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LEE HOIBY'S SONG CYCLE *THE SHINING PLACE*,
WITH POETRY BY EMILY DICKINSON

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LEE HOIBY'S SONG CYCLE *THE SHINING PLACE*,
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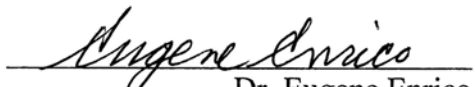
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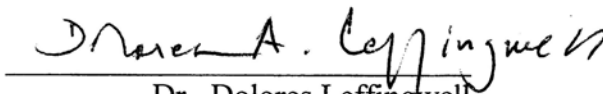
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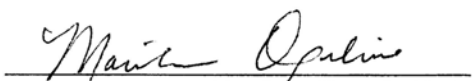

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Abstract

LEE HOIBY'S SONG CYCLE *THE SHINING PLACE*, WITH POETRY BY EMILY DICKINSON

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MAJOR PROFESSOR: JANE MAGRATH, D.M.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the compositional style and influences on Lee Hoiby and to document the importance of the work *The Shining Place* by Lee Hoiby in art song literature. The cycle consists of five Dickinson poems set by Hoiby. The title of the song cycle, *The Shining Place*, is taken from the name of the first song in the set which is dedicated to soprano Cynthia Miller. The four following songs in the set are "A Letter," "How the Waters Closed," "Wild Nights," and "There Came a Wind Like a Bugle."

The first piece in the cycle "How the Waters Closed" was composed in 1954 and the completed cycle was performed initially in 1989 with Hoiby on the piano and soprano Cynthia Miller as soloist. While no relationship between the poems exists, the poetry is filled with text painting and Hoiby's trademark presentations of florid piano parts as a strong duet accompaniment for the singer.

This document investigates the compositional style of the *The Shining Place* and provided insights on various influences on Lee Hoiby. Personal interviews with Hoiby and Virginia Dupuy form the basis of much of the material presented here. The frequency of Hoiby's works appearing in the university and

opera halls in America underscores the importance of providing documentation and analysis of his major works such as *The Shining Place*.

The study is organized into five chapters and begins an introduction to the study. Biographical information on Lee Hoiby is presented in chapter two. The next chapter includes discussions on Emily Dickinson and other American composers who have set Dickinson's poetry to music. The fourth chapter provides a musical analysis of the song cycle *The Shining Place* with an emphasis on the unique aspects of Hoiby's compositional techniques that make this song cycle significant in American art song repertoire. The final chapter contains a summary, reflections, and suggestions for further research. Appendices include transcripts from the interviews with Lee Hoiby and Virginia Dupuy and the poetry from *The Shining Place*.

Chapter I

Introduction

Background of the Study

The Shining Place is a set of five songs composed by Lee Hoiby with text by Emily Dickinson. Originally conceived as a set of four songs, Hoiby felt he needed a stronger “opener” and thus modified the set to add a fifth song, “The Shining Place,” as an opening movement.¹ The original title was *Four Dickinson Songs*, but with the addition of the fifth song the title of the set was changed. Conceived in the 1950’s, the final version of the cycle was not completed until 1989.

The songs are set to several of Dickinson’s poems and one of her letters, and the subjects of the songs range from the biblically influenced “The Shining Place” to the more graphic and dark “How The Waters Closed” to the earthy tone of “There Came A Wind Like A Bugle.” Together the five songs make a well-balanced set that is appropriate for a recital program. Each may be performed separately or the entire work can be performed as a set. The cycle is dedicated to soprano Cynthia Miller, who sang the first performance of five songs in 1989 with Hoiby at the piano.

Lee Hoiby has contributed substantially to the body of vocal literature, composing over one hundred songs and eleven operas within the span of fifty-seven years. Not only are his songs performed in vocal studios and by students, but by many professional singers, including Leontyne Price, who have championed his works on their recital programs. An exemplary advocate of Hoiby’s songs, Price introduced many of his best known poem settings and arias to the public, including

¹ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), 51.

“The Serpent,” “Be Not Afeard” (from *The Tempest*), *The Four Dickinson Songs*, “Evening,” “Lady of the Harbor” and “Where the Music Comes From.”²

Lee Hoiby began composing art songs in 1950. Some of his first songs used texts by Adelaide Crapsey, William Shakespeare, William Butler Yeats, John Fandel and Robert Frost.³ Hoiby continued composing, even through the late 60s and 70s when serialism was the more popular musical language of the time and he felt his compositional language was quite different. During this period, most composers broke with the tonal tradition, and yet Hoiby stayed with the more romantic tradition of Schubert and Strauss. Sometimes described as “neo-romantic,” Hoiby instead prefers the title of “romantic,” stating:

I am not a neo-romantic. I’m a romantic and always have been. There’s nothing neo about my music. It is in a familiar traditional vocabulary. It follows a broad river of western music, from Palestrina to Barber. I feel myself part of that river.⁴

Hoiby experienced difficult times during the 60s and 70s. Gian Carlo Menotti taught and influenced Hoiby, and as a consequence fellow composers and musicians did not take him seriously. Many of the more “academic” musicians found Menotti to be simplistic and popish. They found it unusual that Menotti’s operas *The Consul*, *The Medium* and *The Saint of Bleeker Street* enjoyed major success on both operatic

² Lee Hoiby - American Contemporary Composer, Lee Hoiby, <http://Leehoiby.com> (accessed July 8, 2008).

³ Scott LaGraff, “The French Songs of Lee Hoiby” (D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 2006), 3.

⁴ Ibid.

and Broadway stages. Hoiby served as Menotti's assistant during these successful and historical performances.⁵ Because of this relationship with Menotti and his more tonal compositional style, Hoiby was not as highly regarded as other composers during this time even though his output of work was significant. In a forum of American composers of the 90s, Hoiby describes to the audience his awkward introduction to John Cage." Once I was introduced to John Cage at a party, we were talking very congenially for a while, but when I told him I was a student of Menotti, he just stopped talking, turned around and walked away." ⁶

Despite the rejection and criticism from other composers, Hoiby stayed true to himself and continued to compose in the neo-classical, tonal style with which he was comfortable. Ultimately, this has brought him eminent success as a song composer and as a composer of opera. In 1957 Hoiby premiered the opera *The Scarf* at the Spoleto festival, in Italy, and it was produced at New York City opera the following season.⁷ Following this premier, he composed operas including *Natalia Petrovna* (later revised and renamed *A Month in the Country*) and composed his most famous opera to that date, *Summer and Smoke*, based on the Tennessee William's play by the same name. Other operatic works include *The Tempest*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Something New for the Zoo*, and *Bon Appetit!*, an opera with text based on a recipe by Julia Child.

Hoiby has composed over 100 songs and frequently (but not exclusively) sets them to American texts. He utilizes poets such as Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman and Wallace Stevens, and has even set to music text by Martin Luther King, Jr.

Hoiby, like many composers, has a partner who helps him choose his texts. Mark

⁵ Lee, Hoiby. *Lee Hoiby Biography*. Available from <http://www.leehoiby.com>. Accessed 8 July 2008.

⁶ John Duffy, "Composers for the 90's." *Central Service Conference Bulletin* (Spring 1990), 72.

⁷ Lee, Hoiby. *Lee Hoiby Biography*. Available from <http://www.leehoiby.com>. Accessed 8 July 2008.

Schulgasser serves as Hoiby's literary collaborator on various operas and songs including *The Shining Place*, *The Italian Lesson*, *This is the Rill Speaking*, *A Month in the Country*, *What is the Light*, and *Summer and Smoke*.⁸ Schulgasser has collaborated with Hoiby for more than twenty years. Often directing and producing Hoiby's productions, Schulgasser has a unique insight into the music of Lee Hoiby, in part due to the length of the relationship. This paper will explore their musical relationship and the process by which they composed the cycle, *The Shining Place*. The process Schulgasser went through to choose the poetry for the cycle and the process Hoiby went through to compose the music will be revealed through a series of personal interviews.

Emily Dickinson, author of the poems and the letter that provide the text for this art song cycle, has been a favorite poet for many American composers. To date, more than 275 composers have written music to more than 650 poems and letters by Emily Dickinson.⁹ Composers have set Dickinson as early 1896, possibly the first being Etta Parker who set "Have You Got a Brook In Your Little Heart?"¹⁰ Composer Alan Leichtling has stated (with regard to Dickinson), "I suspect that a sizable amount of American vocal music would not exist but for her poetry."¹¹

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the compositional style of and influences on Lee Hoiby and to document the importance of his work *The Shining*

⁸ "Lee Hoiby Biography," Schirmer, <http://www.Schirmer.com> (accessed July 16, 2008).

⁹ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), xxxvi.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid, xvii.

Place in American art song literature. The investigation examines the composer's thoughts and methods that surround his compositional process in general as well as specifically in the setting of the text of Emily Dickinson. I conducted a personal interview with Lee Hoiby and solicited opinions on the formal analysis of the music and its relationship to the poetry. With the frequency of Hoiby's works appearing in the university and in opera halls throughout America, it is important to provide documentation and analysis of his works. The focus of this document on Hoiby's *The Shining Place* adds to the small body of scholarship which currently exists, and hopefully encourages the musical community to explore the songs of Lee Hoiby and in particular his inspired setting of Emily Dickinson's poetry in *The Shining Place*.

Need for the Study

The song cycle *The Shining Place* has not yet been studied in depth. The document provides the student, teacher, and performer with a musical and poetic analysis of *The Shining Place* as well as a perspective on the work from the composer's standpoint. The personal interview with Lee Hoiby presented an unusual opportunity to obtain the composer's direct input about this work and allows the reader to better understand the music of Hoiby from the composer's perspective, and recognize the composer's compositional, poetic and musical techniques. Through this study, and others like it, more attention is brought to the area of American art song and American composers.

Limitations

The study is meant to serve the singer, pianist, and teacher and focuses primarily on the composer, background and stylistic elements relating to *The Shining Place*. Salient structural and performance considerations for the pieces will be provided for the songs in *The Shining Place*. References will be made to other 20th century American composers, but there will be no side-by-side comparison. A note-by-note analysis of the music will not be provided since the cycle is heavily dependent on the text. It seems most important for the purposes of this study which is directed toward vocal performers that the music and the text be discussed simultaneously. The 2002 edition by Peer Music Publishing of Hoiby's score of *The Shining Place* will be used in the performer's analysis.

Procedures

Information is drawn from published materials and secondary sources relating to the topic, the study of the score and available recordings, and my personal insights as a performing vocalist. Phone and email interviews were conducted with Lee Hoiby. Information provided by them was consequential in better understanding the musical score and poetry. Appendix A of this proposal contains a list of questions and answers from the interview with Hoiby.

Structure of the Document

Chapter I of this document is an introductory chapter. Chapter II presents biographical information about Lee Hoiby, focusing especially on the influences on

his musical style. A synopsis of his style and the importance of Schubert, Menotti, Barber, and other influences on Hoiby are also discussed. In addition, background information on Mark Shulgasser, Hoiby's writing partner, is provided since Mr. Shulgasser chooses a substantial portion of Hoiby's text for his songs and operas. Much of the information obtained in this chapter was obtained through personal and telephone interviews with Lee Hoiby. The questions and answers obtained from this interview can be found in Appendix A.

Emily Dickinson's influence on American composers is discussed in Chapter III. An interview with Virginia Dupuy provides substantial information for this chapter. Dupuy discovered three unpublished poems and letters by Dickinson in 2004 and produced the first compilation of the over three thousand of Dickinson's settings for solo voice and chorus by various composers. She previously had investigated other settings of Dickinson's writings, and in 2001 received a University Research Council grant from Southern Methodist University to expand her research. The information obtained from Ms. Dupuy was obtained through written and telephone interviews. A transcript from these interviews can be found in Appendix B.

Chapter IV provides an analysis of the five songs in the *The Shining Place*, "The Shining Place," "A Letter," "How the Waters Closed," "Wild Nights," and "There Came a Wind Like a Bugle". The analysis was drawn from melodic, harmonic, formal, rhythmic, textural and accompanimental elements in the pieces and from discussion with Hoiby. Range, tessitura, tempi and stylistic characteristics of the songs are also considered in the study. I examined the historical context of the poetry and its relationship to the music, based on theme, tone, and text.

Chapter V provides conclusions, summary, and recommendations for further study. The appendices will consist of interview questions for Hoiby and DuPuy, insample informed consent letters for interviewees, as well as the poetry from the Shining Place. A bibliography is also provided.

Related Literature

This section examines the literature on Lee Hoiby related to his composition of art song literature as well as similar studies of American art song cycle. It is divided into five sections: dissertations, books, articles, web sites and recordings.

Dissertations

The past fifteen years have revealed heightened interest in the music of Lee Hoiby, especially with respect to investigation of his art-song literature. Several research documents have included studies of Hoiby's compositional style, his life and his various compositions. One of the first and most acclaimed dissertations on the genre of Hoiby's song is by John Robin Rice. The dissertation *The Songs Of Lee Hoiby* (1993)¹² includes abundant quotations by Lee Hoiby and a plethora of detailed biographical information. In his dissertation Dr. Rice provides an in-depth analysis of two of Hoiby's baritone song cycles *I Was There* and *O Florida*. A chronological list of songs with publishers as well as discography are provided to the reader. This dissertation includes many in-depth and personal interviews with Hoiby. It is my

¹² John Robin Rice, "The Songs of Lee Hoiby" (D.M.A. diss., Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, 1993).

intention to update much of the information from over 15 years ago through my personal interviews with Hoiby.

In her dissertation *Lee Hoiby: The composer and his compositional style, his role in the history of American music, and his song output* Lori Bade Ellefson provides an extensive discussion of Hoiby's compositional style, and his role in American music, and discusses six representative songs appropriate for the young singer as well as the accomplished performer.¹³ The six representative songs discussed in the treatise are as follows: "She Tells her Love," "Where the Music Comes From," "The Lamb," "The Serpent," "Lady of The Harbor" and "Manners." Her study includes interviews with the composer and information provided illuminates in large part his compositional style and influences.

Another related work is *An Analytical Study of the Song Cycle O Florida by Lee Hoiby* by David Knowles which focuses on a setting of five songs set to the poetry of Wallace Stevens.¹⁴ The songs examined here are: "Floral Decorations for Bananas," "Gubbinal," "Continual Conversation with a Silent Man," "My Back Door," "O Florida" and "Venereal Soil." The pieces are analyzed poetically and musically. In addition, an overview of Hoiby's vocal works is provided as well a discussion of the characteristics of his compositional style.

Colleen Gray Neubert's dissertation, *Lee Hoiby: His Life, His Vocal Writing Style And An Annotation Of Selected Songs For High Voice With Performance Considerations* includes a detailed catalogue of Hoiby's compositions as well as

¹³Lori Bade Ellefson, "Lee Hoiby: The Composer and His Compositional Style, His Role in History in American Music, and His Song Output" (D.M.A. diss., University Texas at Austin, 1994).

¹⁴ David Earl Knowles, "An Analytical Study of O Florida by Lee Hoiby." (D.M.A. diss., The University of Southern Mississippi, 1994).

annotations of several of his songs.¹⁵ Neubert does mention the Dickinson songs in her research, but the discussion is meant to provide brief commentary rather than be an in-depth analysis. Other chapters include a biography with song list and a review of the literature.

Scott LaGraff explored Hoiby's treatment of French poetry in his dissertation *The French Songs of Lee Hoiby* (2006). In one section of note, LaGraff provides biographical information and particularly examines the influence of Franz Schubert on Hoiby's compositional style. An investigation of the French poets Arthur Rimbaud and Marcel Osterreich is included as well as an examination of the relationship of the text and music. LaGraff includes an updated catalogue of works based on Colleen Gray Neubert's research.

Two dissertations have been written with respect to the piano music of Hoiby. The first, *The Piano Music of Lee Hoiby*,¹⁶ by Richard Crosby investigates selected piano works and two solo concertos by Hoiby. This dissertation is based on two interviews between the author and Mr. Hoiby. An analysis of each work is provided as part of the dissertation.

The second dissertation studying Hoiby's piano compositions by Ji-Won Mun is titled *A Stylistic and Analytical Study of Concerto No.2 for Piano and Orchestra, Op.33, by Lee Hoiby*.¹⁷ This work was composed and premiered by Hoiby in 1980.

¹⁵ Colleen Gray Neubert, "Lee Hoiby: His Life, His Vocal Writing Style and an Annotation of Selected Songs for High Voice With Performance Considerations" (D.M.A. diss., West Virginia State University, 2003.)

¹⁶ Richard Crosby, "The Piano Music of Lee Hoiby" (D.M.A. diss. University of Cincinnati, 1990).

¹⁷ Ji-Won Mun, "A Stylistic and Analytical Study of Concerto No.2 for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 33" (D.M.A. diss., Louisiana State University, 2002).

The dissertation examines sections of the concerto and analyzes the stylistic traits of the composition. A survey of Hoiby's piano music also is included in the document.

Books

Several books are especially pertinent to this topic not only because of the information they share about Hoiby, but also because of the historical perspective they establish with other art song composers. In addition, they provide detailed information on his songs and his compositional style.

Carol Kimball's *Song: A Guide to Style and Literature* offers brief biographical information on the composer, stylistic traits and an annotation of selected songs.¹⁸ The book covers more than 150 composers of various nationalities. Discussions of various schools of composition are included. The book offers more of a comprehensive survey of vocal literature than an in-depth study and is in one volume. When presenting a song, Kimball gives the reader a basic introduction, and ideas are presented on how to further research and study a given piece and composer. The extended bibliography is organized and thorough. This book is a helpful resource for a teacher, singer, pianist or vocal coach.

Victoria Etnier Villamil's *A Singer's Guide to American Art Song*¹⁹ provides a detailed biography of Hoiby, a discussion of his output of song repertoire, information on publication and recordings, a partial list of songs, annotations of selected songs, and publication data. Appendices include a supplement of songs that includes American art song anthologies, a directory of publishers, a bibliography,

¹⁸ Carol Kimball, *Song a Guide to Style and Literature* (Redmond, Wash: Pst...Inc., 1996).

¹⁹ Victoria Etenier Villamil, *A Singer's Guide to American Art Song* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004).

discography, index to song titles, and index to poets whose text are used as lyrics are also included. Included in this book is information about 146 American composers dating from 1870-1980.

Ruth Friedberg's *American Art Song and American Poetry Volume I* is an in-depth look at American music and poetry from its conception and early development²⁰. In *Volume I: America Comes of Age*, Friedberg examines the transition from the European-influenced songs of McDowell and Griffes to the more American style of Ives and Copland.

Volume II: Voices of Maturity focuses on composers born just before or after 1900.²¹ During the early 20th century a monumental amount of poetry was composed by American poets, this book looks at the composers response to this poetry.

In *Volume III: The Century Advances*, Friedberg treats songs written approximately between 1940 and 1980.²² She covers sixteen composers including Samuel Barber, Paul Bowles, Vincent Persichetti, Ned Rorem, and Richard Hundley. Among the poets she examines are James Agee, Jonathan Williams and Wallace Stevens. Although Friedberg does not cover Hoiby specifically, she does thoroughly cover many of his influences and the genre of American art song.

Several books have been written about Emily Dickinson, but few have been published about the correlation between her poetry and art song. *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere* by Carlton Lowenberg explores the attraction of the American composer

²⁰ Ruth C. Friedberg, *American Art Song and American Poetry Volume I* (Metuchen, N.J: Scarecrow Press, 1981).

²¹ Ruth C. Friedberg, *American Art Song and American Poetry Volume II* (Metuchen, N.J: Scarecrow Press, 1984).

²² Ruth C. Friedberg, *American Art Song and American Poetry Volume III* (Metuchen, N.J: Scarecrow Press, 1987).

to the poetry of Emily Dickinson. Lowenberg provides a catalog of songs set to poetry by Emily Dickinson.²³ The book also gives information about the composers and the circumstances surrounding the poetry and composition. A detailed inventory of over 1,615 musical settings of Dickinson's texts is also provided.

When looking for source material on the life of Emily Dickinson one has many choices. One of the most thorough and scholarly biographies is *The Life of Emily Dickinson* by Richard B. Sewall. This biography contains published letters, poems and correspondence with relatives.²⁴ The book uses original source material and introduces new documents in regard to the life of Emily Dickinson. Sewall's book is one of the definitive sources in Dickinson research.

Another useful source in the research of Dickinson is the book *Six American Poets*²⁵ by Joel Conarroe. This book includes two hundred forty-seven poems, and introductory essays by the author and poetic scholar Joel Conarroe. The more popular works of the poets are examined but Conarroe also looks at the lesser known works and letters. The book also gives recommendations for further reading and investigation on each poet.

A helpful companion to Conarroe's research is a book called *Essential Dickinson*.²⁶ Basically, this book is a collection of Dickinson's poetry but what is most useful is the introduction by Joyce Carol Oates. The introduction provides a historical perspective on the life of Dickinson and information about her poetic style.

²³ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), 51.

²⁴ Richard Benson Sewall, *Life of Emily Dickinson* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994).

²⁵ *Six American Poets: An Anthology* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993).

²⁶ Emily Dickinson, *Essential Dickinson (Essential Poets)* (Hopewell: Ecco, 2006).

Articles

Several articles have been written about Lee Hoiby, especially with respect to his operatic and stage work. Because of Hoiby's willingness to grant interviews, a great deal of information can be extracted from the discussions and transcripts in these articles.

"A Long Voyage" by Gary Schmidgall is an article about the premiere of the opera *The Tempest*. Schmidgall delves into Hoiby's compositional process for the opera *The Tempest* and uncovers the sum of the process the composer must go through on completion of such a work.²⁷ The article reveals information on the working relationship between Hoiby and Schulgasser. Hoiby's influences and his compositional style also are discussed.

Brian Kellow interviewed Lee Hoiby and Jean Stapleton in an article titled "Double Recipe."²⁸ Here Stapleton's roles in the musical monologues *The Italian Lesson* and *Bon Appetite!* are discussed. The former co-star of the television series "Archie Bunker" reflects on her New York opera debut portraying Manhattan socialite Ruth Draper and chef Julia Child. Kellow also includes a discussion of Hoiby's compositional style and collaborative process with Schulgasser.

John McCauley reviewed *The Four Dickinson Songs* in the musical journal *Notes*.²⁹ This enlightening review gives a background to the poetry and a unique viewpoint into the music of Hoiby. McCauley does not review the song *The Shining Place*, as it was not added to the cycle at the time.

²⁷ Gary Schmidgall, "A Long Voyage." *Opera News* 50, no. 17 (1986): 10-13.

²⁸ Brian Kello, "A Double Recipe," *Opera News* 56, no. 3 (1991): 22.

²⁹ John McCauley, "Review of Four Dickinson Songs," *Notes* 47, no. 1 (September 1990): 230-231.

Jay Nordlinger's article "Singing His Own Song"³⁰ for the *National Review* was conducted during the run of Hoiby's opera *A Month in the Country*. This opera was presented at the Manhattan School of Music in 2004 (it had an earlier premier in 1964 at New York City Opera titled *Natalia Petrovna*). Here Nordlinger not only delves into the opera but also discusses several of the genres of Hoiby's music including art song and piano. The article presents useful background information about Hoiby, his influences, his recordings and his projects in progress.

"Composers of the 90s,"³¹ is an article found in the Central Opera Service Conference Bulletin, contributes to a revealing discussion on 20th century opera and composition by prominent twentieth century composers including Hoiby, John Corigliano, Tod Machover and Kirke Mechem. The purpose of the forum was to understand why living composers want to compose and why so few American operas and other works are programmed on the stage. The transcripts reflect a lively debate between composers and the audience. At the end of reading the transcripts one gains a greater insight and understanding into American musical society and its composers.

In Robert Wilder Blue's interview on *US Opera Web* the author interviews both Hoiby and Schulgasser at the premiere of their new opera *Summer and Smoke*.³² Blue discusses Hoiby, his compositional process, current compositions and new compositions. Franz Schubert, Samuel Barber, Gian Carlo Menotti and Joni Mitchell are composers and musicians discussed in this interesting and evocative article. This

³⁰ Jay Nordlinger, "Singing His Own Song," *National Review* (February 2005): 1-4.

³¹ John Duffy, "Composers for the 90s," *Central Service Conference Bulletin* Spring (1990): 72.

³² Robert Wilder Blue, "Romantic Radical: Lee Hoiby," *US Opera Web* (June 2002): <http://usaoperaweb.com> (accessed July 31, 2008).

interview contains biographical information, information on compositional techniques, and insight on the long time partnership between Schulgasser and Hoiby.

Another article published in *Fanfare* magazine, “The Song is the Flower: The Music of Lee Hoiby” by Joanne Forman, was published during Hoiby’s stint as guest composer and pianist at the Santa Fe music festival in 1996.³³ This article is particularly useful because Hoiby addresses the human voice as he composes art song literature for the instrument. His many influences and their direct effect on song literature are discussed.

Web Sites

Hoiby maintains a virtual presence on the world wide web, and Lee Hoiby.com³⁴ is Hoiby’s personal Web site. There one can find a detailed biography, discography, links to performances, lectures and purchasing information for Hoiby’s published and non-published music.

Recordings

While conducting research for the document it became apparent that uncovering as many recordings as possible was essential to this document. The importance was not only for the performance, but for the author of this paper to learn from the knowledge that many of these performers have gained from working with the composer personally (particularly in the case of Price).

³³ Joanne Foreman, “The Song is the Flower: The Music of Lee Hoiby,” *Fanfare* (Nov. & Dec. 1996).

³⁴ Lee Hoiby - American Contemporary Composer, Lee Hoiby, <http://leehoiby.com> (accessed July 8, 2008).

Lee Hoiby wrote songs specifically for Leontyne Price. A strong advocate of the American art song, Price almost always included Hoiby's works on her recital programs. Two recordings exist that exemplify the collaboration that existed between Price and Hoiby. The first, "Price Rediscovered,"³⁵ a recording of the Carnegie Hall debut recital made by RCA in 1965, was not released until the year 2002. Price sings arias by G.F Handel, Giacomo Puccini, George and Ira Gershwin and art songs by Johannes Brahms, Francis Poulenc, Samuel Barber, Lee Hoiby and American Spirituals. Hoiby's "Winter Song" and "In the Wand of the Wind" are performed on this recital.

The second recording by Price is appropriately titled "Price returns to Carnegie Hall"³⁶ and also is produced by RCA records. In 1991 Price returned to the stage of Carnegie Hall at the age of sixty-four years. G.F Handel, Hector Berlioz, Samuel Barber and Lee Hoiby are some of the composers featured on this critically acclaimed recital. The audience called for nine encores on Ms. Price's successful return to Carnegie Hall.

A recording that is vital to the study of composers who set the text of Dickinson to music is *Emily Dickinson in Song – Dwell in Possibility*³⁷ on Gasparo Records by mezzo-soprano and Southern Methodist University professor, Virginia Dupuy. In 2004 Dupuy and pianists Shields-Collins Bray, Tara Emerson, and William Jordan released the compact disc featuring 25 of these works. Dupuy now performs her recognized Dickinson recital nationally.

³⁵ Leontyne Price. *Price Rediscovered: Carnegie Hall Debut*. RCA 63908.

³⁶ Leontyne Price. *Leontyne Price returns to Carnegie Hall*. RCA Red-Seal. 68435

³⁷ Virginia DuPuy. *Emily Dickinson In Song: Dwell in Possibility*. Gasparo Records. B00029LNV4.

The Shining Place as recorded by soprano Janeanne Houston with pianist Robert Jorgensen comprises a complete recording of all five pieces of Hoiby's, *The Shining Place*.³⁸ Price recorded two of the works in the set, "Wild Nights" and "There Came a Wind Like A Bugle."

Singular recordings of additional songs in *The Shining Place* by other artists include Mezzo soprano, Jennifer Larmore, who performs Hoiby's song "A Letter" on her disc *A Native Land*.³⁹ The Houston recording was made at Pacific Lutheran University's Lagerquist Concert Hall in July 2005. The disc contains one other setting of Dickinson text set by Locklair.

On the disc *Carolyn Heafner Sings America* one has the privilege to hear the composer (Hoiby) accompany the singer.⁴⁰ Hoiby accompanies Heafner on four songs including, "Night," "Pierrot," "Ange'lique" and "The Shroud." Heafner also sings works by other American composers including, Bacon, Beach and Beeson.

Soprano Erie Mills' *Always It's Springs* on the label Video Artists International features four songs by Hoiby -- "Always It's Springs," "The Doe," "What if?," "She tells her love," and "The Serpent."⁴¹ The recording features other American composers such as Charles Ives, Ernst Bacon, John Downey, John Duke and Arthur Farwell. Mills is a well-known singer and professor serving on the faculties of San José State University, and as the English diction coach for the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.

³⁸ Janeanne Houston. *The Shining Place*. Elmgrove Productions. E6GD11.

³⁹ Jennifer Larmore. *My Native Land A Collection of American Songs*. Teldec. 16069.

⁴⁰ Carolyn Heafner. *Carolyn Heafner Sings America*. Composer Recordings. SD 462.

⁴¹ Erie Mills. *Always It's Spring*. Video Artists International, 1151.

Chapter II

Biographical Information

Lee Hoiby comments on the importance of song, affirming, “People can’t live without singing songs. It is part of the human blood stream and embedded in our nature.”⁴² Hoiby’s contribution to the world of music and, in particular, American song is inspiring, with nearly one hundred pieces penned. This chapter presents biographical information on Lee Hoiby and gives a perspective on his life and contributions to the musical world.

Hoiby was born in Madison Wisconsin in 1926 of Scandinavian descent. Like many composers, Hoiby came from a musical family. Hoiby’s grandfather was a Danish violinist and his aunt was a founder of a saxophone band. Mark Schulgasser comments that Hoiby’s father played the ukulele, Hoiby’s grandmother loved the *Grand Old Opry*, and his mother, an amateur pianist, played popular tunes on the piano like “Shine on, Harvest Moon.”⁴³ Today, Hoiby resides on Long Eddy, New York, about 130 miles from Manhattan, choosing to live in a more reflective place than the hustle and bustle of Manhattan.

Hoiby began making music at the age of five, but did not consciously decide to become a composer until the age of 22.⁴⁴ One of Hoiby’s first works was composed at the age of six. He stated that reaction to this first work composed and his innate talent ultimately impacted his early musical and personal life.

⁴² “Lee Hoiby Interview,” telephone interview by author, August 2, 2009.

⁴³ Lee Hoiby - American Contemporary Composer, Lee Hoiby, <http://Leehoiby.com> (accessed July 8, 2008).

⁴⁴ Joanne Foreman. “The Song is the Flower: The Music of Lee Hoiby.” *Fanfare Magazine* November/December 1996, 134.

I started playing tunes that I heard on the radio and making up words for them. I also made up my own compositions – rather lengthy ones. I had one called “The Storm” and I made everyone turn out the lights when I played it. It was full of diminished seventh arpeggios and octave passage big chords. Very early on people set me apart a little bit because of this and that’s probably one reason I didn’t tell people I could play, because they treated you differently. ‘O he’s a sissy. He can play the piano.’ And so I grew up kind of lonely that way.⁴⁵

Mark Schulgasser, Hoiby’s librettist and long-time partner, explains that like Brahms, Hoiby’s father often took him to saloon-type establishments and forced him to play honky-tonk or pop music.⁴⁶ Schulgasser believes that because of this experience Hoiby rebelled against pop music and became a classical musician.

At the age of sixteen Lee Hoiby’s life changed in large part because of Gunnar Johansson, an American pianist, composer of Danish birth and teacher, who recognized Hoiby’s musical aptitude. Johansson held the position of artist-in-residence at the University of Wisconsin from 1939-1976. During the early part of his tenure (1946-53) Johansson presented a broadcast series in which he performed the complete works of Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Chopin and Bach.⁴⁷ Interested in the possibilities of magnetic tape and the impact it could have on musical society,

⁴⁵ Robert Wilder Blue, “Romantic Radical: Lee Hoiby,” *US Opera Web* (June 2002): <http://usaoperaweb.com> (accessed July 31, 2008).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Stanley Sadie. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians 2nd Edition*. (New York: Grove’s Dictionaries, Inc., 2001), s.v. “Johansson Gunner,” by Charles Hopkins.

Johansson recorded the complete keyboard works of Bach, Liszt and Busoni on piano.

When Hoiby was 16 years old, he began to study piano with Johansson. “He was my teacher and never charged me. He led me by the hand into the most sacrosanct level of music-making on earth,”⁴⁸ Hoiby commented concerning his relationship with Johansson in an interview with Robert Wilder Blue. Hoiby graduated with a bachelor’s degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1947 and after six years of study with Johansson, Johansson passed Hoiby on to his own mentor, Egon Petri.⁴⁹

Egon Petri (1881-1962), was born in Hanover, Germany. Early in his career he became a professor at The Royal Manchester College of Music, and later Petri moved to teach at the Berlin Hochschule für Musik. While teaching, Petri toured as concert pianist and undertook an extensive tour of Russia in 1923. Petri was forced to move to America from Poland in 1925 because of the World War II. This move would prove fruitful for his career as a performer and professor. Petri began as a visiting professor at Cornell College and then, after an extensive illness, moved to Mills College in Oakland, California where he would remain for a decade.⁵⁰ “I have never known anyone so capable of putting into words how a passage of music should

⁴⁸ Robert Wilder Blue, “Romantic Radical: Lee Hoiby,” *US Opera Web* (June 2002): <http://usaoperaweb.com> (accessed July 31, 2008).

⁴⁹ Lee Hoiby - American Contemporary Composer, Lee Hoiby, <http://Leehoiby.com> (accessed July 8, 2008).

⁵⁰ Stanley Sadie. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians 2nd Edition* (New York: Grove’s Dictionaries, Inc., 2001), s.v. “Petri Egon,” by James Methuen Campbell.

go,” says Hoiby.⁵¹ Hoiby credits Petri for taking him to an “even higher level” in terms of musical understanding.⁵²

While at Mills College, Hoiby not only developed his pianistic talents but also explored his own compositional possibilities by studying composition with Darius Milhaud. Hoiby remembers playing the song “Pierrot” for Milhaud in class and Milhaud commenting, “Isn’t he a lovely musician.”⁵³ These moments of encouragement were pivotal in Hoiby’s career.

At this point in his life Hoiby spent much of his time exploring the songs of Schubert, often spending time in the practice rooms reading through Schubert Lieder. “It was Schubert more than anyone else who taught me how to write songs,”⁵⁴ he states.

When I was an undergraduate, my friend and I spent a lot of time discovering his songs. We evolved a tradition during our years at school, of going down to one of the practice rooms on New Year’s Eve, and singing in the New Year – with Schubert.⁵⁵

Hoiby claims that through the study of Schubert Lieder he developed a natural

⁵¹ Jay Nordlinger, “Singing His Own Song,” *National Review* (February 2005): 1-4.

⁵² Robert Wilder Blue, “Romantic Radical: Lee Hoiby,” *US Opera Web* (June 2002): <http://usaoperaweb.com> (accessed July 31, 2008).

⁵³ “Lee Hoiby Interview,” telephone interview by author, August 2, 2009.

⁵⁴ Robert Wilder Blue, “Romantic Radical: Lee Hoiby,” *US Opera Web* (June 2002): <http://usaoperaweb.com> (accessed July 31, 2008).

⁵⁵ “Lee Hoiby Interview,” telephone interview by author, August 2, 2009.

affinity for writing for the human voice.⁵⁶ He also credits Schubert's music with teaching him how to economize. "Schubert could take a simple idea such as in the song "Wohin" and "Erlkönig;" he was the essence of economy."⁵⁷ It is this principle of melodic economy that Hoiby is so fond of and that is incorporated in his song "Wild Nights."

When discussing Schubert with Hoiby, the respect he has for the Romantic composer is evident. "Schubert is the most beautiful and the one you want to hear when you die,"⁵⁸ Hoiby comments. Hoiby has chosen Schubert's "Im Abendrot," to be sung by Elisabeth Schumann, as his choice for his funeral.⁵⁹

In 1952 Hoiby's friend Stanley Hollingsworth, a student of Gian Carlo Menotti at the Curtis Institute, showed some of Hoiby's compositions to Menotti without permission. As a result, Hoiby received an invitation to study composition at Curtis with Menotti. Initially Hoiby was not interested, but after Menotti personally sent him a plane ticket to Philadelphia he felt he could not refuse.

It was the strangest single event in my life. I was enrolled for a Master's degree at Mills College, studying passionately with Egon Petri, whom I adored, working toward a New York debut, when I got an invitation to study with Menotti. (A friend had shown him some of my early stuff.) I received a plane ticket in the mail, and I just got on a plane. I left behind my M.A., my car, my books, records, and job at a high school and went to Philadelphia. I

⁵⁶ Robert Wilder Blue, "Romantic Radical: Lee Hoiby," *US Opera Web* (June 2002): <http://usaoperaweb.com> (accessed July 31, 2008).

⁵⁷ "Lee Hoiby Interview," telephone interview by author, August 2, 2009.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

don't recall it as a decision. It just seemed to happen. I have never regretted it.⁶⁰

However, Hoiby did not completely give up his dreams of becoming a concert pianist and would eventually revive his career, giving a debut recital at Alice Tully Hall, New York.

While at Curtis, Menotti subjected Hoiby to two years of strict Palestrina counterpoint, and then infused him with operatic ambitions.⁶¹ In a forum of operatic composers of the 90s, Hoiby describes the influence Menotti had upon him.

I started to write opera because of Gian Carlo Menotti. I remember that up until *The Consul*, opera was considered a vanished form, more or less, especially as far as American composers were concerned. The unique thing about Menotti was that *The Consul*, *The Medium*, and *The Telephone* were successful on Broadway. That was something very new, and it seemed to indicate the revival of opera as a popular form, not just an elitist form.⁶²

Menotti's operatic influence on Hoiby was compelling. On the topic of working with Menotti, Hoiby remembers that "he was strict, very meticulous, very

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Lee Hoiby - American Contemporary Composer, Lee Hoiby, <http://leehoiby.com> (accessed July 8, 2008).

⁶² John Duffy, "Composers for the 90s," *Central Service Conference Bulletin* Spring (1990), 72.

demanding. It was wonderful. Like Verdi, who worked out hundreds and hundreds of contrapuntal exercises, Menotti too, demanded much counterpoint.”⁶³

While at Curtis, Hoiby had the opportunity to meet Samuel Barber. He recalls Barber sitting at the piano, slowly sounding out, over and over, various combinations, looking for the right sound to set his text and music.⁶⁴ At the premier of Menotti’s *The Consul* for which Hoiby was an assistant, audiences gave the opera forty curtain calls. However, fellow composers did not share the same affection for Menotti’s opera or style. Because of his close relationship with Menotti and Barber, and due to Hoiby’s own melodic and tonal style, Hoiby would face many challenges as a composer.

Hoiby dedicated his opera *A Month In the Country* to Gian Carlo Menotti, and dedicated *Summer and Smoke* to Samuel Barber. In the following quote Hoiby reveals the influence the two composers had on his life.

Profound influence, especially Barber. Menotti’s music influenced me too; I had to be careful to avoid the obvious stylistic tropes. His (Menotti) influence was more that of a teacher. He taught me the things he had learned from his teacher, Rosario Scalero (also Barber’s teacher). I didn’t study with Barber, but I worked closely with him, orchestrating his last opera under his supervision. But I also learned from him as a friend. Some of the most valuable things I learned from him came out of conversations.⁶⁵

⁶³ Joanne Foreman, “The Song is the Flower: The Music of Lee Hoiby,” *Fanfare* (Nov. & Dec. 1996), 134.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 134.

After his studies at Curtis, Hoiby was sent to Rome as a Fulbright scholar to continue his musical studies at the Academia di Santa Cecilia. Upon Hoiby's arrival he was refused admittance. Later Hoiby found out it was because he was a student of Gian Carlo Menotti.

I later found out it was because I was a pupil of Gian Carlo Menotti. For one thing, he (Menotti) was very popular, and that was unforgivable; and he was tonal. I got the message that it was really not a welcome thing to be a tonal composer, and that's all I could ever be, so I faced the future with that thought.⁶⁶

From about 1950-1980 atonality dominated the serious music scene. Hoiby came into his artistic maturity around 1950, while many were influenced by the formalistic fashion of Anton Webern and Arnold Schoenberg and sound spectrum explorers like John Cage.⁶⁷ Composers writing during the post World War II era generally participated in the "serial" or "atonal" movements of music inspired by Schoenberg. In a generation during which Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Milton Babbitt and Elliott Carter were held in highest regard, tonal composers like Menotti, Barber and Hoiby were looked at as conservative, simplistic and even predictable. Despite the style of the time, Hoiby did not conform.

⁶⁵ Lee Hoiby - American Contemporary Composer, Lee Hoiby, <http://leehoiby.com> (accessed July 8, 2008).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Gary Schmidgall, "A Long Voyage," *Opera News* 50, no. 17 (1986): 10.

I am a nonconformist, I always refused to conform, and I paid a heavy price for it. But let me not whine about it: It was all a blessing in disguise. It left me with a whole life open, to do with what I pleased, because there were always enough people around – mostly singers – who would commission something, and I could earn some money to stay alive. I always kept my head above water.⁶⁸

Hoiby has composed eleven operas and especially had an early success with the one-act opera, *The Scarf*. *The Scarf*, taken from the Chekov story, was commissioned by Mary Louise Curtis Bok who was the founder of the Curtis Institute.⁶⁹ Menotti presented Hoiby's one-act opera, *The Scarf*; at the inaugural Spoleto festival in 1958. *The Scarf* was given its American premiere the following season at the New York City Opera.

Hoiby's first major operatic commission was *Natalia Petrovna*: based on an Ivan Turgenev play. William Ball, the founder of The American Conservatory Theatre, saw Hoiby's opera, *The Scarf*, and suggested they collaborate on an opera.⁷⁰ Ball served as the librettist, and Hoiby as the composer for *Natalia Petrovna*.

The opera premiered at New York City Opera in 1964 and opened to much critical acclaim. It was praised by the distinguished opera critic Paul Hume who

⁶⁸ "Lee Hoiby Interview," telephone interview by author, August 2, 2009.

⁶⁹ Stanley Sadie. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians 2nd Edition* (New York: Grove's Dictionaries, Inc., 2001), s.v. "Hoiby Lee," by Richard Jackson and Walter G. Simmons.

⁷⁰ Robert Wilder Blue, "Romantic Radical: Lee Hoiby," *US Opera Web* (June 2002): <http://usaoperaweb.com> (accessed July 31, 2008).

compared the closing octet with the Rosenkavalier trio and Meistersinger quintet.⁷¹ In 1980 the piece was revised and renamed *A Month in the Country*.

Another successful work for Mr. Hoiby is *Summer and Smoke* which was first produced in St. Paul in 1971 and brought to New York City Opera in 1972. The opera, based on Tennessee Williams's play (with libretto by Landford Wilson), was declared "the finest American opera to date" by Harriet Wilson of the *Washington Post*.⁷² Twenty productions of the opera took place in the decade after its production.

The Tempest (1986), Shakespeare's last play set by Hoiby's librettist and long time partner Mark Schulgasser, premiered at the Des Moines Metro Opera 1986. Hoiby met Mark Schulgasser in the 70s through a spiritual Pathwork group. It was through this group that Mr. Hoiby says he "learned he had a spirit."⁷³

Mr. Hoiby and Mr. Schulgasser have lived together since the 1980s and since 1979 have collaborated on operas, art songs and other projects including *The Tempest*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Italian Lesson*, *Bon Appetite*, *This is the Rill Speaking*. Schulgasser has been Hoiby's literary collaborator on the libretti of all his operas and collaborator on his art song and chamber works. Hoiby refers to Schulgasser as his "right hand man."⁷⁴ When speaking about his collaboration with Schulgasser, Hoiby notes the following:

⁷¹ Lee Hoiby - American Contemporary Composer, Lee Hoiby, <http://leehoiby.com> (accessed July 8, 2008).

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Lee Hoiby - American Contemporary Composer, Lee Hoiby, <http://leehoiby.com> (accessed July 8, 2008).

⁷⁴ Ibid.

He (Schulgasser) understands music in a most profound way. We have never had a fight. We learned through the Pathwork not to be defensive. When we were first together Mark didn't know he wasn't supposed to suggest changes to a composer. His suggestions worked and I became less resistant. I don't know of another partnership like it. I don't know what Barber and Menotti did about each other's music. I remember Barber opened Amahl and said, "Boy does it sound."⁷⁵

It is because of this partnership that Hoiby "advises all composers to listen carefully to anyone who makes a suggestion."⁷⁶ He explains that composers are usually not this way, but that there are some very good ones who listen to suggestions. Not only does Schulgasser contribute in a literary fashion but produces and conducts many of Hoiby's pieces throughout the United States and abroad.

Hoiby composed many short one-act operas including *Something New for the Zoo*, an amusing children's opera and *This is the Rill Speaking*. Perhaps his most popular are two musical monologues, *The Italian Lesson*, text by Ruth Draper and *Bon Appetite!*, text by Julia Child and premiered by Jean Stapleton. During the time that Hoiby composed operatic works, he also continued to turn out songs and non-vocal works. Composing over a hundred songs, Hoiby stated that some of his favorites are "The Lamb" and "The Shepherd" (both composed in a single day). As a young composer Hoiby received encouragement from notable composers, and this gave him the confidence to keep composing. Hoiby played his song "The Doe" from

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

his *Songs for Leontyne* for Gian Carlo Menotti and Samuel Barber. Menotti praised him and declared it was a “perfect” song and Samuel Barber mused if “he was a publisher, he would publish it.”⁷⁷

Many singers including Renee Fleming, Erie Mills and Leontyne Price have championed Hoiby’s songs. From 1964 until her retirement in 1997, Leontyne Price introduced many of Hoiby’s best-known poem settings and arias to the public, including “The Serpent” of Roethke, “Be Not Afeard”(from *The Tempest*), Emily Dickinson’s *The Shining Place* and “Evening” by Wallace Stevens. Hoiby’s songs can be heard on both of Price’s Carnegie Hall concerts. At the first concert Hoiby sat in a box with Marion Anderson and recalls the loud applause at the end of his pieces.⁷⁸ Hoiby remembers seeing Leontyne Price at Samuel Barber’s funeral and her saying “in Europe you are a household name.”⁷⁹ This was a touching and important statement to Hoiby.

Price also publically performed Hoiby’s song “Lady of the Harbor.” In 1976, during the centennial year of the Statue of Liberty, the composer took Emma Lazarus’s text and composed “Lady of the Harbor.” “It’s just a minute long, but it’s a kick-ass piece,”⁸⁰ Hoiby says about this beautiful song.

Larger compositions for voice include his 1991 setting of Martin Luther King, Jr. titled *I have a Dream* for baritone and orchestra. This work has been performed by baritone William Stone and bass-baritone Simon Estes. In 1994 three composers – Lee Hoiby, Ned Rorem and Robin Holloway – were commissioned to each write a

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Jay Nordlinger, “Singing His Own Song,” *National Review* (February 2005), 4.

work for a speaker and piano. Hoiby's work, *What is Light*, based on the text by Virginia Woolf, was performed by actress Claire Bloom. Hoiby has set texts by Emily Dickinson, Wallace Stevens, and James Merrill. In 1996 Hoiby served as composer in residence at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, and during that time composed *Rain Forest* on a text by Elizabeth Bishop.

Hoiby claims that modernism is collapsing around their ears and people are turning toward tonality."⁸¹ He credits a return to a more tonal world for helping his music to become more popular and thus receiving more awards. When labeled "conservative" Hoiby laughs, "it sounds kind of dull...but it doesn't offend me. I want to conserve what hundreds of years have created."⁸²

Often called a neo-romantic, he rejects the term responding, "There is nothing *neo* about me, I'm just a romantic."⁸³ Hoiby composes in a conservative, tonal and post-romantic style that shows his heritage, influences of Menotti, Barber, Schubert and Mahler.⁸⁴ A recipient of the Fulbright and Guggenheim fellowships and the National Institute of Arts and Letters, Hoiby was also featured on the American Composers series at the Kennedy Center in 1990.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Lee Hoiby - American Contemporary Composer, Lee Hoiby, <http://Leehoiby.com> (accessed July 8, 2008).

⁸² Joanne Foreman, "The Song is the Flower: The Music of Lee Hoiby," *Fanfare* (Nov. & Dec. 1996), 136.

⁸³ Lee Hoiby - American Contemporary Composer, Lee Hoiby, <http://Leehoiby.com> (accessed July 8, 2008).

⁸⁴ Stanley Sadie. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians 2nd Edition* (New York: Grove's Dictionaries, Inc., 2001), s.v. "Hoiby Lee," by Richard Jackson and Walter G. Simmons.

⁸⁵ Lee Hoiby - American Contemporary Composer, Lee Hoiby, <http://leehoiby.com> (accessed July 8, 2008).

Chapter III

Emily Dickinson's Influence on American Composers

More than 275 composers, including Samuel Adler, Elliott Carter, Roy Harris, Jon Harbison, Michael Hennagan, Sergius Kagen, Alice Parker, Daniel Pinkham and Ned Rorem have set to music approximately 650 poems and letters of Emily Dickinson, and this number grows as new composers discover this moving poetry.⁸⁶ The earliest vocal setting of Dickinson's poetry was Etta Parker's "Have You Got a Brook," set with the permission of Emily's sister Lavinia in 1896. A second setting by James MacDermid followed in 1908.⁸⁷

Virginia Dupuy is an expert on the subject of Emily Dickinson in song, and her work includes research grants, extensive recitals and recordings related to American composers who have set Dickinson's text to music. Dickinson's life and song settings were the topic of interviews with Virginia Dupuy for this paper.

Dickinson's poetry was not gathered in a collection until 1955 when scholar Thomas H. Johnson published *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*.⁸⁸ Because earlier publications used edited versions of Dickinson's original text, Johnson's commitment to the original words made his edition particularly significant. An examination of musical settings of Dickinson composed prior to 1955 reveals that the text is often not authentic Dickinson. The text may have been altered. Richard Sewall currently is the major contemporary scholar on Dickinson and holds the most extensive and comprehensive collection of poetry and biographical material on the poet.

⁸⁶ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), xxvi.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Emily Dickinson, *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson Edited by T.H. Johnson*. (Little Brown and Company, 1961).

Emily Dickinson was born in 1830 in Amherst, Massachusetts. Dupuy explains that Dickinson came from a typical northeastern society where there was strict emphasis on education.⁸⁹ Dickinson's father served as a treasurer of Amherst College for thirty-seven years, and was also state senator and representative to the Thirty-Third Congress (1853-1855).⁹⁰ Dickinson is known for being a recluse most of her adult life and not traveling, although a record of her visiting her father at the US Congress exists.

Dickinson's grandfather was one of the founders of Amherst College. Dickinson, herself was highly educated, attending Amherst Academy and Mount Holyoke Female Seminary. Dupuy's research reveals that Dickinson did not enjoy her time as a student at Mount Holyoke, a seminary that embodied a religious perspective to which she did not subscribe.⁹¹

The Dickinson family was deeply religious, although Emily Dickinson did not step into a church after her teenage years. "Her father and brother built a church," said Dupuy. "Possibly as a show of control over her life, Dickinson made the choice not to attend."⁹² One can read about Dickinson musing about her relationship with her family and her struggles with religion in the song, "The Letter," that is discussed in the music analysis chapter of this paper. Although Dickinson may not have attended church, she did not give up religion all together.

Although Emily Dickinson came from a strict religious background, as did other prolific authors such as Louisa May Alcott and Mary Baker Eddy, none of the

⁸⁹ "Interview with Virginia Dupuy," e-mail interview by author, August 31, 2009.

⁹⁰ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), xxvi.

⁹¹ "Interview with Virginia Dupuy," e-mail interview by author, August 31, 2009.

⁹² Ibid.

three followed the rules and roles they were expected to embrace.⁹³ It seems that all rebelled and became pioneers in their respective fields.

Emily Dickinson studied music from the time she was two years old. Lowenberg recalls a story about Dickinson visiting her aunt shortly after the birth of her sister. Dickinson's aunt wrote her father saying, "She has learned to play on the piano—she calls it 'moosic.'"⁹⁴ Dickinson continued her musical studies throughout her twenties, and much of her poetry reflects this emphasis. Dupuy points out "many of her poems are written in four line stanzas very much akin to a hymn setting."⁹⁵

Dickinson may have received church music instruction from William O. Gorham from the Amherst Academy and this might explain her knowledge of how to play church hymns and her deeper understanding of church music. Dickinson often called her poems "hymns;" the verb "to sing" in her poetry often meant, "to write a poem."⁹⁶

Dupuy explains that "Dickinson's use of words, her economy of language and her lyricism makes her poems accessible to composers."⁹⁷ This use of economy was also pointed out by Lee Hoiby in regard to Schubert and to Hoiby himself. He discussed how Schubert was able to take a simple idea and get the most out of it. Hoiby demonstrates his own use of musical economy in the song "Wild Nights" by using the same musical motive throughout the piece. The same can be said for Dickinson's poem "Wild Nights."

⁹³ "Interview with Virginia Dupuy," e-mail interview by author, August 31, 2009.

⁹⁴ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), xxvi.

⁹⁵ "Interview with Virginia Dupuy," e-mail interview by author, August 31, 2009.

⁹⁶ Richard Benson Sewall, *Life of Emily Dickinson* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), x.

⁹⁷ "Interview with Virginia Dupuy," e-mail interview by author, August 31, 2009.

Hymns were an important part of Dickinson's musical life but she enjoyed secular music as well. Upon her death several different types of sheet music were found in her piano bench. In her letters she mentions the songs, "Oh! Susannah," "The Last Rose of Summer," "Home Sweet Home," and the music of classical composers such as Mozart.⁹⁸

Despite her extensive education and her father's public persona, Dickinson withdrew from the public as she grew older. She lived in her father's house her entire life. She wore only white dresses, and her reputation was that of an eccentric. It is reported that during the last twenty years of her life Dickinson rarely left her house.

Neither Emily Dickinson nor her sister Lavinia ever married, and yet Dickinson managed to maintain several friendships with men. One prime example is a relationship she held with the Reverend Charles Wadsworth. The two exchanged letters for many years about theology and religion. Emily looked to Wadsworth for spiritual guidance. As previously discussed, Dickinson did not follow in the strict Calvinist tradition of her father, however, the topic of religion was always very close to her.

Another man who played an important role in her life was Thomas Wentworth Higginson. Through her submission of poetry to his newspaper, he eventually became her friend and mentor. Early in their relationship, Higginson would criticize her poetry and yet later found himself in awe of her work.

Another important relationship included a close bond with Susan Huntington Gilbert, who married Dickinson's brother, Austin. Emily Dickinson was close friends

⁹⁸ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), xxi.

with her prior to Gilbert marrying Austin. Susan and Austin lived next door to the Dickinson family home and became very close to Emily Dickinson. The only time Dickinson left her house as she aged was to tend to Susan and Austin's dying son.⁹⁹ The friendship between the two women lasted more than 50 years.

Dickinson died at the young age of 55 from kidney degeneration, and only ten of her 1,775 poems were published during her lifetime.¹⁰⁰ Dickinson's sister found most of her poems and letters stuffed in drawers throughout Dickinson's home at the time of her death.

Dickinson's personal relationships and life had a deep effect on her poetry. This poetry has attracted some of the world's greatest composers, many of whom have stepped out of their comfort zone. Some who had previously been viewed as primarily instrumental composers felt compelled to set Dickinson's text to music.

What attracts the composer to the text of Emily Dickinson? Dupuy feels it is Dickinson's individualism and ability to connect with every person that makes the text so popular.

Her personal style. I, along with practically every reader, believe that if I were at her home, I would be the one and only she would invite into her chamber! She says so much that we each wish we knew how to say. So we read/sing Emily Dickinson and are brought to our knees in a revelation which she has of us that we don't have ourselves. She is a window on our souls."¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ "Interview with Virginia Dupuy," e-mail interview by author, August 31, 2009.

¹⁰⁰ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), xxvi.

¹⁰¹ "Interview with Virginia Dupuy," e-mail interview by author, August 31, 2009.

Maybe it is this personal revelation that has attracted so many composers, singers and readers alike to Dickinson. When the same question was posed to Lee Hoiby concerning the attraction to Emily Dickinson, Hoiby replied, “She summons feeling in such few words. In one line the picture is complete; she leaves room for the music.”¹⁰² The composer Ernst Bacon wrote to the singer Marion Anderson on February 10, 1939 and said the following:

The poetry of Emily Dickinson seems to me to be one of the great achievements of womankind. Her style of lyricism lends itself more perhaps to any philosophical human thought without the latter being too apparent.¹⁰³

Many other composers share similar feelings of those of Hoiby, Bacon and Dupuy. It is because of this literary respect that Dickinson is one of the most popular and beloved figures in American literary history. Dickinson’s powerful poetry and letters continue to remain a favorite of art song composers and singers alike.

A further examination of five composers who set the poetry of Emily Dickinson follows in this chapter. Arthur Farwell, Aaron Copland, Ernst Bacon, Leon Kirchner and John Duke have made important contributions to the world of art song, especially through their settings of Emily Dickinson. Marshall Bialosky wrote the following in a review for the publication *Notes*.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² “Lee Hoiby Interview,” telephone interview by author, August 2, 2009.

¹⁰³ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), 3.

¹⁰⁴ Marshall Bialosky, “Review” *Notes*. Second Series, Vol.45, No.4 (Jun., 1989), 861-863.

Emily Dickinson died in 1886; she must have had a faint glimmer of hope that someday someone would discover her poems. What she could not have dreamed in her wildest imaginings was that her work would eventually draw three American composers of the twentieth century, all Pulitzer Prize winners, back from the world of instrumental music into the vocal area by virtue of her poems and that a fourth composer, also a Pulitzer Prize winner, would base much of his work on her lyrics.¹⁰⁵

Arthur Farwell was the first serious composer to set Emily Dickinson's text in 1907 and composed a song on her poem, "Sea of Sunset." He continued writing settings of Dickinson's poetry until 1947.¹⁰⁶ Most of the Dickinson songs set by Farwell were set later in his life during his 60s and 70s.

Farwell attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology to become an electrical engineer, but after hearing a performance of the Boston Pops, his plans changed from electrical engineer to composer.¹⁰⁷ Farwell founded the American Music Society in 1905; this society promoted and arranged concerts for American composers.¹⁰⁸ When Farwell had trouble getting his music published, he opened his own music publishing company, Wan-Wan Press (named after an Omaha Native

¹⁰⁵ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), 3.

¹⁰⁶ Carolyn Lindley Cooley, *The Music of Emily Dickinson's Poems and Letters*. (Jefferson, North Carolina and London:McFarland and Company, Inc., 2003), 127.

¹⁰⁷ Victoria Etenier Villamil, *A Singer's Guide to American Art Song* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004),158.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 158.

ceremony).¹⁰⁹ Farwell recognized the importance of American composers and American music and sought to promote it.

Farwell's music incorporates American Indian themes and many of his pieces were flavored by American folk songs, cowboy songs and spirituals. He yearned to produce a sound that was not influenced by Europe but was truly American. The texts of Dickinson were a perfect match for a man who yearned for such Americana.

In Carolyn Lindley Cooley's book *The Music of Emily Dickinson's Poems and Letters*¹¹⁰ she recounts a letter from Farwell's children. She states, "It was perhaps the Dickinson songs which he believed were the best expression of what he really wanted to say to the world with his music, of all of the things he composed."¹¹¹

For many years Farwell's manuscripts were thought to be lost but instead were found at an auction and now reside at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma.¹¹² Singer Paul Sperry is credited for bringing this literature out of obscurity and introducing Farwell's settings of Dickinson to the public through his recordings and recitals. Sperry wrote an introduction to the collection *The Thirty-Four Songs of Emily Dickinson* that is published by Boosey and Hawkes.¹¹³ *The Thirty-Four Songs of Emily Dickinson* is split into two volumes for medium voice. Volume one consists of songs composed from 1936-1941 and Volume II includes songs composed from 1944-1949. A sample of the songs included in this collection

¹⁰⁹ Ibid,158.

¹¹⁰ Carolyn Lindley Cooley, *The Music of Emily Dickinson's Poems and Letters*. (Jefferson, North Carolina and London:McFarland and Company, Inc., 2003), 127.

¹¹¹ Ibid,127.

¹¹² Carol Kimball, *Song a Guide to Style and Literature* (Redmond, Wash: Pst...Inc., 1996), 232.

¹¹³ Victoria Etenier Villamil, *A Singer's Guide to American Art Song* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 158.

are: “Ample Make This Bed,” “And I’m a Rose,” “The Level Bee,” “The Sea Said
“Come,” to the Brook,” and “These Saw Vision.”

Aaron Copland set twelve of Dickinson’s texts to music when he was at Sneden’s Landing, New York between March 1949 and 1950.¹¹⁴ The first performance of *The Twelve Dickinson Songs* was May 18, 1950 during the Sixth Annual Festival of Contemporary Music at Columbia University.¹¹⁵ Copland considered himself mostly an instrumental composer and wrote only a handful of songs in comparison to his substantial amount of instrumental music. *The Twelve Dickinson* songs have been published separately and also as a complete cycle, and each was individually dedicated to a different composer friend, including David Damion, Elliott Carter, Ingolf Dahl, Alexe Haieff, Arthur Berger, Lukas Foss and Marcelle de Manziarly. Later, Copland orchestrated eight of the Dickinson songs for chamber orchestra. Gwendolyn Killebrew and the Julliard Orchestra first performed these at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Carol Kimball in *Song: Guide to Style and Literature* makes this observation of Copland’s work:

He was accustomed to writing for the piano; it was the vocal lines that were my real challenge. I followed the natural inflection of the words of the poems, particularly when they were conversational...The Harmony is basically diatonic, with some chromaticism and polytonality, and much of the piano writing is contrapuntal.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Carol Kimball, *Song a Guide to Style and Literature* (Redmond, Wash: Pst...Inc., 1996), 249.

¹¹⁵ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), 28.

¹¹⁶ Carol Kimball, *Song a Guide to Style and Literature* (Redmond, Wash: Pst...Inc., 1996), 249.

Copland's set of Dickinson's songs is not a "cycle," meaning that they can be performed separately and are not linked by a musical motive or idea. Copland did, however, prefer that they be performed together. It was the soprano Phyllis Curtain who was best known for performing these songs with Aaron Copland at the piano. Curtain comments on Copland and her experience with the music:

It was Aaron Copland who found a musical voice for Emily Dickinson, and the times I sang them the best, I had the feeling that she was speaking. I don't know that I think of them as cyclical, but I think of them as part of Emily's life, as part of her personality, as part of her living in New England, so they progress one to another but not in story form.¹¹⁷

Other respected singers who have admired and performed Copland's Dickinson songs in recital and recording are Jan DeGaetani, Federica von Stade, Arleen Auger and Nancy Tatum.

In *The Twelve Dickinson Songs*, the poetry covers contrasting themes such as nature, and this is seen in "Nature, the gentlest mother," and "There Came a Wind Like a Bugle," and "death," "I felt a funeral in my brain," "Sleep is supposed to be," and "The Chariot." "Sleep is supposed to be" and "The Chariot" are the only the two songs that are linked by thematic rhythmic motive. "Life" and "Eternity" are other subjects often mused on by Dickinson. "When will they come back?" and "Heart we will forget him" are two songs that address these subjects.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 247.

In Victoria Etnier Villamil's book *A Singer's Guide To American Art Song*, Villamil calls *The Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson*, "one of the most distinguished works in the American repertoire."¹¹⁸ Ruth Friedberg, the author of the respected *American Art Song and American Poetry* series comments:

The overwhelming majority opinion including this writer's has aligned itself with William Flanagan's citing the work as probably "the most important single contribution toward American art song literature that we have to date."¹¹⁹

Years later, many teachers and scholars still believe this fact to be true. On May 10, 1979 Aaron Copland composed a letter to Ernst Bacon that said the following:

It was nice to hear from you after such a long time. Naturally I was interested to know that you had also produced a number of songs based on the poems of our dear Emily. (I wonder if you know that I orchestrated eight of my own settings of twelve of her poems?)¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Victoria Etnier Villamil, *A Singer's Guide to American Art Song* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 107.

¹¹⁹ Ruth C. Friedberg, *American Art Song and American Poetry Volume I* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1981), 119.

¹²⁰ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), 29.

A less popular composer than Copland, but nonetheless important, Ernst Bacon composed some 200 songs. Bacon, however, is probably known best for his settings of Dickinson and by far has the most extensive Dickinson catalogue of songs.¹²¹ In addition, Bacon won a Pulitzer Prize in 1932 for his *Symphony in D minor*. Bacon also wrote two books *Words on Music* (1960) and *Notes on Piano* (1963).¹²² Perhaps Bacon is best known for his settings of American poets. His settings of poets including Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman and Carl Sandburg are sung in voice studios across the United States.¹²³ Hoiby's earlier musical style is straightforward and tonal while his later style grew to be more dissonant.

Most of the Dickinson songs set by Bacon were composed during the 1930s and 40s, a period during which he grew interested in American themes and composed the orchestral suite *From Emily's Diary*.¹²⁴ Some of Bacon's larger settings include *Five Poems of Emily Dickinson*, *Six Songs* (for Contralto or baritone), *The Last Invocation* (Requiem), and *Songs of Eternity* (baritone or contralto, harp, percussion, string orchestra). Bacon provided various additional settings and solo songs that appear in collections. He is known for his sensitivity to the poetry and inflection of words and a masterly use of syncopation to give the impression of natural speech.¹²⁵ His settings of texts by Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman are considered by many to be among the finest examples of twentieth century American art song. One

¹²¹ Marshall Bialosky, "Review" *Notes*. Second Series, Vol.45, No.4 (Jun., 1989), 861.

¹²² Phillip L. Miller. "Bacon, Ernst." *Grove Music Online* <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed October 28, 2009).

¹²³ Victoria Etenier Villamil, *A Singer's Guide to American Art Song* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 13.

¹²⁴ Ruth C. Friedberg, *American Art Song and American Poetry Volume I* (Metuchen, N.J: Scarecrow Press, 1981), 119.

¹²⁵ Phillip L. Miller. "Bacon, Ernst." *Grove Music Online* <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed October 28, 2009).

recording, *Songs of Charles Ives and Ernst Bacon* features Bacon accompanying Helen Boatright, soprano, singing 22 Dickinson songs.¹²⁶ This recording features some of Bacon's most endearing and lovely songs including "I'm Nobody," "As Well as Jesus," "Weeping and Sighing," "O Friend," "A Spider," "Eternity," and the "Simple Days." Two other singers who champion Bacon's work are Carolyn Heafner and Elenor Steber .

Unlike Ernst Bacon, Leon Kirchner primarily was known for his instrumental works. A significant contrast can be drawn between Kirchner and Aaron Copland in that Kirchner was a student of Arnold Schoenberg and Roger Sessions and was drawn to composers like Alban Berg, and Anton Webern. Copland was a student of Nadia Boulanger and composed songs derived from American folk songs and traditions. Kirchner won a Pulitzer Prize for his *String Quartet No. 3* in 1967. Copland observed in the 1950s that there were moments in Kirchner's music that seemed nearly 'out-of-control.'¹²⁷ Instrumentalists such as Yo-Yo Ma have championed Kirchner's work, often performing his *Music for Cello and Orchestra* with various symphonies on recordings. Kirchner used the Dickinson cycle, *The Twilight Stood*, for a setting for six poems for soprano and piano. The poems are thematically unrelated, although each of the songs is meant as tiny operatic scenes of their own which together depict the serenity and fears of approaching death, and thus giving the piece continuity.¹²⁸ The piano part is challenging and virtuosic in the work. *The Twilight Stood* was commissioned in part by Santa Fe Chamber and Spoleto Music Festivals, and

¹²⁶ Ernst Bacon. *Songs of Charles Ives and Ernst Bacon*. CRI, Inc. CR675.

¹²⁷ Alexander L. Ringer. "Kirchner, Leon." *Grove Music Online*. <http://oxfordmusiconline.com>. (accessed October 28, 2009).

¹²⁸ Bernard, Holland. "Music: Song Cycle By Leon Kirchner." *New York Times.com* <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed October 18, 2009).

premiered in Charleston S.C. in 1982.¹²⁹ The first performance of the work was sung by soprano Beverly Hoch, with Leon Kirchner at the piano during the 1982 Spoleto Festival. The poems included in the cycle are “Much Madness in Divinest Sense,” “Partake as Doth the Bee,” “He Scanned it – Staggered,” “The Crickets Sang,” “There came a Wind Like A Bugle,” and “The Auctioneer of Parting.”

Most musicians know John Duke for his many collections of art songs, and he composed approximately 145 art songs before setting a text of Dickinson in 1968, late in his compositional career. Like Aaron Copland, Duke studied composition with Nadia Boulanger in Paris and piano with Arthur Schnabel in Berlin.

Duke’s romantic setting of *Six Poems of Emily Dickinson* includes settings of the poems “Good morning,” “Midnight,” “Heart! We will forget him,” “Let down the Bars,” “Nobody knows this little rose,” “Bee!,” “An Awful Tempest Mashed the Air!” and “I’m Expecting You!” Dickinson composed these poems during a time of great upheaval in her life (1858-1865) and at a time when her withdrawal away from humanity was set in motion.¹³⁰ Duke met Martha-Dickinson Bianchi, Dickinson’s niece, and had the opportunity to visit and spend time in Emily Dickinson’s hometown of Amherst, Massachusetts. This gave Duke a deeper connection to Dickinson’s home town and perspective into her life. These songs may be performed as a complete set or separately. Poetically, Duke had the advantage of the Thomas H. Johnson edition (Copland and Bacon did not). The poetry in Duke’s settings is truer to Dickinson’s original words than settings of earlier of composers.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ruth C. Friedberg, *American Art Song and American Poetry Volume II* (Metuchen, N.J: Scarecrow Press, 1984), 129.

Despite the diverse compositional styles of these composers and the differing historical backgrounds, the one thing that draws them together is a mutual respect for one poet. The influence Emily Dickinson had on the world of music is ever present through art song settings which expresses this complicated woman's feelings so suitably.

Chapter IV

Analysis of *The Shining Place* by Lee Hoiby

“The Shining Place,” No.1 from Lee Hoiby’s Cycle *The Shining Place*

“The Shining Place,” the first song in the cycle *The Shining Place*, was composed in 1954 and first performed in 1989 by soprano Cynthia Miller and pianist Lee Hoiby. “The Shining Place” was the last piece to be added to the *Four Songs of Emily Dickinson*, a cycle that was later titled *The Shining Place*. According to Hoiby, “The Shining Place” was intended as No.1 of *Five Dickinson Songs*.¹³¹ The range is comfortable for soprano, a higher mezzo soprano or tenor.

The dialogue poem of Emily Dickinson which serves as the text for “The Shining Place” was penned in response to a reading of Revelation 22:17 by the Reverend Charles Wadsworth, a prominent minister of the Arch Street Presbyterian Church, with whom Dickinson forged a strong friendship that lasted until Wadsworth’s death in 1882. The poem *The Shining Place* is Dickinson’s response to the scripture. One can see similarities in the scripture and Dickinson’s poem.

¹³¹ Carlton Lowenberg, *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere Emily Dickinson & Music* (Berkeley, Calif: Fallen Leaf Press, 1992), 51.

Figure 1: Poetic comparison for “The Shining Place”

Scripture	Dickinson Text
<p>The spirit and the bride say, “Come!” and let him who hears say, “Come!” Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.¹³²</p>	<p>Me--come! My dazzled face In such a shining place! Me--hear! My foreign Ear The sounds of Welcome--there! The Saints forget Our bashful feet— My Holiday, shall be That They--remember me-- My Paradise--the fame That They--pronounce my name-</p>

Dickinson’s main poetic idea is that heaven is remote and the only immortality she sees is the immortality of being remembered, presumably (a thought preoccupied by her at this time) for her poetry.¹³³ There is no undercurrent of regret, no sadness, and only exuberant looking forward to again seeing the loved ones who have “gone before,” the saints who will remember her name.¹³⁴

¹³² The Holy Bible. New International Version. Grand Rapids Michigan: Zondervan, 2001, 2087.

¹³³ Richard Benson Sewall, *Life of Emily Dickinson* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994).

¹³⁴ Colleen Gray Neubert, “Lee Hoiby: His Life, His Vocal Writing Style and an Annotation of Selected Songs for High Voice With Performance Considerations” (D.M.A. diss., West Virginia State University, 2003), 77.

One can hear, especially in the sextuplet motive beginning in m. 1, that Hoiby communicates Dickinson's text from the first note of the piece. The sextuplet patterns create "shimmering" movement and are reminiscent of the word "shining." Hoiby's trademark active accompaniment appears underneath the longer, drawn out, lyrical, arching melodic line.

Example 1.1: Opening of “The Shining Place,” (mm. 1-12)

The Shining Place

Emily Dickinson Lee Hoiby

Allegro (♩ = 76)

Me! _____

4 _____ Come! _____ My _____

7 daz - zled face _____ In such a shin - - - - - ing _____

11 _____ place! _____

The piece starts softly, and not until m. 8 is there a crescendo on the central words and title of the song “shining place.” The range becomes higher and the note values are elongated, reflecting the importance of the title of the song. The dynamic level changes again in the piano part for the word “Me” in m. 13 to *piano* and the

phrase slowly grows in intensity to the word “near!” in m. 19. One should note that the words “shining place” (m. 11) and “near!” are both set to triplet figures. The parallel phrase structures in mm. 3-12 and mm. 13-20 are also notable. One notes that the beginnings and the endings of the phrases are similar. In this section Hoiby uses dynamic fluctuation to help the singer gain intensity with each poetic phrase.

Example 1.2: “The Shining Place,” mm. 13-22

The musical score consists of five systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The piano part features a complex texture with many sixteenth notes in the right hand and longer notes in the left hand. Dynamics include *p*, *sfz*, *p cresc.*, and *f*. The lyrics are: "Me! Hear! My for - eign ear The sounds of wel - - - come near! The saints shall".

The left hand of the piano moves in tandem with the right hand texture up to m. 13 on the word “Me,” creating a rising feeling. Instead of the broken chords that have accompanied the right hand, the left hand accompaniment features longer note

values. At m. 17 the familiar 3/2 to 2/2 meter vacillation is disturbed and the meter changes to 6/4. The meter of 6/4 in m. 17 occurs on the word “foreign” in the poem, creating rhythm and meter that is foreign to anything that has been heard earlier in the piece.

An example of word painting in the piece is the word “saints” in m. 22. Hoiby brings out the importance of this word with the melodic right hand of the piano, a strong sense of F Lydian, and a trumpet-like fanfare as well as a *forte* dynamic. The F Lydian is reinforced through the B-natural in the right hand in m. 22. A strong V-I motion from the last beat of the CM7 of m. 21 into the F chord of m. 22, further strengthens this moment. This moment is unusual because a shift in tonality and dynamic for this word occurs. Textually this moment is important because the only immortality Dickinson sees is the immortality of being remembered; the saints are a symbol of this remembrance.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ Richard Benson Sewall, *Life of Emily Dickinson* (Cambridge, Mass; Harvard University Press, 1994).

Example 1.3: Fanfare in “The Shining Place,” mm. 21-29

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system (mm. 21-22) shows the vocal line starting with 'The' and the piano accompaniment. The second system (mm. 23-24) continues the vocal line with 'saints shall meet Our bash - ful feet. My hol - i - day' and the piano accompaniment. The third system (mm. 25-26) shows the vocal line with 'shall be that they re - mem - ber' and the piano accompaniment. The piano part includes dynamic markings such as 'f' and 'cresc.'.

The sequential pattern at mm. 28-31 (Bb, F6, gm, dm6, Eb, Bb6, cm, gm6) also is noteworthy. The high point of the piece occurs at m. 32 where the singer sings a high g on the word “paradise.” This is significant because it is the highest note sung to this point and prepares the singer and pianist for the climax of the piece. This is the second time in the text that Dickinson requests that people remember her. From

m. 32 into m. 33 a mode change from Bb major to Bb dorian is presented. After the fermata, a stepwise return to C major occurs, the bassline in the piano simply steps up, and the vocal line drops down on the text “pronounce my name.”

Example 1.4: "The Shining Place," mm. 28-42

28
they re - mem - ber me;

31
My par - - - a - dise the

34
fame That they pro -

37
nounce my name.

A tempo

ritard.

tenuto al fine

The musical score consists of five systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The piano part features a prominent eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *f* (forte) at the beginning, *ff* (fortissimo) at measure 34, and *ritard.* (ritardando) at the end. The score concludes with a *tenuto al fine* marking.

A crescendo, the only *fortissimo* and the highest note all transpire in m. 35. This is the first and only place in the piece where the forward motion ceases.

After the climax the rhythm changes to held whole notes in the piano and the motion of the music comes to a stop, while the vocalist sings “pronounce my” in mm. 36-38. A fermata on the word “my” in m. 38 is noted and the climax is prolonged by a rest with a fermata. The word “name” follows this dramatic climax and returns to the simpler figures from the beginning of the piece. One also must note the powerful chords in the extended registers of the piano. The piano then resumes the *pianissimo* sextuplet pattern, continuing until the end. The lower register of “pronounce my name” and the return to the patterns of the beginning of the piece help reinforce the simple request of this poignant dialogue poem.

“A Letter,” No. 2 from Lee Hoiby’s Cycle *The Shining Place*

By the mid 1860s Emily Dickinson and her sister-in-law, Sue, were looking for a prominent literary figure to critique Emily’s poetry. Both women agreed Dickinson needed an objective figure to assess the merit and quality of her poems. In 1862 Thomas Wentworth Higginson wrote an article for the *Atlantic Monthly* encouraging young writers to “Charge your style with life.” The article contained advice for writers wanting to find literary success. Thomas Wentworth Higginson was a man of letters, a social reformer, an abolitionist and was involved in fight for the rights of women. Higginson was also known for commanding the first troop of African-American soldiers in the Civil War.

Through letters and poetry Dickinson decided to respond to Higginson's call. She wrote Higginson, and in her letter she inquired about the validity of her poems; asking specifically if her writing was "alive."¹³⁶ This correspondence included four poems, "Safe in their Alabaster Chambers," "The nearest Dream recedes unrealized," "We play at Paste," and "I'll tell you how the Sun rose." Her initial correspondence was the beginning of a relationship that lasted for 23 years.

Dickinson credited Higginson for saving her life in 1862 because of his encouragement; however his response to her writing was not always positive. In response to the initial letter sent by Dickinson, Higginson asked for background information on her life and work. The letter she writes in return is the basis of Hoiby's song "A Letter."

Dickinson's Letter to Higginson:

MR. HIGGINSON, --Your kindness claimed earlier gratitude, but I was ill,
and write today from my pillow.

"You ask of my companions. Hills, sir, and the sundown, and a dog large as
myself, that my father bought me. They are better than beings because they
know, but do not tell; and the noise in the pool at noon excels my piano.

I have a brother and sister; my mother does not care for thought, and father,
too busy with his briefs to notice what we do. He buys me many books, but
begs me not to read them, because he fears they joggle the mind. They are
religious, except me, and address an eclipse, every morning, whom they call
their "Father."

¹³⁶ Richard Benson Sewall, *Life of Emily Dickinson* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), 542.

But I fear my story fatigues you. I would like to learn. Could you tell me how to grow, or is it unconveyed, like melody or witchcraft? You speak of Mr.

Whitman. I never read his book, but was told that it was disgraceful.

I read Miss Prescott's *Circumstance*, but it followed me in the dark, so I avoided her.

Two editors of journals came to my father's house this winter, and asked me for my mind, and when I asked them "why" they said I was penurious, and they would use it for the world.

I could not weigh myself, myself. My size felt small to me. I read your chapters in the *Atlantic*, and experienced honor for you. I was sure you would not reject a confiding question.

Is this, sir, what you asked me to tell you? Your friend,

E. DICKINSON."¹³⁷

Hoiby composed a song based on Dickinson's letter on February 2, 1987 and dedicated it to Dalton Baldwin, world-renowned coach and accompanist.

I have loved Dalton Baldwin's recordings of Schubert with Gerard Suzay, since way back in the 50's. And then one day I met him, after a program of my songs at the Mannes school. He introduced himself and said to me "Your songs are for the ages." That was a red-letter day.¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Richard Benson Sewall, *Life of Emily Dickinson* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), 542-543.

¹³⁸ "Lee Hoiby Interview," telephone interview by author, August 2, 2009.

The piece begins in the key of G major and introduces a rocking motive in the piano that sets the mood for the simplicity of the piece. This uncomplicated motive might reflect a single person writing a letter. He conveys this feeling through straight-forward rhythm, and quarter note bass arpeggiations against eight note figures.¹³⁹ The piano provides an easy counter motive against the voice. The texture is simple and does not possess the lush chords or harmonies from the earlier piece.

¹³⁹ Colleen Gray Neubert, "Lee Hoiby: His Life, His Vocal Writing Style and an Annotation of Selected Songs for High Voice With Performance Considerations" (D.M.A. diss., West Virginia State University, 2003.), 79.

Example 2.1: "A Letter," mm. 1-14

The image shows a musical score for the first 14 measures of a piece titled "A Letter". The score is written for voice and piano. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/8. The piano part begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The lyrics are: "You ask_ of my com - pan - - ions. Hills, sir, and the sun - - - down, and a dog large as my - self, that my fa - ther bought me." The score is divided into four systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more rhythmic bass line in the left hand. The lyrics are placed below the vocal line.

1
You ask_ of my com - pan - - ions.

6
Hills, sir, and the sun - - - down, and a

9
dog large as my - self, that my fa - ther bought me.

12

Example 2.1 cont.: “A Letter,” mm. 15-21

Musical score for Example 2.1, measures 15-21. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "They are bet - ter ___ than be - ings be - cause they know ___ but do not". The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note bass line and a treble line with chords and melodic fragments.

At m. 21 on the words “But do not tell” the voice is unaccompanied, and this might reflect a bit of secrecy between Emily and her animals. On the word “tell” the bass arpeggiations and eighth note figures reappear.

Example 2.2: “A Letter,” mm. 21-24

Musical score for Example 2.2, measures 21-24. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "but do not tell;". The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note bass line and a treble line with chords and melodic fragments.

A significant change occurs in m. 25. The right hand of the piano plays in a higher register and the rhythm changes from eighth notes to running sixteenth notes. The bass arpeggiations still remain. At m. 27 the running sixteenth note figures provide an example of word painting, helping to express “the noise in the pool at noon excels my piano.” The upper register is more pronounced than that in previous sections, and sixteenth note figures are reflective of the pool and of the playing of a piano. In m. 30 Hoiby calls attention to the actual piano part by creating a piano solo with triplet figures.

Example 2.3: “A Letter,” mm. 25-30

The musical score for Example 2.3, "A Letter," mm. 25-30, is presented in two systems. The first system (mm. 25-27) shows the vocal line with the lyrics "and the noise in the pool at noon ex - cels" and the piano accompaniment. The piano part features a *legato* section with running sixteenth notes in the right hand and arpeggiated figures in the left hand. The second system (mm. 28-30) shows the vocal line with the lyrics "my pi - an - o." and the piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a *ritenuto* section followed by a *A tempo* section. The piano solo in the right hand features triplet figures, and the dynamics are marked *f*, *p*, and *mf*.

In mm. 31-38 Hoiby breaks up the lyrical vocal line and creates a speech-like section by inserting rests and adding a dotted eighth, sixteenth note rhythm. When Dickinson addresses her family in the text, Hoiby chooses to use more minor intervals and tri-tones as in m. 35 on the words “for thought”.

At m. 38 the declamatory style succumbs to a lyrical line. The G minor of the phrase evolves into B Lydian on “he buys me many books”, and there is an ascending scalar pattern in the piano. On the words “because he fears they joggle the mind” the texture becomes thinner, the whole-step piano tiptoe motive is sparse, and the register becomes higher. The thirty-second note figure shakes and so does the word “joggle” which Hoiby sets on a triplet.

Example 2.4: “A Letter,” mm. 31-45

The image displays a musical score for a vocal and piano piece, spanning measures 31 to 45. The score is written in G major and 3/4 time. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "I have a broth-er and a sis-ter; my moth-er does not care for thought, and fa-ther, too bus-y with his briefs to no-tice what we do. He buys me man-y books, but begs me not to read them, be-cause he fears they jog-gle the mind." The piano accompaniment features various textures, including arpeggiated chords, sustained chords, and melodic lines. Dynamics such as *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte) are indicated. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs.

Hoiby sets Dickinson’s feeling about her family in mm. 46-51. The text begins “They are religious” and is accompanied by a major, hymn-like, homophonic accompaniment throughout the section. When the singer sings, “They are religious

except me” the piano then echoes the same motive in mm. 47-48. The “except me” motive also appears in m. 49. The dynamics in this section are marked piano helping to make the section reverent, as if in a church service. Sewall comments on Dickinson’s description of her family:

One of the many ironies in her letters to Higginson is her description of family: “They are religious – except me.....” She may at times have felt emotionally walled in – or walled out – but her mind and her sympathies recognized no limits, no limitations.¹⁴⁰

Example 2.5: “A Letter,” mm. 46-51

Measure 52 serves as a transition from the homophonic section to the more simple, letter-writing section of the beginning. The two lines are contrapuntal in nature and in a higher register.

¹⁴⁰Richard Benson Sewall, *Life of Emily Dickinson* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), 535.

Measure 55 is reminiscent of the beginning of the piece. It begins with the same rocking motive, except this time the text enters on a triplet figure. Hoiby once again uses text painting in m. 61. With “could you tell me how to grow” the piano and voice rise upward, representing an act of growing. There is also a fermata on this word allowing the length of the note to grow as long as one sees fit.¹⁴¹

Example 2.6: “A Letter,” mm. 55-60

55

But I fear my sto - ry fa - tiques you.

58

I would like to learn.

f

¹⁴¹ Colleen Gray Neubert, “Lee Hoiby: His Life, His Vocal Writing Style and an Annotation of Selected Songs for High Voice With Performance Considerations” (D.M.A. diss., West Virginia State University, 2003), 80.

Example 2.6 cont.: “A Letter,” mm. 61-64

61 *allargando*
— Could you tell me how — to grow, —
mp

64 *8va*
—
—

The last section is evocative of recitative as the music questions the listener as Dickinson questions Higginson in the original letter. Hoiby begins this section of quasi-recitative with a broken seventh chord in inversion and when the voice finishes the text, a new chord is arpeggiated. Measure 71 returns to the familiar rocking motive at the beginning of the piece.

Example 2.7: “A Letter,” mm. 70-72

70 *poco ritenuto*
witch - craft?
—
—

“How The Waters Closed,” No. 3 from Lee Hoiby’s Cycle *The Shining Place*

“How the Waters Closed” is presented as the third song in the cycle of *The Shining Place*. Chronologically it was the first of the cycle to be composed. Hoiby first composed the piece in the 1950s while still at Curtis (it was Gian Carlo Menotti who suggested the poem). Later Mark Schulgasser found it in a box and suggested that Hoiby include the piece in a group of songs, or create a group of songs to be combined with this piece.¹⁴² It was first published under the title “The Drowned Boy” and later revised and renamed “How the Waters Closed” in 1980.¹⁴³

“I wrote “How the Waters Closed” while I was still a student at the Curtis institute back in the early 50’s. Many years later I polished it up and added three more Dickinson songs. Then a friend of mine was singing them but found it difficult to begin with “The Letter,” so she commissioned me to write the first song (“The Shining Place”).¹⁴⁴

This eerie poem articulates the last moments of a boy who drowned and only the remnants of his coat and hat are left behind. Dickinson penned a number of poems about death. The poem that preceded “How the Waters Closed” in the collection of Dickinson poetry is titled “Those who have been in the Grave the Longest”.

¹⁴² “Lee Hoiby Interview,” telephone interview by author, August 2, 2009.

¹⁴³ Colleen Gray Neubert, “Lee Hoiby: His Life, His Vocal Writing Style and an Annotation of Selected Songs for High Voice With Performance Considerations” (D.M.A. diss., West Virginia State University, 2003), 80.

¹⁴⁴ Janeanne, Houston. *The Shining Place*. Elmgrove Productions, Seattle, WA; E6GD11, 2006. Compact Disc.

The form of the piece is through-composed and the rhythm is more straightforward and linear than the faster, florid accompaniments of the other pieces in *The Shining Place*.

Hoiby formulates a dissonant sound to reflect the sadness and coldness of a drowning boy. The dissonance can be heard in the first two measures of the piece. The left hand of the piano plays a C sharp and the right hand plays a C natural. This suggests an A major, A minor mixture that helps to create tension.

Example 3.1: "How The Waters Closed," m. 1-3

The musical score for "How The Waters Closed," measures 1-3, is presented in a three-staff format. The top staff is the vocal line, the middle staff is the right hand of the piano, and the bottom staff is the left hand of the piano. The time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The vocal line begins with a rest in measure 1, followed by the lyrics "How the wa-ters closed a -" in measures 2 and 3. The piano accompaniment features a steady, descending eighth-note ostinato in the bass line, starting on C# in measure 1 and moving down to C in measure 3. The right hand of the piano plays chords that create a dissonant sound, particularly in the first two measures. The piece is marked with a piano (p) dynamic.

The composer begins the music with a slow, steady, dragging pulse and with an ostinato figure in the bass line. This left hand ostinato figure is reflective of a funeral march, courtly and ceremonial.

The first vocal phrase (mm. 2-4) (descending melodic scale), repeats at a fourth higher in mm. 5-7. Throughout mm. 1-11 the vocal line tends to rise and fall, and this decreases the energy and reflects the sadness of the text.

Example 3.2: “How the Waters Closed,” mm. 1-11

How the wa-ters closed a - bove him,

p

How the wa - ters closed a - bove him

mp

we shall nev-er know;—

At m. 11 the ostinato figure ends, thus signaling a change in the overall feeling of the song. Hoiby’s gift of word painting comes into play in this section. On the word “stretched” (m.13) Hoiby stretches the pitch by half steps, and elongates the meter by evading the feel of a strong down beat through the use of syncopation.

Example 3.3: “How the Waters Closed,” mm. 12-15

allargando

How he stretched his an - - - guish to us, That is cov - ered

mf *ff* *dim.*

Unlike previous entrances, the texture at this point becomes thicker; the vocal line enters on the off beat instead of on the beat. The rising whole tones under the word “lily” help to musically mimic the rising of the pond above the boy.¹⁴⁵ Although Hoiby does not always place dynamics indications in the vocal part, he expects the voice to follow piano markings. Hoiby is clear with these markings and they often follow the emotions of the poetry as seen in mm.19-21.

Measure 19 begins the most dramatic part of the piece. The dynamic is *pianissimo*; an ascending whole tone scale and the higher register help aid in the feeling of ascension.

Example 3.4 “How the Waters Closed,” mm. 16-21

The musical score for Example 3.4, “How the Waters Closed,” mm. 16-21, is presented in two systems. The first system covers measures 16-18, and the second system covers measures 19-21. The music is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The vocal line is written in a soprano clef, and the piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The lyrics are: “That is covered too. Spreads the pond her base of lilies. Bold a - bove the”. The piano part includes dynamics markings: *p* (piano) at measure 17, *pp* (pianissimo) at measure 19, and *ff* (fortissimo) at measure 21. The vocal line enters on the off-beat in measure 16.

¹⁴⁵ Colleen Gray Neubert, “Lee Hoiby: His Life, His Vocal Writing Style and an Annotation of Selected Songs for High Voice With Performance Considerations” (D.M.A. diss., West Virginia State University, 2003), 80.

The drama and energy disappear at m. 22. as Hoiby returns to a simple texture that resembles the beginning of the piece. The melody of the vocal line is in unison with the right hand of the piano, while the left hand plays a descending passage in m. 23. In m. 25 the right hand plays a portion of the melody and the marking is *trattenuto* or held back. The ostinato, funeral march theme returns in the bass line at m. 27 and is played until the end of the piece. The dynamic level returns to *pianissimo* and the melody trails off and “sinks” to a low A at the end. This “sinking” note and others like it suggest the tragic subtext that words do not express.¹⁴⁶

Example 3.5 “How the Waters Closed,” mm. 23-29

23
Whose un-claimed hat and jack-et *tratt.*

26 **A tempo**
sum the his-to-ry. *pp*

¹⁴⁶ Janeanne, Houston. *The Shining Place*. Elmgrove Productions, Seattle, WA; E6GD11, 2006. Compact Disc.

“Wild Nights,” No. 4 from Lee Hoiby’s Cycle *The Shining Place*

The poem “Wild Nights,” most likely authored in 1861, is one of the most popular and beloved poems in Dickinson’s literature.¹⁴⁷ Hoiby set this poem on Christmas day in 1986, and, unlike the other settings in *The Shining Place*, there is no dedication.

The poem was penned out of loneliness for Dickinson’s brother, Austin, and sister-in-law, Susan. Dickinson mentioned in her writings, “I don’t think I should mind the weather if Susie and you were here, but I feel so very lonely now, when it storms and the wind blows.”¹⁴⁸ Richard Sewall points out the poem “Wild Nights” is often interpreted as religious or erotic.

The poem might be both religious and erotic but have an underlying emotion of loneliness and longing. But it is full of dichotomy – storm/calm, danger/security, separation and reunion – and their hoped-for resolution may go back emotionally to such relatively simple origins as appear in this letter – loneliness and longing for her friends during a bad spell of spring weather. The poem, of course, intensifies the mood and focuses on one object of longing.¹⁴⁹

The song “Wild Nights” is a perfect example of two independent lines (piano and voice) that fit together to express the text of the poetry. Here, Hoiby’s skills as a

¹⁴⁷ Richard Benson Sewall, *Life of Emily Dickinson* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), 108.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 431.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 431.

pianist are shown with a very intricate and challenging piano part. Hoiby is hopeful that this piece challenges pianists and “makes them want to play.”¹⁵⁰ Hoiby comments on the relationship of the vocal line to the accompaniment in his pieces stating, “They’re independent, and yet they are not. They’re a perfect partnership ideally. They are equally important...like two vines growing up and intertwining.”¹⁵¹ Hoiby commented on the biggest challenge for the singer and the pianist in the cycle *The Shining Place*.

I ask a lot of breath from the singer. Here again Schubert leads the way; think “Nacht und Träume” and Strauss asks for long breaths repeatedly. But a good singer likes to be challenged, and singers with good techniques love to sing this music. Just as good pianists love to play Chopin Etudes. Here again, Schubert set the bar. Who isn’t tempted to perform “Erlkönig?” (Not that many can.) On the other hand, I never *try* to make things difficult. I learned from Debussy how to help the singer find the pitch from the accompaniment.¹⁵²

The piano part plays chromatic, dissonant chords and clashing harmonies (g’s against f#s), all the while exploring the entire range of the instrument. In the vocal line the rhythmic values are elongated, legato, and basically follow a stepwise and half-step motion, completely opposite of what the piano is playing.

¹⁵⁰ “Lee Hoiby Interview,” telephone interview by author, August 2, 2009.

¹⁵¹ Carol Kimball, *Song a Guide to Style and Literature* (Redmond, Wash: Pst...Inc., 1996), 31.

¹⁵² Ibid.

Example 4.1: “Wild Nights,” mm. 1-6

The image displays a musical score for the first six measures of the song "Wild Nights." It is written in 2/4 time and consists of three systems. The first system (measures 1-2) features a vocal line with a fermata on the word "Nights" and a piano accompaniment marked *ff* with a *con sord.* instruction. The second system (measures 3-4) shows the vocal line with the lyrics "Wild Nights," and the piano accompaniment marked *p*. The third system (measures 5-6) shows the vocal line with the lyrics "Wild Nights!" and the piano accompaniment. The piano part is characterized by sequential patterns of eighth notes moving up and down the keyboard.

Hoiby was aware of “the essence of economy” in Schubert art song. He models many of his compositional techniques from Schubert, including the idea of using the same economic principle of taking a simple idea and developing it to the fullest. An example of this can be seen in the song “Wild Nights,” in which the pianist plays sequential patterns up and down the piano throughout the piece.

Measure 13 provides another example of the rising and falling in the piano and of the poignant harmonies expressed between all the voices. The dynamic also rises and falls with the *crescendo*, *decrescendo*. The tri-tone on the words “our luxury” in mm. 14-15 helps to express the seductive nature of this part of the text.

Example 4.2: "Wild Nights," mm. 13-22

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Wild Nights," measures 13 through 22. The score is written for voice and piano. It begins at measure 13 with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The vocal line starts at measure 14 with the lyrics "should be Our lux - - - u - ry!". The piano accompaniment features a complex, rhythmic pattern with many beamed notes. Performance markings include *tratt.*, *molto*, and *A tempo* at measure 14, *mp* at measure 17, and *dim.* at measure 19. The score continues to measure 21 with the lyrics "Heart in port". The piano part maintains its intricate texture throughout.

At m. 31, the mood of the piece changes. The range of the piano becomes higher and the texture becomes thinner. On the text "Rowing in Eden" (mm. 31-34) tied notes and triplets are employed, and the vocal line becomes less frantic allowing longer note values to prevail. The music has a more linear feel and the vocal line

moves very minimally in half steps. The ascending and descending flourishes in the piano return. These same measures have the feel of two against three.

Example 4.3: “Wild Nights,” mm. 31-35

The image shows a musical score for three measures (31, 33, and 35) of the piece "Wild Nights". The score is written for voice and piano. Measure 31 is marked "Meno mosso" with a tempo of approximately 60 beats per minute. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The vocal line in measure 31 is "Row - - - - - ing in" with a fermata over the word "Row". The piano accompaniment features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand. Measure 33 continues the vocal line with "E - - - - - den" and a fermata over "E". The piano accompaniment continues with similar triplet patterns. Measure 35 shows the vocal line ending with a fermata over a whole note, while the piano accompaniment continues with the triplet pattern. The score includes performance instructions such as "dolce, cantando, espr., rubato" and "3" indicating triplets.

At mm. 37 and 38 a new melody appears in the left hand. This melody appears many times in the bass of the piano throughout the end of the piece. Toward the end of the piece the voice and piano come together, and the piano returns to a

simpler texture. There seems to be no stopping point to this piece, and the shimmering of the water reflected in the rising and falling arpeggiated figures continues.

Example 4.4: "Wild Nights," mm. 37-48

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Wild Nights," measures 37 through 48. The score is written for voice and piano. It consists of four systems of staves. The first system (measures 37-39) features a vocal line with the lyrics "Sea!" and a piano accompaniment with arpeggiated figures. The second system (measures 40-42) shows the piano accompaniment continuing with similar arpeggiated patterns. The third system (measures 43-45) includes a vocal line with the lyrics "Might I but moor" and a piano accompaniment. The fourth system (measures 46-48) features a vocal line with the lyrics "To - night In" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part is characterized by shimmering, arpeggiated figures that create a sense of continuous movement. The score includes various musical notations such as clefs, notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *f*.

Example 4.4 cont.: "Wild Nights," mm. 49-60

The musical score consists of four systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a soprano clef and contains the lyrics "Thee!". The piano accompaniment is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into measures by bar lines, with measure numbers 49, 52, 55, and 58 indicated at the beginning of each system. The piano part features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and some chords. The vocal part is mostly sustained notes with some melodic movement.

“There Came A Wind Like A Bugle,”

No. 5 from Lee Hoiby’s Cycle *The Shining Place*

In this acclaimed Dickinson poem nature turns commanding and ominous.¹⁵³

Dickinson’s overall theme through this poem is to convey that nature has power in the destruction of life and nature. The poem was written in 1833, three years before Dickinson’s death. The colorful text “chill,” “doom,” and “ghost,” may suggest Dickinson’s state of mind at the time.¹⁵⁴

This piece is technically demanding for both piano and voice. Hoiby creates a picture of the stirring wind with the opening trill in the lower register of the piano and a rising scale beginning in m. 2. The voice part enters here in a declamatory style and concludes the phrase with an accented “bugle”. One hears opening rushes of scales and broken chords, as well as high and low broken octave passages in both hands. The virtuosic piano figures at the beginning of this piece are key to setting the mood and reflecting Dickinson’s naturalistic text.

¹⁵³ Carol Kimball, *Song a Guide to Style and Literature* (Redmond, Wash: Pst...Inc., 1996), 250.

¹⁵⁴ Victoria Etenier Villamil, *A Singer's Guide to American Art Song* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 122.

Example 5.1: “There Came a Wind Like a Bugle,” mm. 1-4

Rhythmically, Hoiby stresses words such as “quivered,” “ominous,” “chill,” and “electric moccasin” throughout the piece. He often uses a dotted rhythm or triplet figure to set these apart from the notes of longer value. This demonstrates the importance of the poetry and his employment of word painting. The use of the pedal in mm.5-6 helps create this cold and blurry atmosphere. When Dickinson discusses the “doom’s electric moccasin” in the succeeding measures, Hoiby removes the pedal helping to enforce the clarity and sharpness of electricity.

Example 5.2: “Quiver” in “There Came a Wind Like a Bugle,” mm. 5-6

Musical score for Example 5.2, measures 5-6. The score is in 2/4 time and features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins at measure 5 with the lyrics "It quiv-ered through the Grass". The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand and a more complex melodic line in the right hand. The dynamic marking *pp* is present in both staves. The piano part includes sixteenth-note figures and slurs. There are asterisks and a double bar line at the end of the piano part, indicating the end of the example.

Example 5.3: “So ominous” in “There Came A Wind Like A Bugle,” mm. 8-9

Musical score for Example 5.3, measures 8-9. The score is in 2/4 time and features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins at measure 8 with the lyrics "Chill up - on the Heat So". The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand and a more complex melodic line in the right hand. The dynamic marking *pp* is present in both staves. The piano part includes sixteenth-note figures and slurs. There are asterisks and a double bar line at the end of the piano part, indicating the end of the example.

Example 5.4:

“Doom’s electric Moccasin” in “There Came A Wind Like A Bugle,” mm. 14-16

Another example of text painting in the song is at mm. 24-25 “Rivers where the Houses ran.” Here Hoiby changes the texture and register from sixteenth note arpeggiated figures in the treble clef to thirty-second note ascending scalar passages in the bass clef. These ascending passages help to illustrate the running rivers.

Example 5.5: “Running Rivers” in “There Came A Wind Like A Bugle,” mm. 24-25

On the text “The Bell Within” one is struck by the swinging rhythm. Triplets in the piano prepare the voice for the melismatic figure in m. 31. The words “flying

tidings” converge with the piano to intensify the text and fioritura is employed.¹⁵⁵

Hoiby searches for references to music in poetic text such as “The Bell Within,” and these for him are often promising signs that the text might make a good song.¹⁵⁶

The suggestion that music and sound can convey a message or even an experience of the spirit in a more direct and public way than words can. The reference to music in a song creates a useful point of cognitive overlap between the text and setting, and a moment when the imitative ‘Mickey mousing’ of textual imagery (which one usually tries to avoid) can be indulged in.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Carol Kimball, *Song a guide to style and literature* (Redmond, Wash: Pst...Inc., 1996), 271.

¹⁵⁶ Carolyn Lindley Cooley, *The Music of Emily Dickinson’s Poems and Letters*. (Jefferson, North Carolina and London:McFarland and Company, Inc., 2003), 147.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 147.

Example 5.6: "There Came A Wind Like A Bugle," mm. 29-39

29 *stringendo* **Un poco più mosso, marcato**
The bell with-in the

31
stee-ple wild The fly-ing ti-dings

34
told How

37 *legato*
much can come And much can

p legato

Example 5.6 cont.: “There Came A Wind Like A Bugle,” mm. 40-43

Textually, Dickinson completely stops the wind from blowing and thus the chaos in the poetry ceases. Hoiby chooses the text “And yet Abide the World” for this dramatic change in his setting. Up to this point the tempo has been fast and somewhat chaotic; unpredictability has dominated this piece. At m. 36 a transition begins a slower, grander section and the composer achieves a strong C major feel. Hoiby sets the climax of the piece and a grand lyrical ending ensues. At “Yet Abide” in m. 42 the texture is conjunct and translucent, a dramatic change from the disjunct, frenetic line of the previous parts of the song. The piano plays triplet chordal inversions and is in 6/4 while the vocal line is in 2/2.¹⁵⁸ This meter change helps provide motion through the piano movement while the voice renders the contrasting long line above.

¹⁵⁸ Colleen Gray Neubert, “Lee Hoiby: His Life, His Vocal Writing Style and an Annotation of Selected Songs for High Voice With Performance Considerations” (D.M.A. diss., West Virginia State University, 2003), 77.

“And yet abide” is repeated four times, three in a higher register and the last in the lower register.

In Victoria Villamil’s book *A Singer’s Guide to American Art Song*, she claims the ending is “predictable and excessive and disappoints.”¹⁵⁹ However, this author finds this ending to be quite powerful and fully appropriate.

¹⁵⁹ Victoria Etenier Villamil, *A Singer’s Guide to American Art Song* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 200.

Example 5.7: "There Came A Wind Like A Bugle," mm. 36-46

36
How

37 *legato*
much can come And much can

40 *ritenuto*
go. And yet a-bide the

43
World! And yet a-bide the

p legato

ten. *f*

ritenuto

f

ten.

f

ritenuto

f

Example 5.7 cont.: "There Came A Wind Like A Bugle," mm. 47-60

The image displays a musical score for the piece "There Came A Wind Like A Bugle," specifically measures 47 through 60. The score is arranged in four systems, each containing a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single treble clef, while the piano accompaniment is in grand staff notation (treble and bass clefs).
Measure 47: The vocal line begins with the word "World!" followed by a long horizontal line indicating a sustained note. The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *ten.* (tender) is present above the vocal line.
Measure 48: The vocal line continues with the word "And" followed by another long horizontal line. The piano accompaniment continues with similar melodic and bass lines.
Measure 49: The vocal line has the lyrics "yet a - bide" followed by a horizontal line, and "the World!" followed by another horizontal line. The piano accompaniment continues.
Measure 50: The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) is present in the piano part.
Measure 51: The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *meno f* (meno forte) is present in the piano part.
Measure 52: The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *meno f* is present in the piano part.
Measure 53: The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *meno f* is present in the piano part.
Measure 54: The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *meno f* is present in the piano part.
Measure 55: The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *meno f* is present in the piano part.
Measure 56: The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *meno f* is present in the piano part.
Measure 57: The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *meno f* is present in the piano part.
Measure 58: The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *meno f* is present in the piano part.
Measure 59: The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *meno f* is present in the piano part.
Measure 60: The vocal line is silent. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *meno f* is present in the piano part.

Example 5.7 cont.: "There Came A Wind Like A Bugle," mm. 61-68

61

And yet a - bide the World!

65 *allargando*

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system (measures 61-64) features a vocal line with the lyrics "And yet a - bide the World!" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a bass line with eighth-note patterns and a right-hand part with chords and melodic lines. The second system (measures 65-68) is marked *allargando* and shows the vocal line ending on a whole note, with the piano accompaniment continuing with a descending bass line and a final chord in the right hand.

Chapter V

Summary, Perspectives and Recommendations for Further Study

Summary

Lee Hoiby's favorite metaphor is as follows: "I wanted to grow heirloom roses, but you were allowed nothing but cactuses."¹⁶⁰ During a time when atonality prevailed, Hoiby continued to produce tonal music, even when referred to as "old fashioned" or "conservative."

Let me not whine about it; It was a blessing in disguise. It left me with a whole life open, to do with what I pleased, because there were enough people around – mostly singers who commissioned me to do something, and I could earn some money, to stay alive. I always kept my head above water.¹⁶¹

Hoiby continued to produce numerous songs appropriate for professionals and students alike to sing. One can walk into a university or an opera company and see and hear Hoiby's works performed on the stage or hear his works performed on a recital program. Hoiby's compositional style may have been conservative, tonal, or even romantic for the ears of many critics, but Hoiby makes no pretense about the nature of his compositional voice. "There is nothing very arcane about my music. It is very direct. There are no interpretive mysteries about the text and the music – it is very straightforward."¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Jay Nordlinger, "Singing His Own Song," *National Review* (February 2005): 2.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Carol Kimball, *Song a guide to style and literature* (Redmond, Wash: Pst...Inc., 1996), 250.

Hoiby displays a passion for singers, exemplified in his significant relationship with Leontyne Price. She premiered many of his works and he composed numerous songs for her including *The Songs for Leontyne: Six Songs for High Voice*. Hoiby commented to Robert Wilder Blue, “When I heard Leontyne Price sing five of my songs in Constitution Hall in 1965 I just flipped! They were better than I had thought and it made me very serious about wanting to do more.”¹⁶³

This paper investigated the compositional style of *The Shining Place* and provided insights on various influences on Lee Hoiby. Personal interviews with Hoiby and Virginia Dupuy form the basis of much of the material presented here. The frequency of Hoiby’s works appearing in the university and opera halls in America underscores the importance of providing documentation and analysis of his major works such as *The Shining Place*.

The title of the set comes from the title of the first poem of the set which is the same. Other poems set are “A Letter,” “Wild Nights,” and the very popular “There Came a Wind Like A Bugle.”

The first song “As the Waters Closed” was composed in 1954 while Hoiby was a student of Gian Carlo Menotti at the Curtis institute. It wasn’t until 1989 with Hoiby on the piano and soprano Cynthia Miller as soloist that Hoiby compiled five songs he had set to the text of Dickinson into a cycle. While no relationship between the poems exists, the poetry is filled with text painting and trademark presentations of florid piano parts as a strong duet accompaniment for the singer.

¹⁶³ Robert Wilder Blue, “Romantic Radical: Lee Hoiby,” *US Opera Web* (June 2002): <http://usaoperaweb.com> (accessed July 31, 2008).

Perspectives

Hoiby feels strongly about the collaborative process between the singer and pianist and recommends the memoirs and books by Gerald Moore to vocalists and pianists alike.¹⁶⁴ Referring to the books by Moore as his “required” reading list, Hoiby emphasizes the importance of studying this series on musical collaboration in depth.¹⁶⁵ When asked what the singer should know about approaching his song cycle *The Shining Place*, Hoiby responded:

As with any song, I always ask the singer to project the words as clearly as possible. It *can* be done. There is no excuse for poor diction (or poor rhythm). Final consonants are more important than beautiful tones. Try to get into the words as deeply as possible. Sing expressively. Be very stingy with hand gestures. The pianist should not be afraid to use a big sound when the voice is *forte*.¹⁶⁶

The text of Emily Dickinson has been set by hundreds of reputable composers and Hoiby’s *The Shining Place* is a cycle that is rapidly becoming part of the standard American art song repertoire. The song cycle can stand with other prominent composers settings of Dickinson including Arthur Farwell, Aaron Copland, Ernst Bacon, Leon Kirchner and John Duke. Two aspects that make Hoiby’s setting of Dickinson particularly poignant are the technical abilities required by both the

¹⁶⁴ Gerald Moore. *Farewell Recital: Further Memoirs by Gerald Moore*. London, England: Hamish Hamilton, 1978.

¹⁶⁵ “Lee Hoiby Interview,” telephone interview by author, August 2, 2009.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

vocalist and pianist, and the humanity that is exposed through the music and profound connection to the text.

I have to fall in love with the text. Then if I decide to set it to music, I just start right in. I don't spend a lot of time with the text, because I want my musical response to be spontaneous. Besides, I wouldn't set text that required too much thought. It has to be immediately comprehensible, because my music does not deal with intellectual subtleties much; it deals with feelings.¹⁶⁷

Mark Schulgasser, Hoiby's literary collaborator should receive much of the credit for choosing Hoiby's art song text, as well as his operatic libretti. Schulgasser also produces and directs many of Hoiby's works throughout the country. In an interview with *Opera Web* Hoiby discusses the importance of this collaboration and how he chose his text before the relationship with Schulgasser.

I was flailing around – I didn't know anything about literature. It was pretty catch as catch can, but I did catch some good poets; I couldn't write words to a bad poet. I found the text to "The Doe" in a *New Yorker* magazine by a young poet named John Fandel. I wrote to him and he let me set it to music. When Mark came along he took over the part and he has picked almost all of the texts I've set for the last twenty years.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ "Lee Hoiby Interview," telephone interview by author, August 2, 2009.

¹⁶⁸ Robert Wilder Blue, "Romantic Radical: Lee Hoiby," *US Opera Web* (June 2002): <http://usaoperaweb.com> (accessed July 31, 2008).

It is the sensitivity for the written word that makes Lee Hoiby compatible with Emily Dickinson. In John McCauley's review of the Dickinson songs for *Notes* he explains:

Those familiar with Hoiby's work know that in addition to an extraordinary knowledge of the piano virtuosic capabilities, he has a special ability to combine musical gesture, sonority and the written word.¹⁶⁹

Hoiby credits composers such as Schubert, Chopin, Debussy and Brahms – all of the major song composers – for teaching him this sensitivity and giving him an understanding of the human voice.¹⁷⁰ However, it was Schubert whose influence was most impressionable.

Emily Dickinson is often defined by her struggles and her reclusiveness but one must also point out the specific traits that make her attractive to composers. Dickinson loved music and played the piano and this is probably one of the attributes that made her poetry attractive and compatible with music. In much of her poetry she uses musical imagery – “There Came a Wind Like a Bugle,” “The Music in the Violin does not emerge alone,” “Dying at my music! Bubble! Bubble!”¹⁷¹

A favorite topic of Dickinson in her poetry was nature. The use of nature in poetry has been attractive to many composers as well, especially romantic composers. Schubert and Schumann often were compelled to use the poets who used this natural

¹⁶⁹ John McCawley. “Review of Four Dickinson Songs.” *Notes*, Vol. 47. No. 11, (September 1990), 230.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ Carol, Cooley. “The Music of Emily Dickinson's Poems and Letters.” McFarland and Company, London, 57.

imagery. One can see how a composer such as Hoiby, with tendencies toward the romantic style, would be drawn to this imagery.

Carlton Lowenberg's book discusses the interest composers have in Emily Dickinson. He catalogs over 1,615 musical settings of 654 Dickinson poems and letters set by 276 composers. Carolyn Linley Cooley notes that since the publication of his book in 1992 this number has risen to nearly 3,000 songs and since the publication of Cooley's book in 2003 this number has grown significantly.¹⁷²

The Shining Place is a complex marriage of the musical versatility of Hoiby and the poetic skillfulness of Dickinson. From the sparkling "The Shining Place," to the intimate "A Letter," and the declamatory "There Came A Wind Like A Bugle," Hoiby is able to constantly link the musical motives to the dramatic ideas of the text and each piece has a special and individual musical quality.¹⁷³ The virtuosic piano and vocal part are a challenge for the singer and pianist. These pieces provide an equally appropriate showcase for a graduate recital or a seasoned professional like Leontyne Price.

¹⁷² Ibid, Pg.120.

¹⁷³ Carol Kimball, *Song a guide to style and literature* (Redmond, Wash: Pst...Inc., 1996), 30.

Recommendations for Further Study

In the course of this research study, several topics for possible research became apparent that were beyond the scope of this document. Further investigation of the topics that follow is recommended:

1. A comparison of the operas of Gian Carlo Menotti, Samuel Barber and Lee Hoiby.
2. The influence of Leontyne Price on the art songs of Samuel Barber and Lee Hoiby.
3. A study of the collaborative, operatic works of Lee Hoiby and Mark Shulgasser
4. An analysis and comparison of further settings of text by Emily Dickinson by prominent American art song composers.
5. The collaborative process between a singer and pianist from a composer's point of view.
6. An updated catalog of the works of Emily Dickinson set by American composers.
7. An analysis of the oratorio *Galileo* by Lee Hoiby.
8. Schubert's economic principles in Hoiby's music.

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Appendix A

Compiled Responses from Lee Hoiby:

What process do you go through in setting text to music?

Wow! You don't pull your punches. Well, first of all, I have to fall in love with the text. Then if I decide to set it to music, I just start right in. I don't spend a lot of time with the text, because I want my musical response to be spontaneous. Besides, I wouldn't set a text that required too much thought. It has to be immediately comprehensible, because my music does not deal with intellectual subtleties much; it deals with feelings.

Some call you a neo-romantic, how would you describe your overall compositional style?

I am not neo-romantic. I am a romantic, and always have been. There's nothing neo about my music. It is in a familiar traditional vocabulary. It follows the great broad river of western music, from Palestrina to Barber. I feel myself a part of that river.

How did Menotti and Barber influence your compositional style and career?

They had a profound influence, especially Barber. Menotti's music influenced me too. I had to be careful to avoid obvious stylistic tropes. His influence was more that of a teacher. He taught me with great dedication the things he had learned from his teacher, Rosario Scalero (also Barber's teacher). I didn't study with Barber, but I worked closely with him, orchestrating his last opera under his supervision. But I also learned from him as a friend. Some of the most valuable things I learned came out of conversations.

Was it difficult for you to leave your piano career to study composition at Curtis with Gian Carlo Menotti? What were the circumstances?

It was the strangest single event in my life. I was enrolled for a Master's degree at Mills College, studying passionately with Egon Petri, whom I adored, working toward a New York debut, when I got an invitation to go to Curtis to study with Menotti. (A friend had shown him some of my early stuff.) I received a plane ticket in the mail, and I just got on a plane. I left behind my MA, my car, books, records, job at a high school, and just went to Philadelphia. I don't recall it as a decision. It just seemed to happen. I have never regretted it.

Describe your experience with Leontyne Price.

Price premiered "There Came a Wind Like a Bugle" and "Wild Nights." During her recital at Carnegie Hall. I was sitting in a box with Marion Anderson and after my songs people clapped loudly after my pieces. Mark put together reviews and many critics said my pieces were the best thing on the program.

How did you feel composing very tonal, lyrical music during a time when composition taking a much different course?

It has always felt kind of scary. I have often felt the shade of Schoenberg glowering

over my shoulder. Less scary as the years went by, until now it's really not such a sin any more to write a triad. But for a long time I wasn't sure it would ever happen. I thought we were all doomed, and that I would never get anywhere. But I couldn't have done differently.

What other musical genres influence your compositional style?

I'm not sure I know what you mean. My style evolved from my deep love for the music that came before me, including Bach, Chopin, et al. The most immediate influences came from Strauss, Mahler and Barber. I feel I am their direct descendant.

What has drawn you to the art song?

Schubert, mostly. When I was an undergraduate, my friend and I spent a lot of time discovering his songs. We evolved a tradition during our years in school, of going down to one of the practice rooms on New Year's Eve, and singing in the new year – with Schubert. Schubert is the most beautiful and the one you want to hear when you die – “In Abendrot” sung by Elizabeth Schumann is my choice. Schubert can take a simple idea, (for instance in the song Wohin) he was the essence of economy, you can hear this is my song Wild Nights.

You've composed close to one-hundred songs, which are your favorite and why?

“Autumn,” “Evening,” “Goodby, Goodby World.” I have not been able to get the rights to the latter; but one day the copyright on “Our Town” will expire, and it is my hope that someone will discover a copy of that song and bring it forward. Last year I made a CD of my songs with two wonderful singers (Julia Faulkner and Andrew Garland). We recorded “Goodby, Goodby World,” just to get it in the can. We still have not succeeded in getting the rights. We wanted to call the CD “Goodby, Goodby World.” It will be out around Christmas, on Naxos, and will be called “A Pocket of Time.” Unless we miraculously get the rights before then...

The Doe composed for Leontyne Price is another favorite. Menotti said “this was a perfect song” and Barber said “if he was a publisher he would publish it.” I had a similar experience in 1950 when I played my song “Pierrot for Milhaud.” He said “Isn't he a lovely musician.” This was a big boost from a great composer.

What do you feel is the state of the 20th century American art song?

It seems to be alive and kicking. Younger composers are coming forth, now less intimidated by the modernists, and some of them are writing beautiful songs. We lost one of the most talented a few years ago, Christ De Blasio, whose “Walt Whitman in 1981” will choke you up. The future is bright, modernism is collapsing around their ears and people are turning toward tonality. Tonality is to music as breath is to life.

How do you choose the poets for your songs?

Randomly. My partner, Mark Schulgasser, has chosen most of them in the last 30 years. He has even been able to convince me to set poems that I didn't like at first.

What attracted you to Emily Dickinson?

Oh Jeez, we're all swept away by her. I can't explain it.

What about Dickinson suits your compositional style?

In spite of the depth of her thoughts, she always leaves room for music. She summons feelings in such few words. In one line the picture is complete, she leaves room for the music.

*How did you choose the poetry for *The Shining Place*?*

Mark chose it, knowing how I write. Menotti suggested the poem “The Drowned Boy.”

*The poems in *The Shining Place* are contrasting. Was this on purpose?*

I suppose so. I wrote the third one (“How the Waters Closed” – originally titled “The Drowned Boy”) while I was still at Curtis. Mark found it in a box, and suggested the others. He is a great programmer.

*The cycle originally had four pieces, and did not include the song *The Shining Place*. What caused this piece to be added to the cycle and for the cycle to bear its name?*

A friend of mine, Cynthia Miller, found it difficult to start with *The Letter*, so she commissioned me to write a new song to start with. She paid \$1,500. Mark chose the title for the set.

Several of the pieces are dedicated to people, including Dalton Baldwin and Cynthia Miller. What is the significance of these dedications?

Well, I just answered about Cynthia. I have loved hearing Dalton Baldwin’s recordings of Schubert with Gerard Souzay, since way back in the ‘50s. And then one day I met him, after a program of my songs at the Mannes School. He introduced himself and said to me “Your songs are for the ages.” That was a red letter day.

Did you prefer of a man or woman singing these songs?

I’ve never heard a man sing them, but they are not gender specific, so I think a tenor could do them.

Why is the range for a higher voice?

A song seems to find its own tessitura as it finds its music. My songs mostly require a high range. Only those for baritone or mezzo steer clear of the stratosphere.

In the cycle you give many specific dynamic markings for the piano and not the singer why is this?

I thought it was understood that the singer rides in the same dynamic range as the accompaniment. Schubert didn’t use dynamics in the voice. I think they are unnecessary even in choral music. Once in a while I put in a dynamic in the voice, when it seems necessary or for a special effect.

*Why did you change the title of the third song from “*The Drowned Boy*” to “*How the Waters Closed*?”*

Mark's idea. He asked why any singer would want to sing about a drowned boy. Oof, let's skip that one.

The pieces are challenging for the singer and the pianist. What do you think is the biggest challenge for the singer and the pianist in the work?

I ask a lot of breath from the singer. Here again Schubert leads the way; think of "Nacht und Träume." And Strauss asks very long breaths repeatedly. But a good singer likes to be challenged, and singers with good techniques love to sing this music. Just as a good pianist loves to play Chopin Etudes. Here again, Schubert set the bar. Who isn't tempted to perform "Die Erlkönig?" (Not that many can.) On the other hand, I never try to make things difficult. I learned from Debussy how to help the singer find the pitch from the accompaniment.

What is the biggest challenge you faced when composing this work?

As with any other work, trying to find the right notes.

The cycle has long beautiful lines with a wild, free feeling in "Wild Nights," and short rhythmic figures that sound like a bugle in "There Came a Wind Like A Bugle." One trait in the music of Hoiby is nearly all the figures for the voice and piano mimic the poetry. Does the poetry set the music or does the music set the poetry?

The music arises from the rhythm, the meaning, and the feeling in the words. I try to avoid Mickey-Mousing, but sometimes I fail.

How did you choose what key each of the pieces would be in?

Ah, there's a mystery. Still, Schubert's songs are published in three different keys and still work fine. I don't think much of the theories about tonalities. It's a personal matter. Though we can all agree that Tchaikowsky certainly chose the right key for his First Concerto.

What do you want the singer and pianist to know about how to approach this song cycle?

As with any song, I always ask the singer to project the words as clearly as possible. It can be done. There is no excuse for poor diction. (Or poor rhythm) Final consonants are more important than beautiful tones. Try to get into the words as deeply as possible. Sing expressively. Be very stingy with hand gestures. The pianist should not be afraid to use a big sound when the voice is forte.

Explain any compositional techniques in The Shining Place that will be helpful to my research.

I wouldn't know where to begin. I just look for the right notes. I would like to suggest some required reading for both singers and pianists. Gerald Moore's *The Unashamed Accompanists*; please put this in your paper as Lee Hoiby's required reading. The most important quality in art song is that you have two equal partners.

How did you first meet Mark Shulgasser? This has been a powerfully productive relationship for you in the musical world. Why do you think this is so?

Mark and I met in a Spiritual Pathwork conscienceness raising group in the 1970's. This is where I learned I had a spirit. We got to know each other romantically and musically and moved in together in the 1980's. Mark is my right hand man in writing music. He understands music in the most profound way. We have never had a fight. We learned through pathwork not to be defensive. Mark didn't know he wasn't supposed to suggest changes to a composer but I began to be less resistant. I don't know of another partnership like it. I don't know what Barber and Menotti did about each other's music. I remember Barber opening Amahl and saying, "Boy does it sound!"

Appendix B

Compiled Responses from Virginia Dupuy:

What sparked your interest in the poetry of Emily Dickinson?

I have always loved poetry and literature and Emily Dickinson was a favorite. As an art song singer, I am particularly interested in American Music as well as contemporary music. In 1995 I found three new profound settings by American Composers: "I Never Saw a Moor" by Richard Pearson Thomas, "Will There Really be a Morning" by Richard Hundley, and "A Letter: Dear Cousins" by William Jordan. On a personal note, I was reared in a small East Texas town as a Christian Scientist. Inside the church, all people were equal and there were women in authority, African Americans in the membership, and no religion of fear and oppression was taught. Outside the church, the 1960s was a time of great turmoil in terms of the rights of minorities. I felt a kinship with Emily Dickinson as I questioned the conventions of growing up a young woman in the Old South.

What about the poetry of Dickinson lends itself to music?

The obvious is that many of her poems are written in four line stanzas very much akin to a hymn setting. Dickinson's use of words, her economy of language and her lyricism makes her accessible and interesting to composers. It is easier to name the composers who have chosen NOT to set her. Among those few are John Musto and Dominick Argento (although he set her when a student at Peabody Conservatory, but no one has been allowed to see them!) Even Osvaldo Golijov has set for voice and strings "How Slow the Wind".

On your recital "Emily Dickinson in Song," Emily can take on different personalities. Can you explain how you would categorize her?

I have read a great deal about Emily Dickinson, have visited Amherst several times including her home and chamber and I have talked with noted Emily Dickinson scholars. I have come to some conclusions which I did not anticipate. All that one reads about her not leaving home after age 21, wearing a only white dresses made in the same pattern and never attending church (although her father and brother built it) allowed Emily Dickinson a position of power and control over her life. She did not like being a student at Mt. Holyoke or finding herself in social settings. She, along with Louisa May Alcott and Mary Baker Eddy, came from very strict religious backgrounds and none of the three bought the rules and roles they were expected to embrace. It was a tumultuous time in America with the Civil War and so many drastic cultural changes. The northeasterners lived in a "vortex" of intelligence with intense emphasis on education. My father's family lived in Mt. Holyoke at the end of the century and his great aunt was Chair of Music at Smith College in the early part of the Twentieth Century.

There is evidence that Dickinson was musical, and may have been especially influenced by hymns. How does this impact her poetry and the relationship it has to music?

She was quite musical. She played piano which pleased her father very much. (She was also the family cook as an adult.) We know the music that was kept in her piano bench and on the music stand. It's very interesting to see the variety of styles which interested her, including the classical composers. She no doubt heard hymns all her life even though she did not attend church after her teenage years. The prosody of hymns is akin to the rhythm of many, many of her poems. I can let you know more of the music that was found in and around the piano in the parlor.

How did Dickinson's relationship with her parents effect her work?

She was a devoted daughter but had a complicated relationship with her mother and her father. She was devastated when they died: she and Lavinia lived at home with the parents and neither ever married. Their brother, his wife and son (until the untimely death of the boy) lived next door. She went to the bedside of the dying child as this was the only time she left the house later in her life. We know that she traveled to Washington to visit her father.

Was Dickinson the recluse people make her out to be?

Yes, but again, I have strong feelings about her strength and the power of her talent keeping her engaged with those with whom she chose to be in correspondence. She sent poems to the Atlantic Monthly and they refused to publish any; she contacted men whom she felt were worthy of "ordaining" her as a poet, and they did not. Had it not been for her brother Austin's mistress, we wouldn't have the poems at all: She had asked they be destroyed upon her death. One-third of her writings were lost. The "world" was lost on this poet. But her world, her garden, the bees, the birds, the sound of a funeral procession going by – all of this was her very rich universe.

What about Dickinson is not known that anyone approaching her music needs to know?

She was incredibly strong. She was a genius in regards to her use of language. Every word one reads or sings must be dealt with very seriously. Editing Emily Dickinson can be dangerous. For instance, in singing or reading "I Would Not Paint a Picture", in the final version she writes, "Nor would I be a poet, tis finer own (not on) the ear". Take the time to make sure as a reader, then singer, that you know absolutely what is on the page before performing. There are poems we will never understand. It is aggravating to a number of Emily Dickinson scholars to try to ascertain the exact meaning of poems. One must read/ sing with reverence for what is written and not endeavor to be the definitive interpreter. Emily Dickinson believed that sound is music, so one must sing for the sheer importance of the sound and let the words fall as beauty upon the ears of listeners. Complete understanding is not the goal here. I have a new depth of feeling about the poems every time I sing the recital.

After Dickinson passed away they found thousands of poems hidden away in her house. What circumstances historical and personal would cause this to be the case?

She didn't want them known. She felt that the world did not find them worthy. Her talent had its own motivation, which eluded the world.

You include Lee Hoiby on your recital, along with other notable American art song composers. What is it about his compositional style that captures the essence of Dickinson?

"Wild Nights" set by Lee is one of the masterpieces of Twentieth Century art song. One hears the wildness of the night and the "rowing in Eden, ah, the sea..." in the piano before the singer joins the sweeping, structureless song. This is ED's most sexual poem. There was a lot she knew about that the general public would not associate with the myth of Emily.

The Dickinson recital you perform is in demand throughout the United States. What do you think attracts people to the poetry and letters of Emily Dickinson?

Her personal style. I, along with practically every reader, believe that if I were at her home, I would be the one and only she would invite into her chamber! She says so much that we each wish we knew how to say. So we read/ sing ED and are brought to our knees in a revelation which she has of us that we don't have ourselves. She is a window on our souls.

Many composers have set Dickinson poetry. What do you think are some of the best settings and why?

I assume you have my CD, so you can see which ones of the 4,000 I wanted to showcase. I LOVE the three mentioned earlier that set me on my journey. All the songs of William Jordan, a Dickinson Scholar, student of Samuel Barber and great friend and connection to Amherst are favorites. I love Jake Heggie's settings. I have become friends and soul mates through our common ED experience with Richard Hundley, Ricky Ian Gordon, Dan Welcher, Lori Laitman, Libby Larsen, Richard Pearson Thomas, Mrs. Ernst Bacon, and many others. ED was complex and I love the interpretations of these composers. It's so interesting to compare settings. For instance, Richard Hundley's setting of "Will There Really be a Morning" is questioning and indecisive. Ricky Ian Gordon's is flowing, lyrical and optimistic. Hundley, in my opinion sounds frustratingly inconclusive, and Gordon says, "Yes", there will be one. Though very difficult technically, both have sweeping, all encompassing, passionate longing in their expression.

This project has become a history of American art song for me. The "Have You Got a Brook" was the first setting, permission given by sister Lavinia to Etta Parker. The second is in 1908 by James MacDermid who also set texts of Mary Baker Eddy.

Appendix C

Poetry from *The Shining Place* by Emily Dickinson

The Shining Place

Me – come! My dazzled face

In such a shining place!

Me – hear! My foreign Ear

The sounds of Welcome – there!

The Saints forget

Our bashful feet –

My Holiday, shall be

That They – remember me –

My Paradise – the fame

That They – pronounce my name –

A Letter

“You ask of my companions. Hills, sir, and the sundown, and a dog large as myself, that my father bought me. They are better than beings because they know, but do not tell; and the noise in the pool at noon excels my piano. I have a brother and sister; my mother does not care for thought, and father, too busy with his briefs to notice what we do. He buys me many books, but begs me not to read them, because he fears they joggle the mind. They are religious, except me, and address an eclipse, every

morning, whom they call their “Father.” But I fear my story fatigues you. I would like to learn. Could you tell me how to grow, or is it unconveyed, like melody or witchcraft?”

How The Waters Closed

How the Waters closed above Him

We shall never know –

How He stretched His Anguish to us

That – is covered too –

Spreads the Pond Her Base of Lilies

Bold above the Boy

Whose unclaimed Hat and Jacket

Sum the History –

Wild Nights

Wild nights! Wild nights!

Were I with thee, Wild nights should be Our luxury!

Futile the winds To a heart in port, Done with the compass, Done with the chart.

Rowing in Eden! Ah! the sea! Might I but moor To-night in thee!

There Came A Wind Like A Bugle

There came a wind like a bugle;
It quivered through the grass,
And a green chill upon the heat
So ominous did pass
We barred the windows and the doors
As from an emerald ghost;
The doom's electric moccasin
That very instant passed.
On a strange mob of panting trees,
And fences fled away,
And rivers where the houses ran
The living looked that day.
The bell within the steeple wild
The flying tidings whirled.
How much can come
And much can go,
And yet abide the world.

Appendix D

Music Publisher Permissions

From: David Jacome [mailto:djacome@peermusic.com]
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2010 11:49 AM
To: scmorren@cox.net
Subject: FW: Permission to use Lee Hoiby's Shining Place in dissertation

Dear Christina,
Peermusic will allow you to use the the Lee Hoiby work on a gratis basis for your dissertation.
Regards,
David Jácome
Copyright Manager

From: Peermusic Classical [mailto:peerclassical@peermusic.com]
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2010 11:30 AM
To: 'David Jacome'
Subject: FW: Permission to use Lee Hoiby's Shining Place in dissertation

Dear David,
Christian Morren would like to use the (below) excerpts from Lee Hoiby's, *Shining Place* in a dissertation. Todd has agreed to allow this. Would you be so kind as to follow up with Christian on this permission request?
Many thanks,
Erin

From: Christian Morren [mailto:scmorren@cox.net]
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2010 10:26 AM
To: peerclassical@peermusic.com
Subject: Re: Permission to use Lee Hoiby's Shining Place in dissertation

Hello Erin,
I have the page numbers and excerpts for you that I would like to use in my dissertation on Lee Hoiby's The Shining Place. Thank you so very much for your help.
Sincerely,
Christian Morren

“The Shining Place”
pages 1-2 mm.1-12
pages 3-4 mm. 13-22
pages 3-4 mm. 21-29

pages 4-5 mm. 28-42

“A Letter”

pages 6-7 mm. 1-21

page 7 mm. 21-24

page 8 mm. 25-30

pages 9 and 10 mm. 46-51

pages 10 and 11 mm. 55-64

page 11 mm.70-72

“How the Waters Closed”

page 12 mm. 1-11

page 12 mm. 12-15

pages 12 and 13 mm. 16-21

page 13 mm. 23-29

“Wild Nights”

page 14 mm. 1-6

pages 15 and 16 mm. 13-22

pages 17 and 18 mm. 31-35

pages 18 and 19 mm. 37-60

“There Came A Wind Like A Bugle”

page 21 mm. 5 - 6

page 22 mm. 8- 9

page 23 mm. 14-16

page 24 mm. 24-25

pages 25-27 mm. 29-43

pages 25-27 mm. 36-68

On Nov 30, 2009, at 2:47 PM, Peermusic Classical wrote:

Dear Christian,

Please let us know which excerpts (by page/measure number) you will be using.

Thanks,

Erin

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-----Original Message-----

From: Steve & Christian Morren [<mailto:scmorren@cox.net>]

Sent: Saturday, November 28, 2009 7:17 PM

To: peerclassical@peermusic.com

Subject: Permission to use Lee Hoiby's Shining Place in dissertation

To whom it may concern,

My name is Christian Morren and I am finishing a dissertation on Lee Hoiby's The Shining Place. I own two copies of this music and would like permission to scan musical examples in my paper. Can you let me know who the proper person is to contact for this? I appreciate any help you can give me.

Sincerely,

Christian Morren

1609 Pembroke

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