

Robert Edwin, Associate Editor

# I Am the Very Model of a Modern Two Year Repertoire

Elizabeth Gerbi



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AS INCREASING NUMBERS OF STUDENTS ATTEND one of our nation's 1,200 community colleges with the ambition of either earning a transfer credential or immediately entering the music theater workforce,<sup>1</sup> it becomes increasingly imperative that we consider the unique needs of the late adolescent performer who may endeavor to synthesize voice technique, movement, and casting suitability within a much smaller time frame than in generations past. In fact, many of these performers may effectively be creating their personal “brand” after only a handful of lessons. Pedagogically advisable or not, the diverse body of students who have historically relied upon two-year schools for financial, academic, or personal reasons—students of color, first-generation college students, differently-abled performers, and, most notably in the last few years, trans students—is of growing interest to established baccalaureate programs in the post-*Hamilton* and Deaf West *Spring Awakening* era. If Ali Stroker's sensational triumph at the 2019 Tony Awards is any indication, a new, even more inclusive age of casting is well nigh. And, where better might talent representatives and conservatory scouts find fresh voices and faces to capture the spirit of the innovative, “nontraditional” theatrical scores being conceived even as I write?

In addition, I safely assume that many readers of this column are developing instructors who, in order to obtain academic experience, may very well be settling into their first applied studio position within one of the country's growing number of accredited two-year music and theater programs. As a Departmental Part-Time Supervisor and Lesson Coordinator, I have mentored several of these instructors. Part of that process has been to compose a “real-world” repertoire list based on my decades of experience as a musical director—and, perhaps more critically, my personal access to the closed-door comments of creative teams and casting directors—as well as my adjudication of, at last count, approximately 1,000 music theater students in state and community college programs, hearing again and again the distinction between what “sounded like good ideas” and what became truly effective in realization. This “predetermined system of progression”<sup>2</sup> is not intended as a panacea or even a literal model, but allows the new instructor, particularly those who are new to the music theater genre, a point of effective departure when considering the whole performer—voice, body, emotional age, ethnic-

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ity, movement style, and gender—in order to create an individualized plan for each student.

The following presents a series of four semester benchmarks that allow individual performers to explore their unique assets within a carefully scaffolded body of literature, specifically designed with the vocal hygiene of new and developing singers in mind. These selections also were chosen to capture typical emotional and social concerns of late adolescent performers, featuring thematic texts and subtexts in which they might explore their holistic theatrical “voice.”

Music theater auditions generally require contrasting pairs of the following four categories: 1) register (classical “legit,” mix, and belt); 2) tempo (up-tempo and ballad); 3) overall interpretive tone (humorous and dramatic); and 4) chronological period (“Golden Age” or earlier and contemporary). By the third semester, students should be able to present all eight categories within two selections; for example, a Golden Age, up-tempo, legit, humorous work paired with a contemporary, ballad, belted, dramatic work, with an additional two works selected on the basis of specific technical or interpretive requirements. By graduation, students also should have included at least one work from outside the music theater canon (NFM), which may include but is not limited to R & B, rap, country, alternative, rock, and folk.

The pieces recommended here are classified with these designations:

- L: Classical/ Legit, CT-dominant, Mode 2
- HM: Head Mix, CT/TA, Mixture of Modes 1 and 2
- BT: Belt, TA-dominant, Mode 1
- UT: Up-tempo
- B: Ballad
- H: Humorous or light in tone
- D: Dramatic
- PG or G: Pre-Golden Age or Golden Age
- C: Contemporary
- NFM: Not from a musical
- (\*): Authentic period style, written in one era but categorized as another (e.g., PG \*1920s/2000s means written in 2000, but is appropriate to sing for a pre-Golden Age audition).

This is by no means a comprehensive list, but a guided series of repertoire suggestions as one way to pose a

progressive series of vocal and dramatic challenges for developing music theater artists. Instructors are always advised to use their best judgment and to assume that what is an ideal elementary song for one singer may prove an advanced challenge for another.

Most of the following songs are considered age appropriate for older teens and young adults in their early twenties of *any* ethnicity; more specific age, body type, ethnic, or other requirements are listed when deemed essential to creative intent of authors, as dictated by license holders, or represent an assumed industry standard. Teachers are advised to use their best judgment in terms of character or singer’s gender; generally, lyrics that only require pronoun substitutions to lyrics are deemed appropriate. Also, I have only included composers’ names on the list below for scanability; however, this in no way suggests that lyricists are less responsible for the generation of quality literature; they should always be credited fully in performance and scholarly materials.

### 1st Semester

Contextual notes:

- Since it may be a student’s first semester of formal study, lessons may focus on establishing core functional vocabulary (dynamics, register, diction, vibrato, etc.), especially with the use of vocal jury rubric to aid student in synthesizing adjudicator feedback.
- Students should be concurrently enrolled in a Freshman Performing Arts Seminar during the first seven weeks of the semester, which requires students to produce a four semester program plan and concrete “next step goals” (i.e., transfer or entry level employment); it is recommended to employ at least one familiar work at juries that will be applicable to these goals.
- Mainstage musical auditions are scheduled for the first two weeks of classes. Audition excerpts from the selected show will be posted and distributed during July and August. Singers may wish to use first lessons for preparation of these materials with their instructor, allowing for instructor to assess technical facility.

### Soprano/Mix/Belt

- “Another Suitcase in Another Hall” (*Evita*), Andrew Lloyd Webber (HM, B, D, C).  
Lyric ballad sung by the teenaged mistress of Juan Peron after being expelled by his new partner, the

ferocious and unapologetic social climber Eva—very appropriate for lighter voices.

- “In My Own Little Corner” (*Cinderella*), Richard Rodgers (HM, B, H, G).  
Sung by Cinderella, who retreats to her imagination in order to deal with the horrors of her stepfamily.
- “I Don’t Know How to Love Him” (*Jesus Christ Superstar*), Andrew Lloyd Webber (HM, B, D, C).  
Mary Magdalene ponders her complex relationship with Jesus; appropriate orientation to rock/folk singing for a lighter voice.
- “Part of Your World” (*The Little Mermaid*), Alan Menken (HM, B, H, C).  
Ariel’s “I want” song; Broadway key (G major) should be used to highlight registral climax; friendly selection for new singers.
- “Some Things are Meant to Be” (*Little Women*), Jason Howland (HM, B, D, C).  
Performed as a duet between Beth and Jo in the show, though works effectively as a solo for the dying Beth out of context; highly appropriate for lighter voices working on upper mix and longer, legato phrases.
- “Times are Hard for Dreamers” (*Amelie*), Daniel Messe (HM/B, UT/B, D, C).  
Amelie explains to her confidants (the audience) the unusual lens with which she sees the world; ideal for light “chest” voices (Mode 1/TA) and actors with a “different” perspective.

### Mezzo Soprano/Mix/Belt

- “Mama Who Bore Me” (*Spring Awakening*), Duncan Sheik (BT, B, D, C).  
Sung by Wendla, whose curiosities and fears regarding her changing adolescent body and emerging sensuality go unheeded by her mother; low tessitura (A<sub>3</sub>-A<sub>4</sub>), useful for isolating Mode 1/TA (“chest”) in young singers and new belters.
- “Mama, I’m a Big Girl Now” (*Hairspray*), Marc Shaiman (HM/B, UT, H, C).  
Tracey assures her skeptical mother Edna that she is a capable, confident young woman of the 1960s; important for context for “big girl” to read as *double entendre*; exaggerated brightness in voice helpful for coaxing reluctant mix-belters to experiment with “twang.”

- “Pulled” (*Addams Family*), Andrew Lipka (BT, UT, H, C).  
The former princess of darkness, Wednesday Addams, finds herself entering a teenage romance, and is thoroughly disgusted by the thought of happiness; most suitable for a “Wednesday” physical type (a degree of stoic physical comedy required), reliable comic showpiece for performers who can capture the internal battle.
- “Stepsister’s Lament” (*Cinderella*), Richard Rodgers (BT, UT, H, G).  
Sung by Cinderella’s stepsisters at the ball after receiving their comeuppance; very comic, speech-oriented piece, “character over beauty”; helpful for belt mix and exploration of a “character” sound.

### Tenor

- “All Good Gifts” (*Godspell*), Stephen Schwartz (L/HM, B, D, C).  
Lamar leads the tribe in a tribute of thanks to God; a rare opportunity for a larger, more legit tenor voice in 1970s folk music theater repertoire.
- “Dancing Through Life” (*Wicked*), Stephen Schwartz (HM, UT, H, C).  
The cocky young Fiyero encourages his peers to assume his ne’er-may-care worldview; consider this choice for students with a certain 1990s “boy band” appeal.
- “Love, I Hear” (*A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*), Stephen Sondheim (L, B, H, G).  
Hero sings of (what else?) the joy of being painfully stricken by love at first sight; vocally forgiving though melodically challenging selection, helpful for improving pitch accuracy.
- “On the Street Where You Live” (*My Fair Lady*), Frederick Loewe (L, B, H, G).  
Freddy Emsford-Hill sings a conditional ballad conveying his surprising feelings for the strange but fascinating Eliza; helpful piece to reinforce strong legato in a young romantic *ingénue*.
- “Take a Chance on Me” (*Little Women*), Jason Howland (B, UT, H, C).  
Somewhat prematurely, Laurie begs his newfound pal Jo to consider him a worthy companion “now and forever”; very much a “young” teenaged perspective.

- “The Old Red Hills of Home” (*Parade*), Jason Robert Brown (HM, B, D, C).  
A young confederate soldier performs a musical prelude to the show, serving as a ghost and homage to the late Antebellum south.
- “Wonder of Wonders” (*Fiddler on the Roof*), Jerry Bock (BT, UT, H, G).  
A blissfully happy Motel the Tailor sings a song of triumph to his newly betrothed, Tzeitel; although from 1964, generally considered to be the “last” great traditional Golden Age musical score.

### Baritone/Bass

(Note: most “bass” selections for young singers feature a C<sub>3</sub>-E<sub>4</sub> range, and are generally appropriate for either voice classification based on the individual voice’s weight and color. However, baritones who want to work as music theater performers should be encouraged to healthfully explore the upper end of their working range.)

- “I Can Do That” (*A Chorus Line*), Marvin Hamlisch (BT, UT, H, C).  
“Traditional light-hearted song and dance” performed by Mike, a brilliant tap dancer who has an easy, confident physical style; good showpiece for a skilled tap dancer.
- “Oh What a Beautiful Mornin’” (*Oklahoma*), Richard Rodgers (L, UT, H, G).  
Curley the cowboy strides up confidently to Laurie’s house, in full belief that the girl he loves will go to the box social with him; helpful piece to reinforce legato singing and explore mixed upper voice in young baritones.
- “River in the Rain” (*Big River*), Roger Miller (BT, B, D, C).  
Sung by a contemplative Huck Finn in a duet with Jim soon upon escaping on their river raft (easily accommodated to solo, where the river serves as “scene partner”); calls for authentic southern MI accent and traditional country stylisms; composed by the country western legend Roger Miller, highly authentic sounding example of country repertoire.
- “Ten Minutes Ago” (*Cinderella*), Richard Rodgers (BT, UT, H, G).

Prince Charming sings while waltzing with the mysterious, yet unrevealed Cinderella.

### 2nd Semester

Contextual notes:

- Students should be asked to return to lessons with compiled jury feedback to establish semester goals.
- Students should present a prospective pair of contrasting works at juries.

### Soprano/Mix/Belt

- “I Could Have Danced All Night” (*My Fair Lady*), Frederick Loewe (L, UT, H, G).  
A giddy Eliza on the eve of her triumph; one of the few truly legit up-tempo staples in the Golden Age repertoire; the actor must perfect Standard Royal British Dialect and ascend to G<sub>5</sub> on final pitch (not the C<sub>5</sub> written in many anthologies).
- “If I Loved You” (*Carousel*), Richard Rodgers (L, B, D, G).  
Conditional ballad sung by a lovestruck Julie Jordan to the “bad boy” Billy, later unfolding into a complex and flawed relationship; optional Maine accent, very helpful for developing fullness in upper extension and legato.
- “Mister Snow” (*Carousel*), Richard Rodgers (L/HM, B, H, G).  
The sweet and silly Carrie sings of her head-over-heels love for her betrothed, the fishy smelling Mr. Snow; optional Maine accent; one of the few truly humorous ballads for a legit soprano in the Golden Age repertoire.
- “Much More” (*The Fantasticks*), Harvey Schmidt (L/HM, UT/B, H, G).  
A nuanced ballad sung by the sixteen year old Luisa, who inspires wild and imaginative flights of fancy through different vocal colors; appropriate for comparing chest (Mode 1) and chest mixes (Modes 1 and 2), as well as encouraging broad, committed character choices.
- “Practically Perfect” (*Mary Poppins*), George Stiles (HM, UT, H, C).  
Introduces the character of Mary Poppins to the Banks household; generally mix tessitura with single legit G<sub>5</sub> at the end, requires flawless Standard British Royal Accent.

### Mezzo Soprano/Mix/Belt

- “Buenos Aires” (*Evita*), Andrew Lloyd Webber (BT, UT, D, C).  
Sung by the dynamic, teenaged Eva as she unceremoniously abandons her poverty-stricken family to begin her rapid social ascent; *contemporary casting now dictates Eva be of South American descent*; very strong final audition cut for a belter with an easy low range, demonstrating E<sub>3</sub>-E<sub>5</sub> flexibility.
- “Fly, Fly Away” (*Catch Me If You Can*), Marc Shaiman and Scott Whitman (BT, B, D, C).  
“Eleven O’ Clock,” gospel inspired showpiece for the flight attendant Brenda, who professes her love for the elusive Frank; excellent improvisational opportunity.
- “I Cain’t Say No” (*Oklahoma*), Richard Rodgers (BT, UT, H, G).  
The sexually adventurous Ado Annie articulates her plight to a slightly less confident Laurie; actress must be strong comedienne who embraces midwestern dialect; opportunity for country-western stylisms.
- “It Won’t Be Long Now” (*In the Heights*), Lin-Manuel Miranda (BT, UT, H/D, C).  
Introduces the worldly Vanessa, who dreams of leaving her Washington Heights neighborhood for a better life (and better love) downtown; *important for context to be an actor of color*; different cuts permit either high belt or sensitive lower range to be featured.
- “Shadowland” (*The Lion King*), Lebo M. and Hans Zimmer (HM/B, B, D, C).  
Nala the lion mourns her dying country; *important for context to be performed by a black singer*; one of the few opportunities to demonstrate South African pop sensibility in music theater literature.

### Tenor

- “I Believe” (*The Book of Mormon*), Trey Parker and Matt Stone (BT, UT/B, H, C).  
Elder Price confronts the bad guy (a Ghanan warlord) and his inner demons through a profession of his faith; *important for context to be a “Mormon exemplar”*; requires a very bright tone and “unflappable perkiness.”
- “I’m Alive” (*Next to Normal*), Tom Kitt (BT, UT, D, C).

Sung by the long-dead Gabe, who continues to haunt his mother’s psychotic delusions despite her treatment; solid showpiece for a skilled soft rock singer.

- “Leaning on a Lamp-Post” (*Me and My Gal*), Noel Gay (BT, UT, H, PG/1930s).  
Sung by the cockney Bill, en route to see his sweetheart, Sally; lilting, nostalgic, whimsical tune; East End accent imperative.
- “Maria” (*West Side Story*), Leonard Bernstein (HT, B, D, G).  
A love struck Tony attempts to verbalize his immediate, sweeping love for a young woman he’s only just met by reciting her name again and again; helpful for exploring tenor’s head mix with varying degrees of chest throughout upper range, including reinforced falsetto (Mode 2).
- “Piragua” (*In the Heights*), Lin-Manuel Miranda (BT, UT, H, C).  
Sung by the Spanish-speaking, otherwise unnamed “Piragua Guy” of early 2000s Washington Heights; *important for context for actor to be of Hispanic descent*; performs with accent; fantastic show piece for a young tenor with a legit, mixed A<sub>4</sub>.
- “Winter’s on the Wing” (*The Secret Garden*), Lucy Simon (HM/BT, UT, D, C).  
The teenaged Dickon communes with his natural surroundings; optional (but strongly recommended) Yorkshire accent; ideal for a singer familiar with Celtic folk-rock stylisms.

### Baritone/Bass

- “All I Need is the Girl” (*Gypsy*), Jule Styne (BT, UT, H, G).  
Tulsa is a “street-alley” Gene Kelly in this ersatz song and dance number; one sung E<sub>4</sub>, otherwise in speech range; ideally suited for a strong dancer.
- “A Lot of Livin’ to Do” (*Bye Bye Birdie*), Charles Strouse (BT, UT, H, C).  
Sung by the fictional Conrad Birdie, a late 1950s teen sensation who is highly reminiscent of a young Elvis Presley; one of the earliest incorporations of R & B rockabilly music in a musical score, should be classified as “contemporary” instead of “Golden Age” despite year of production (1960).

- “Camelot” (*Camelot*), Frederick Loewe (BT, UT, H, G). Sung by a young King Arthur to his new bride, Guenivere, to assuage her nerves about the strange new kingdom that they will rule; very speech-oriented declamation with medium-low tessitura (C<sub>3</sub>-brief D<sub>4</sub>).
- “If I Can’t Love Her” (*Beauty and the Beast*), Alan Menken (L, B, D, C). Act I Finale of the show, sung by the grieving Beast who believes he has lost Belle forever; a climatic F<sub>4</sub>, but otherwise modest tessitura.
- “Lonely Town” (*On the Town*), Leonard Bernstein (L, B, D, G). A melancholy Gabey feels the unique brand of loneliness that can only be felt in New York City at night; beautiful lyric ballad for a large, rich baritone voice.
- “When I First Saw You” (*Dreamgirls*), Henry Krieger (B, B, D, C). Curtis Taylor (highly reminiscent of producer Berry Gordy), Jr. sings to Deena (Diana Ross), who is uncertain that she has chosen the right path by professionally and personally choosing him; *important for context to be performed by a black singer*; sentimental and rarely-sung selection, highly appropriate for students skilled in R & B ornamentation.
- “Astonishing” (*Little Women*), Jason Howland (HM/BT, UT/B, D, C). Jo March’s “epiphany” song; high mix-belt that may live in some soprano’s “sweet spot” (although should not be performed if range is not easily accessible).
- “I Have Confidence” (*The Sound of Music*), Richard Rodgers (HM, UT, H, G). Originally penned for the film adaptation starring Julie Andrews, but has been incorporated into officially licensed iterations of the show (key of F major), sung by the determined Maria en route to her governess appointment to care for the seven Von Trapp children.
- “No One Else” (*Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812*), Dave Molloy (HM, B, D, C). The lonesome Natasha pines for her love, Andrey; a challenging work, requiring but enabling a flexible soprano voice to demonstrate true “loft” (Mode 2) in a contemporary musical setting.
- “Think of Me” (*The Phantom of the Opera*), Andrew Lloyd Webber (L, B, D, C). The operatic debut of the new star of the Paris Opera, Christine Daae; ensure that final modulation goes to original key of F major; strong selection for young soprano who can sing the *ossia* (written or stylistically appropriate substitution) a cappella.
- “Watch What Happens” (*Newsies*), Alan Menken (HM/B, UT/B, D, C). Aspiring journalist Katherine chooses to risk her future by covering the newsboy strike of 1899; although commonly assigned to developing singers, requires reinforced mix-belt to E<sup>b</sup><sub>5</sub>.
- “Your Daddy’s Son” (*Ragtime*), Stephen Flaherty (L/B, B, D, C). Sarah apologizes to the illegitimate child that she abandoned; *generally considered necessary to be sung by a performer of color by industry standard*; demands an “Audra MacDonald” level of dexterity with mix-belt (Modes 1 and 2) and legit upper register (Mode 2).

### 3rd Semester

#### Contextual notes:

- It is strongly advised that students intending to transfer prepare their intended audition repertoire (two contrasting selections, covering all eight categories) for fall juries so that students may use vetted works for January-March transfer auditions.
- Instructors should consider more demanding acting challenges for students based on the student’s unique personality and interests.

#### Soprano/Mix/Belt

- “Another Life” (*Bridges of Madison County*), Jason Robert Brown (HM, B, D, C). Marian sings in a flashback sequence her “goodbye” to her young husband Robert; highly appropriate for a folk *chanteuse* in the manner of Joni Mitchell or Joan Baez.

#### Mezzo Soprano/Mix/Belt

- “Nothing” (*A Chorus Line*), Marvin Hamlisch (BT/HM, UT/B, D, C). Morales explains through veiled terms the racially motivated discouragement she encountered (and later

triumphed over) in becoming a Broadway performer; *important for the context to be performed by a singer of Hispanic descent*; powerful story song for capable actress.

- “Show Off” (*The Drowsy Chaperone*), Lisa Lambert/Greg Morrison (BT, UT, H, PG\* 1920/2000s).  
Written for the star Janet, ironically declaring that she no longer wishes to be the center of attention; famously long C<sub>5</sub> at end of audition cut, great piece for dancer.
- “So Much Better” (*Legally Blonde*), Laurence O’Keefe (BT (high), UT, H, C).  
The victorious Elle Woods, Malibu debutante, who enjoys her first major academic win over her ex-boyfriend Werner; any ethnicity, but we encourage students to think of “blondeness” as “state of mind.”
- “Waiting for Life” (*Once on this Island*), Stephen Flaherty (BT, B, D, C).  
The young, passionate Ti Mouné’s “I want” song from this Caribbean re-telling of “The Little Mermaid”; *important for the context to be performed by a very young looking black singer*; good showcase for easy high belt (sustained D<sup>#</sup><sub>5</sub>)

### Tenor

- “Beauty School Dropout” (*Grease*), Warren Casey (HM, B, H, C/1950s nostalgic score).  
“Teen Angel” descends from the heavens to reassure Frenchy, who has (literally) dropped out of beauty school; teen “doo-wop” idol feel, good opportunity to incorporate new “falsetto” (Mode 2).
- I Only Want to Say [Gethsemane]” (*Jesus Christ Superstar*), Andrew Lloyd Webber (BT, B, D, C).  
Sung by a conflicted Jesus on the eve of his crucifixion; highly challenging and virtuosic rock *ossia* section in final bridge/cadence that are essential to piece’s dramatic effectiveness.
- “Let it Sing” (*Violet*), Jeanine Tesori (BT, UT, D, C).  
Inspirational anthem sung by Flick to the despondent Violet; *important for context to be performed by a black singer, though may be excerpted in cabaret performance for any ethnicity*; sensational show piece for students with gospel riffing abilities.
- “Why God Why” (*Miss Saigon*), Claude-Michel Schoenberg (BT, B, D, C).

A frustrated GI, Chris, who has unexpectedly fallen for a very young Vietnamese girl; character is an early twenty something American and has a vocally demanding climax with very high tessitura; excellent choice for a committed actor who can sing the final chorus easily.

- “You’ve Got to be Carefully Taught” (*South Pacific*), Richard Rodgers (HM, UT, D, G).  
Lieutenant Cable realizes, observing the tacit racism of his friend who claims she “can’t help it,” that he can; must be performed by a capable actor who understands full text and subtext.

### Baritone/Bass

- “C’est Moi” (*Camelot*), Frederick Loewe (L, UT, H, G).  
“Lancelot the Great” sings of his accomplishments and his none-too-modest ego; self-adulation is more critical than physical appearance in this instance; great comic showpiece for legit baritone voice.
- “Me” (*Beauty and the Beast*), Alan Menken (L, UT, H, C).  
Sung by the (literally) “cartoonishly large” Gaston, ineffectively attempting to win over Belle with brawn over brains; *important for context for performer to be physically imposing, though this quality may be liberally interpreted.*
- “Make Them Hear You” (*Ragtime*), Stephen Flaherty (HM/BT, B, D, C).  
Coalhouse Walker, Jr.’s call to arms, perhaps in realization that he stands on his last battlefield, and asks his comrades to ensure his suffering was not in vain; *important for context to be sung by a black performer.*
- “Muddy Water” (*Big River*), Roger Miller (BT, UT, D, C).  
Sung by the character of Jim, Huck Finn’s runaway slave companion; *important for context to be sung by a black performer*; unusually low tessitura (C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>), allows for gospel stylization.

### 4th Semester

Contextual notes:

- It is strongly recommended that all students explore prospective job postings early in the semester with their instructor (especially on [www.playbill.org](http://www.playbill.org)), in order to identify a series of prospective entry level

singing opportunities (stock, regional theater, cruise lines, and entertainment parks, etc.).

- If a student has not yet presented a NFM piece, this should be attempted in the fourth semester. *Creativity is encouraged!* (As cited in Jonathan Flom’s wonderful text *Get the Callback*, I once had a colleague who scored an impressive amount of callbacks singing the “Theme from the Gummy Bears!”<sup>3</sup> Assume that anything effective and unexpected can work for the right voice).
- Consider student interests and background: Bollywood, K-Pop, Arab classical, Hip-hop, “Blue-eyed” Soul, Celtic folk, Reggaton, Gospel, even Rap. The sky’s the limit, and this a chance for students to assert their identity while demonstrating their marketable, unique brand.
- If appropriate, students should consider a self-accompanied work this semester during their jury assessment.
- Various NFM options include the following repertoire items. Please note: a combination of artist and composer names has deliberately been included on the basis of which was more likely to yield specific reference recordings (i.e., specific examples of keys, tempi, and arrangements that are friendly to developing instruments; caution is suggested when using other cover editions, although exploring all available adaptations for purposes of comparative listening is highly encouraged); students should be reminded always to credit both composer and lyricist for performance or scholarly purposes.

#### Soprano/Mix/Belt

- “All Through the Night,” Cyndi Lauper (HM, B, H; 1980s pop).
- “Almost There” (*Princess and the Frog*), Randy Newman (HM/BT, UT, H; 1930s New Orleans Swing).
- “Big Yellow Taxi,” Joni Mitchell (HM, UT, D; 1960s folk); excellent for light, lyric voices.
- “Girls Just Wanna Have Fun,” Cyndi Lauper (HM, UT, H; 1980s pop).
- “I Will Always Love You,” Whitney Houston (HM, B, D; 1990s power ballad); strong show piece for “riffer” with large working range.
- “Winter,” Tori Amos (HM, B, D; 1990s alternative).

- “You Can’t Hurry Love,” Diana Ross (HM, UT, H; 1960s Motown).

#### Mezzo Soprano/Mix/Belt

- Virtually the entire Carol King canon, including: “Beautiful,” “I Feel The Earth Move,” “It’s Too Late,” “One Fine Day,” “So Far Away.”
- “Jolene,” Dolly Parton (BT, UT, D; 1970s country rock).
- “I Can’t Make You Love Me,” Bonnie Raitt (BT, B, D; 1990s pop/country ballad).
- “I Say A Little Prayer,” Dionne Warwick (BT, UT, D; 1960s pop).
- “I Will Remember You,” Sarah McLachlan (HM, B, D; 1990s ballad).
- “The Rose,” Amanda McBroom (HM, B, D: 1970s ballad).
- “Today I Met the Boy I’m Gonna Marry,” Darlene Love (BT, UT, H; 1960s Motown).
- “Turn the Beat Around,” Gloria Estefan (BT, UT, H; Latin pop/disco).

#### Tenor

- “59th Street Bridge,” Simon & Garfunkel (1970s folk).
- “Against All Odds,” Phil Collins (HM, B, D; 1980s pop ballad).
- “All My Loving,” Beatles (BT, UT, H; 1960s British rock).
- “Crazy Train,” Ozzy Osbourne (BT, UT, D; 1980s heavy metal).
- Virtually the entire Billy Joel canon, including “And So it Goes,” “Uptown Girl,” “She’s Got a Way.”
- “Glory,” John Legend (HM, B, D; Gospel/R&B/Rap).
- “How Sweet It Is (to be Loved by You),” Marvin Gaye (BT, UT, H; 1960s soul/Motown).
- “I’ll Be There,” Jackson Five (HM, UT, H; Late Motown).
- “I Want to Know What Love Is,” Foreigner (HM, B, D; 1980s rock).
- “Livin’ La Vida Loca,” Ricky Martin (BT, UT, H; 2000s Latin pop).
- “Jessie’s Girl,” Rick Springfield (BT, UT, H; 1980s pop rock).
- \*Young Michael Jackson songs very useful for flexible unchanged voices and countertenors.

#### Baritone/Bass

- “All You Need Is Love,” Beatles (BT, UT, H; 1960s British rock).



- “Blowing in the Wind,” Bob Dylan (BT, B, D; 1960s folk).
- “Jailhouse Rock,” Elvis Presley (BT, UT, H; 1950s rhythm and blues).
- “Layla,” Eric Clapton (BT, B, D; 1970s blues rock).
- “Light My Fire,” Jim Morrison (BT, B, D; 1960 psychedelic rock).
- “Lithium,” Kurt Cobain (BT, B, D; 1990s alternative rock).
- “Moonshadow,” Cat Stevens (BT, B, D; 1970s folk rock).
- “Sweet Caroline,” Neil Diamond (BT, B, H; 1970s soft rock).
- “The Time of Our Lives,” Pitbull (Rap, UT, D; Rap, R&B, Latin Pop).
- “Turn Turn Turn,” Pete Seeger (BT, B, D; 1960s folk).
- “Walk the Line,” Johnny Cash (BT, UT, H; 1950s rockabilly).
- “White Wedding,” Billy Idol (BT, UT, H; 1980s rock).
- “Your Song,” Elton John (BT, B, D; 1970s pop ballad).

## NOTES

1. Thomas Bailey, Shanna Smith Jaggars, and David Jenkins, *Redesigning America’s Community Colleges: A Clearer Path to Student Success* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).
2. Colleen M. Conway and Thomas M. Hodgman, *Teaching Music in Higher Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).
3. Jonathan Flom, *Get the Callback* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2010).

**Elizabeth Gerbi**, currently a full time tenure track Instructor of Musical Theater at the State University of New York at Dutchess Community College and member of the College Music Teaching Summer Doctoral Cohort at Teachers-College-Columbia University, is well known across the country as a singing teacher, voice coach, choral conductor, and music director/pianist (160+ productions). She has previously taught on the faculty of SUNY New Paltz, and most recently served as a Visiting Professorial Lecturer of Music Theater at The American University. As a singer-actor, she has appeared in regional productions ranging from *I pagliacci* to *Les Misérables* to *The Kenny Rogers Christmas Tour*. Recent projects include music directing *The Chris Betz Show* (Rose’s Turn/Sage Theatre, NYC), *Side Show* and *Tommy* (Westchester Broadway Theatre), accompanying master classes for Broadway performers Ken Jennings, Lisa Howard, and Lindsay Mendez, adapting *Starmites* for Broadway composer Barry Keating, and participating in a recent European tour with her husband

(and favorite collaborator), Christopher Brellochs, performing at venues such as the prestigious Paris Conservatoire at St. Maur and Saint Marri.

She has also taught workshops in music theater pedagogy and performance at the International Thespian Festival and Educational Theatre Association (Georgia Thespians), Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, New York State Theatre Education Association, and New England Theatre Conference, and has regularly presented papers/participated on panels for the Association for Theatre in Higher Education. Please visit [www.facebook.com/elizabethgerbisinger](http://www.facebook.com/elizabethgerbisinger) for more information.

A tenor, all singers above,  
 (This doesn’t admit of a question),  
 Should keep himself quiet,  
 Admit to his diet  
 And carefully nurse his digestion:  
 But when he is madly in love  
 It’s certain to tell on his singing—  
 You can’t do chromatics  
 With proper emphatics  
 When anguish your bosom is wringing!  
 When distracted with worries in plenty,  
 And his pulse is a hundred and twenty,  
 And his fluttering bosom the slave of mistrust is,  
 A tenor can’t do himself justice.  
 Now observe –(*sings a high note*),  
 You see, I can’t do myself justice!

I could sing, if my fervour were mock,  
 It’s easy enough if you’re acting—  
 But when one’s emotion  
 Is born of devotion  
 You musn’t be over-exacting.  
 One ought to be firm as a rock  
 To venture a shake in *vibrato*,  
 When fervour’s expected  
 Keep cool and collected  
 Or never attempt *agitato*.  
 But, of course, when his tongue is of leather,  
 And his lips appear pasted together,  
 And his sensitive palate as dry as a crust is,  
 A tenor can’t do himself justice.  
 Now observe—(*sings a high note*),  
 It’s no use—I can’t do myself justice!

Gilbert and Sullivan, *Utopia*, II