

Flowers in Winter

song-cycle for mezzo-soprano and piano; duration ~8'00"

lyrics by Thandiwe McMillan, composed by Hannah C Sobel

- I. *Friday the 13th*
- II. *Baby Girl*
- III. *What this voice can do*

Program Notes:

Flowers in Winter, a set of 3 poems by Thandiwe McMillan, is a brief overview of McMillan's life thus far, as she emerges into adulthood. The 3 poems, selected from McMillan's book of the same title, chronicle her growth into a world that seemed to have nothing but spite for her, and her strength in overcoming it.

Lyrics:

- I. *Friday the 13th*

Thunder roared and dark skies flashed with lightning rays
On Friday the 13th; a supposedly cursed day.

8 hours of induced labor - of pain
"Make doo-doo," the doctor says again and again

I was one of 300,000 babies born in the US that day
But others weren't so lucky, I have to say...

"Mother and Baby killed"- The New York Times
As their eyes shut forever, I opened mine
Tupac Shakur; age 25
Today he slipped into eternal sleep
Torture victim sues
Last day for sale on pantyhose

I try to find happy articles but I cannot
Only ads, tragic stories, death, and whatnot

I awoke on the day of my birth,
to a broken, shattered, Earth.

II. *Baby Girl*

Mum called me *Baby Girl*
for 6 months after I
entered this world.

She couldn't think of a name.

I often feel like a baby girl—

Naive and sensitive
Crying and trying
to take my first
clumsy steps.

In this strange universe.

I lose myself
collecting vomit-green money
that is used to define
me as if I were a word
in a dictionary.

The world becomes exhausting
for a baby girl.

III. *What this voice can do*

This is not a small voice.
This voice is crisp,
sharp,
This voice stands alone,
speaks its mind.

it is the voice heard from
the back of the auditoriums,
that turns heads
with what it has to say.

This voice holds power.

This voice will
not be muted.
It will stand at the head
of the protest line.
This voice will not be
silenced.
It will not be drowned
like those
of its ancestors.

I. Friday the 13th

Thandiwe McMillan

Hannah C Sobel

$\text{♩} = 54$

M-S. *f*

Thun-der roared and dark skies flashed

Pno. *f*

5

with lightening rays. On Fri-day the thir - tenth,

10 *mf* *mp* 2

a sup-pos-ed-ly cur-sed day. Eight hours of in -

15

duced la-bor in pain. "Make doo- doo," the doc-tor says a -

20

gain and a-gain. I was

24

one of three hun - dred thou - sand bab - ies born in the U. S. that

27

day but oth - ers were - n't so luc - ky, I have to say...

30

f

"Mo-ther and ba - by killed," the

This system contains measures 30 through 34. The vocal line begins with a rest in measure 30, followed by the lyrics "Mo-ther and ba - by killed," in measures 31-34. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and chords in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *f* is present in measure 34.

35

mp

New York Times. As their eyes shut for - e - ver, I op - ened mine.

This system contains measures 35 through 38. The vocal line has the lyrics "New York Times. As their eyes shut for - e - ver, I op - ened mine." in measures 35-38. The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present in measure 35.

39

f

Tu-pac Sha-kur, aged twen-ty-five, to-night he slipped in to e-ter - nal

This system contains measures 39 through 42. The vocal line has the lyrics "Tu-pac Sha-kur, aged twen-ty-five, to-night he slipped in to e-ter - nal" in measures 39-42. The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern. A dynamic marking of *f* is present in measure 39.

43 *mf*

sleep. Tor ture vic-time sues.

47

Last day for sale— on pan - ty - hose. I— try to find

mf

51

hap - py art - i - cles but I can - not. On - ly ads,

56

tra - ge - dies, death, and what - not.

p

62

p

I a-woke on the day of my birth to a bro-ken, shat-tered, Earth.

This block contains the musical notation for measures 62 through 66. It features a vocal line in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a 7/8 time signature. The lyrics are: "I a-woke on the day of my birth to a bro-ken, shat-tered, Earth." The piano accompaniment consists of a right hand in a treble clef and a left hand in a bass clef, both in the same key signature and time signature. The piano part provides a steady accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes.

67

to a bro-ken,

This block contains the musical notation for measures 67 through 70. The vocal line has rests for the first three measures, followed by the lyrics "to a bro-ken," in measure 70. The piano accompaniment continues with a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes.

71

shat-tered, Earth.

This block contains the musical notation for measures 71 through 74. The vocal line has rests for the first two measures, followed by the lyrics "shat-tered," in measure 71 and "Earth." in measure 73. The piano accompaniment continues with a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes.

II. Baby Girl

Thandiwe McMillan

Hannah C Sobel

$\text{♩} = 56$

mp
warm

M-S.

Mum called me *Ba - by*

Pno. *mp*

6

Girl for six months af-ter I en-tered this world.

11

Ba - by *Girl.*____ She could-n't think of a

mf

16

name. She could-n't think of a name. I

rit. ♩ = 48

21

of-ten feel like a ba-by girl. Na-ive and sen-si-tive

p

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

27

Cry-ing and try-ing, try-ing to take my first clum-sy steps in this

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

32 $\text{♩} = 60$ *mf*

strange un-i-verse. Ba - by Girl.____

38

I lose____ my-self col-lect - ing vo-mit green mo-ney

43

that is used to de-fine me as if I were a

48

word in a dic-tion-a-ry. *f* Ba - by Girl. —

54

mp The world — becomes ex-haus-ting, the world — be

59

comes ex-haus-ting for a ba - by girl, for a ba - by girl.

64

rit.

III. What this voice can do

Thandiwe McMillan

Hannah C Sobel

♩ = 92

mf

*remember that
you are strong*

M-S.

♩ = 92

This is not a small voice. This

Pno.

mf

5

voice is crisp. This voice is sharp. This voice stands a-lone,

Pno.

mf

10

speaks its mind.

Pno.

p

15

Musical score for measures 15-20. The vocal line consists of six measures of whole rests. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the bass line and chords in the treble line.

21

mp

3

It is the voice heard from the back of au - di - to-ri-ums that

Musical score for measures 21-24. The vocal line begins with a triplet of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the treble line.

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

25

turns heads with what it has to say.

Musical score for measures 25-28. The vocal line continues with quarter and eighth notes. The piano accompaniment maintains the eighth-note bass line and chords in the treble line.

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

29

mf

This voice holds pow-er.

This

Musical score for measures 29-33. The vocal line (top staff) begins with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The piano accompaniment (bottom staves) features a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand and chords in the right hand. A *mf* dynamic marking is present in the piano part.

Red.

*

34

voice will not be mu-ted. It will stand at the head of the pro-test line.

Musical score for measures 34-38. The vocal line (top staff) continues with a half note C5, a quarter note D5, and a quarter note E5. The piano accompaniment (bottom staves) continues with the eighth-note bass line and chords. The piano part features a *mf* dynamic marking.

39

f

This voice will not be si-lenced.

Musical score for measures 39-43. The vocal line (top staff) begins with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The piano accompaniment (bottom staves) continues with the eighth-note bass line and chords. A *f* dynamic marking is present in the piano part.

44

It will not be drowned, it will not be drowned,

Musical score for measures 44-47. The vocal line consists of quarter notes and rests. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand.

48

it will not be drowned like those of its an-ces-tors.

Musical score for measures 48-52. The vocal line includes a triplet of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand, with a *p* dynamic marking.

53

Musical score for measures 53-56. The vocal line is mostly rests. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand.

56

Musical score for measures 56-59. The score consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef staff containing four whole rests. The middle and bottom staves are grouped as a grand staff. The middle staff (treble clef) contains the following notes: measure 56 has a quarter rest; measure 57 has a quarter rest followed by an eighth rest; measure 58 has an eighth note G4, an eighth note A4, and a triplet of eighth notes B4, C5, and B4; measure 59 has a quarter rest. The bottom staff (bass clef) contains the following notes: measure 56 has a whole note G3; measure 57 has a whole note G3; measure 58 has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, a quarter note B3, and a quarter note C4; measure 59 has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, a quarter note B3, and a half note C4.