

AIDS Quilt Songbook

A Lecture Recital

International Congress of Voice Teachers

University for Music and Performing Arts

Orchesterstudio

4 August, 11:30

Presenters

Susan Hurley, D.M.A.

Associate Professor of Voice

Mississippi University for Women

Marcy McKee, D.M.A.

Director of Opera/Assistant Professor of Voice

Northwestern State University of Louisiana

Deborah Popham, D.M.A.

Associate Director/School of Music

Sam Houston State University

William Reber, D.M.A.

Staff Pianist/Director of Choirs

Mississippi University for Women

AIDS Quilt Songbook

- The *AIDS Quilt Songbook* is an ongoing musical response to AIDS based in the traditions of the classical song recital. Composers, writers, and performers create and perform works that deal directly with the complex experiences of living and dying in the age of HIV/AIDS. The *Songbook* is a musical parallel to the *NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt*.

AIDS Quilt Songbook

- Now an international project involving many artists and organizers working both separately and together, the *AIDS Quilt Songbook* was first conceived by American baritone William Parker (1943-1993). Parker commissioned the first 18 pieces, written by 18 different composers from the classical, musical theatre, and jazz traditions, that comprise the original *Songbook*.

AIDS Quilt Songbook

- Since the first 18 songs premiered in New York City in 1992 and were published by Boosey & Hawkes in 1993, numerous new songs have been added. Unfortunately, only a few of the new songs have been published and no second published collection has gathered them all together. These uncollected works include songs for a variety of different voice types and piano, plus chamber compositions. We hope you will enjoy the selections we share with you today.

Classical vocal AIDS fundraisers should include songs about AIDS

“For singers, we are being pretty
unvocal about AIDS.”¹

1 William Parker, quoted by Jeffrey Stock,
foreword to AIDS Quilt Songbook (New
York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1993) iii.

AIDS Quilt Songbook

A Musical Companion to the *Quilt*

Original volume 1993 Boosey & Hawkes
18 songs for baritone

Additional songs 1993 – present
Dozens of new additions
For multiple voice types
No second collection is yet published

“Across the Sea”

- From the Musical *TITANIC*
- Words and music by Kevin Oldham
 - Written circa 1991
- "Whether you stay alive or not, seems the trivial part. It's your work itself that must have a life of its own. If I can make sure that my music will continue to have life, that seems to be the more important consideration."²

- To obtain a score, please contact Stephen Rotondaro at kevinoldhammusic@gmail.com

Kevin Oldham

- (1960 - 1993)
- Diagnosed with HIV in 1988
- Oldham performed solo recitals at Carnegie Hall, and the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. along with other performances in the USA and Europe. His orchestral debut was as piano soloist in Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* with the Detroit Symphony. ³

“One Child”

- Music by Gregg Kallor
- Words by Sara Cooper
 - 2014
- Score available in *Gregg Kallor: Collected Songs for Voice and Piano* (Gregg Kallor Music)
 - www.greggkallor.com

AIDS Activism

- The song “Away, but not far away” draws parallels between “the Plague Years” of the AIDS pandemic in the U.S.A. and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS around the world today.
- A reference is made to a 1992 action by AIDS activist group ACT-Up, in which activists scattered the ashes of deceased loved ones on the White House lawn.⁴

“Away, but not far away”

- Music by Robert Aldridge
- Words by Herschel Garfein
- 2012

- Score: Contact the composer at bob@robertlivingstonaldridge.com

Robert Aldridge

- b. 1954
- Director of Music, Head of Composition, Rutgers University Mason Gross School of the Arts.
- A composer of most genres. Dr. Aldridge is the Composer-in-Residence at Brevard Music Festival and has been at The American Dance Festival, University of Minnesota, and the University of Colorado.⁵

Herschel Garfein

- b. 1958
- Active composer, librettist, and stage director.
- Collaborated with Robert Aldridge by writing the libretto to Aldridge's opera *Sister Carrie* and *Elmer Gantry*.
- Garfein's contributions to the *AIDS Quilt Songbook* include lyrics to "Away, but not far away" and "Ordinary," plus words and music for "No Giggly Time."

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“Her Final Show”

- Music by Drew Hemenger
 - Words by Rafael Campo
 - 2012
- Score available in the New Music Shelf
Anthology of New Music for Tenor, volume I.

“Ordinary”

- Music by Fred Hersch
- Words by Herschel Garfein
 - 2012
- To obtain a score, please contact me at slhurley@muw.edu or susan.hurley@me.com

HIV Medications

- The 2012 song, “Ordinary,” tells us how HIV medication makes possible an ordinary life. Several medications are listed by name as part of a “pharmaceutical rosary” of thanks.
- Several songs discuss HIV medications and side effects.

Summary

- The 5 songs you heard today are only a tiny sample of the uncollected *AIDS Quilt Songbook*, which includes several dozen songs.
- Scores exist for a variety of voice types and chamber music combinations.

Looking for repertoire?

- Download a repertoire list at <https://www.susanhurleysoprano.com/links>
- Or contact Susan Hurley at slhurley@muw.edu or susan.hurley@me.com

Acknowledgments

- **The *AIDS Quilt Songbook* was conceived in 1991 by the late baritone William Parker. We extend our gratitude to Parker and to all of the composers, poets, and performing artists who launched and then expanded this deeply meaningful project, building a body of work from which we – and future generations – may now draw to honor the millions of people whose lives have been forever changed by HIV.**