

## Background

My vocal professor, Dr. Brou, gave me pieces by composers Amy Beach and Isabella Colbran when I started my sophomore year of college and I didn't find it unusual to be assigned their compositions. I thought of them as part of the general word *composer*. But as Dr. Brou and I had conversations about diversity in the music educational curriculum, I realized that not many people had the same mentality as I did. Women composers existed but hardly existed in the standard repertoire assigned to students. I came to see that the lists of vocal compositions in competitions and anthologies published were dominated by men. I saw the magnitude of the problem and it influenced me to explore my topic.

## Statement of Problem

If college graduates lack knowledge about female composers or have not performed compositions by female composers, how will they incorporate female selections in their classrooms? Long-held gender roles are starting to slowly rectify for female composers but continue to be suppressed. It is still necessary to take a proactive approach. In the words of Pauline Oliveros (1932-2016): "If a performer is playing a program, they need to play music by women as well as by men. And if an audience goes to a concert and there's no music by women, they have to confront the management about it. If that doesn't happen, the change is not going to take place."

## Methods and Materials

This paper will demonstrate the lack of female composers represented in the most common published vocal anthology books and vocal solo competition repertoire lists in Texas. Throughout the paper, I will be including discussions with distinguished voice teachers and significant people at the forefront of vocal diversity research. I will also be recommending art songs composed by women for high school and college singers that can function just as well as the traditional male-dominant selections

- 38 published Anthologies
- NATS competition list
- 3 classes of the UIL PML

Book	Number of Songs	Number of Songs Composed by Women
First book of Soprano Solos Volume 1	33	3
First book of Soprano Solos Volume 2	34	0
First book of Soprano Solos Volume 3	34	2
First book of Mezzo-Soprano Solos Volume 1	34	3
First book of Mezzo-Soprano Solos Volume 2	37	1
First book of Mezzo-Soprano Solos Volume 3	37	2
First book of Tenor Solos Volume 1	35	1
First book of Tenor Solos Volume 2	36	0
First book of Tenor Solos Volume 3	34	0
First book of Baritone-Bass Solos Volume 1	32	1
First book of Baritone-Bass Solos Volume 2	34	0
First book of Baritone-Bass Solos Volume 3	36	2
Second book of Soprano Solos Volume 1	29	2
Second book of Soprano Solos Volume 2	33	1
Second book of Mezzo-Soprano Solos Volume 1	32	0
Second book of Mezzo-Soprano Solos Volume 2	33	3
Second book of Tenor Solos Volume 1	32	0
Second book of Tenor Solos Volume 2	33	0
Second book of Baritone-Bass Solos Volume 1	31	1
Second book of Baritone-Bass Solos Volume 2	29	0
Standard Vocal Literature for Soprano	30	0
Standard Vocal Literature for Mezzo-Soprano	30	0
Standard Vocal Literature for Tenor	30	0
Standard Vocal Literature for Baritone	30	0
Standard Vocal Literature for Bass	30	0
American Art Song Anthology	50	1
American Aria Anthology	32	0
Art Songs in English Low-Voice	50	2
Art Songs in English High-Voice	50	2
28 American Art Songs	28	1
Romantic Art Songs	50	3
Contemporary Art Songs	28	0
The Art Song Anthology High Voice	40	1
The Art Song Anthology Low Voice	40	1

34 Published anthology books that show the number of songs and the number of songs composed by females.

ART SONGS & ARIAS IN ENGLISH	2016-2020	
MALE COMPOSERS (Top 25)	# of Pieces	# of Entries
Quilter, Roger	46	411
Handel, George Frideric	48	215
Vaughan Williams, Ralph	30	215
Barber, Samuel	32	214
Copland, Aaron	21	130
Purcell, Henry	20	122
Duke, John	23	89
Morem, Ned	32	83
Britten, Benjamin	39	80
Finzi, Gerald	20	64
Menotti, Gian Carlo	11	59
Charles, Ernest	6	57
Head, Michael	15	57
Hendley, Richard	11	56
Heggie, Jake	30	51
Mendelssohn, Felix	13	49
Holby, Lee	12	47
Gordon, Ricky Ian	17	44
Hageman, Richard	5	44
Niles, John Jacob	12	39
Argento, Dominick	8	34
Moore, Ben	12	34
Weill, Kurt	5	34
Johnson, Hall	11	32
Moore, Douglas	7	25
TOTALS:	486	2285

The number of pieces and the number of entries for the top 25 male composers for the English language of the NATS list.

Class of Solo	Number of Pieces in Class	Number of Female Composers	Number of Songs by Female Composers	Unknown Selections
Class 1	628	13	26	16
Class 2	475	25	39	16
Class 3	243	18	21	8

The Texas State Solo-Ensemble Contest showing the number of female composers and their compositions on all 3 classes of the UIL PML.

## Results

Results show that female compositions are woefully discounted in the NATS competition list, 38 published anthology books, and the list of vocal piece selections for all 3 classes on the UIL PML list.

## Conclusion

Today's leading gender in the musical selections in Texas is the male composer. We see it within the choral canon, the selections provided in competitions, and the pieces given to students for those competitions. Most often, the repertoire assigned to students at the high school and collegiate level are compositions that have been done for years that educators have made it a routine to assign. Can you blame them? It is what they were taught. But now that we see problems that can arise when it comes to young female singers or Hispanic women wanting to pursue a career that doesn't feature possible models for them, we can be advocates for those composers. Not because we pity them but because they are exceptional composers. At the end of the day, female composers are composers.

## Acknowledgments

I wish to express my gratitude to the women that have composed musical selections over time and those who have yet to be discovered.

A special word of appreciation goes out to my mentor, Dr. Melinda Brou, for enlightening me with such a topic. A truly inspiring person who has made an impact in my life.

## References

- "About Us." *TEXOMA NATS*, www.texomanats.org/about/about-us.
- Caicedo, Patricia. *Anthology of Latin American and Iberian Art Songs by Women Composers*. 2020.
- Citron, 'Gender, Professionalism and the Musical Canon', 108.
- Deemer, Robert. Interview. Conducted by Victoria Corona, 14 July 2021. Guerrero, Liliana. Interview. Conducted by Victoria Corona, 12 July 2021.
- Heard, Richard. *44 Art Songs and Spirituals by Florence B. Price for Medium/High Voice and Piano*. ClarNan Editions, 2015. Pauline Olivero, interview with Tara Rodgers, *Pink Noises: Women on Electronic Music and Sound* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 31.
- Hunter-Holly, Daniel. "Texoma NATS Repertoire Database [Shared]." *Google Sheets*, Google, docs.google.com/spreadsheets
- "ICD: CDD." *Institute for Composer Diversity*, www.composerdiversity.com/composer-diversity-database.
- Kelley, Jamey. "The Choral Canon and Beyond: Exploring Repertoire Selection." TCDA Summer Conference, 23 July 2021, Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas.
- Kimball, Carol. *Women Composers*. Hal Leonard Corporation, 2004.
- Myers, Shannon Marie. "Unsung and Unheard: An Analysis of the History and Impact of Female American Vocal Composers." (2021).
- Rodriguez, James. Interview. Conducted by Victoria Corona, 13 July 2021.
- Smith, Daryl G., and Natalie B. Schonfeld. "The Benefits of Diversity: What the Research Tells Us." *About campus* 5.5 (2000): 16-23.
- Translation © Richard Stokes, author of *The Book of Lieder*, published by Faber, provided courtesy of Oxford Lieder (www.oxfordlieder.co.uk) "Who We Are." *Institute for Composer Diversity*, www.composerdiversity.com/about.
- Zaborowski, Monika. *Collected Songs of Poldowski Volume 1*. Hildegard Publishing Company, 2020.