So still in that hot sweet hour, so". The piano accompaniment features a *mp a tempo* dynamic and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The score concludes with a *poco rall.* marking in the piano part.

10 *poco rit.*

still, so still in that sweet hour. You lay so

Pno. *p delicato* *poco cresc.* *mp* *poco rit.*

13 **Poco più mosso** *rit.* *a tempo* *rit.*

still in the sun - shine, you lay so still That the

Pno. *mf* *rit.* *p a tempo* *rit.*

16 *a tempo*

tim - id things of the for - est land Came

Pno. *mp a tempo*

18 **Freely** *molto rall. dolce*

close; a but - ter - fly, a but - ter - fly lit on your

Pno. *mp* *delicato* *molto rall.*

Tempo I°

21 hand, Mis - tak - ing it for a flow'r. Mm

Pno. *mp dolce*

24 You scarce - ly breath'd in your slum - ber, So dream - less it was, so

Pno. *rit. a tempo p rit.*

27 deep. While the warm air

Pno. *mp poco a poco accel. e cresc.*

29 stirr'd, it stirr'd in my

Pno. *mp*

31

veins like <sup>3</sup> wine, The air that had

Pno.

*mf*

34

blown through, blown through a jas - mine vine,

Pno.

*f*

36

Freely Tempo I°

The warm air, it

Pno.

*f*

*p* *colla voce*

40

stirr'd, <sup>3</sup> in my veins like wine, But you

Pno.

*pp*

*freely*

Freely, tempo I°

*dolce*

44

slept, \_\_\_\_\_ you slept, \_\_\_\_\_ Mm \_\_\_\_\_ and,

Pno. *mf*

48

and I let you sleep, \_\_\_\_\_ sleep,

Pno. *mp*

8vb-----

51

Mm \_\_\_\_\_ sleep... \_\_\_\_\_ mm...

Pno. *p*

54

*pp* *morendo* \_\_\_\_\_ *ppp* *al niente*

Pno.



