

ABSTRACT

Juliana Hall's World:
Analysis of Night Dances (1987) and Christina's World (2016)

Doctor of Musical Arts in Voice Performance
The Hartt School, University of Hartford
April 24, 2023

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Juliana Hall is a prominent American composer with a diverse range of compositions. However, her greatest focus has been on composing art songs. Hall's personal history is unique, having initially majored in piano at Yale University before pursuing composition. Her works are imbued with her individual color and philosophy, reflecting her artistic vision. From her first commission with *Night Dances* in 1987 to her recent works, such as *Christina's World* in 2016, Hall has consistently adhered to her own color of compositional method and style, which is a testament to her artistic consistency and commitment to her craft. This study consists of three chapters. The first chapter examines Hall's life, identifying the events and influences that guided her to establish her own method of composition. In addition, the second chapter describes her own composition techniques, which she has used since the beginning of her career as a composer and still adheres to in her sixties. Finally, the third chapter introduces her two song cycles and presents the poetic and musical connections used in each, providing an overall understanding of both. Specifically, each song in the cycle is analyzed in detail, identifying Hall's specific songwriting techniques and intentions. I sincerely hope that the findings of this study will be helpful to musicians who appreciate Hall's works.

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Musical Arts
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April 24, 2023

Dedication

하나님께 모든 영광을 올려드립니다.
항상 사랑과 믿음으로 기다려 주신 부모님, 신대현 채영완
나의 또 다른 부모님, 오종호 경혜란
나를 많이 사랑해주는 우리 신랑, 오영윤
이 여정을 뱃속에서 함께해 준 우리 보물들, Warren & Eliana
나의 Soulmate, 신일영
나의 사랑하는 가족에게 이 박사학위를 바칩니다.

*Dedicated to my mentors who have supported me throughout my journey.
Prof. Cherie Caluda, Dr. Michael Schiano, Tracey Rudnick,
Dr. Donna Menhart, and Dr. Saerom Kim.*

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Introduction

The goal of this study is to understand Juliana Hall's compositional method and style by analyzing her works. To my great delight, I had the opportunity to interview her and compare my analysis to her actual intentions. I was thrilled to have this experience as she was generous with information. I have chosen to analyze two of Hall's song cycles, *Night Dances* and *Christina's World*. *Night Dances*, written in 1987, is an early work, which is one of her most successful pieces in her career. On the other hand, *Christina's World*, composed in 2016, represents one of her more recent compositions. Additionally, I was fascinated by this cycle because I had remembered the same title of a painting, *Christina's World*, that I saw at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. By examining these two cycles, I aim to demonstrate her consistent unique style and techniques in composition.

In the beginning of this research, I studied her compositional style and works in chronological order by applying my knowledge of music history and theory that I had gained from my undergraduate and doctoral courses. I also approached the music analysis using modern music theory. However, I realized that it is meaningless to categorize her works by periods. Hall, herself, explained to me that she has adhered to the same compositional style throughout her career. From the beginning, she had devised various techniques to project her own specific color. These techniques testify to her sincere, steady, and truthful approach. I would like to express my gratitude to Juliana Hall for providing this valuable information, as I did not obtain such detailed information from the several articles, dissertations, and interviews I had previously

read before interviewing her. Additionally, it is an honor to be able to write this study.¹

This study consists of three chapters. The first chapter examines Hall's life, identifying the events and influences that guided her to establish her own method of composition. In addition, the second chapter describes her own composition techniques, which she had used since the beginning of her career as a composer and still adheres to in her sixties. Finally, the third chapter introduces her two song cycles and presents the poetic and musical connections used in each cycle, providing an overall understanding of the cycles. Furthermore, each song in the cycle is analyzed in detail, identifying Hall's specific songwriting techniques and intentions. I sincerely hope that the findings of this study will be helpful to musicians who appreciate Hall's works.

¹ Juliana Hall, "Welcome," Biographical information on "Juliana Hall: American Art Song Composer," accessed February 27, 2021, <http://www.julianahall.com/>.

Chapter 1: Juliana Hall's Life and Career

1. Biographical Information

Juliana Hall is an American art song composer, who was born in Huntington, West Virginia in 1958. Her first musical encounter was with a church choir in which she sang as a child. Enjoying music, she then started studying piano at the age of six and composed her first song at the age of thirteen. That was her first glimpse into her talent for composition. However, she did not take her composition studies seriously as she felt that composers were only figures of remote history, so she was not impressed by her own abilities. Eventually, she devoted herself to her piano studies, but her early experiences with composition stayed with her. When Hall began her first semester in piano performance at Yale University, she was required to take many electives. At that time, composition caught her interest. That opportunity reignited her love for composition and motivated her to rediscover her talent. The composition professors recognized her potential, providing her with the necessary guidance and encouragement to pursue her dream of becoming a professional composer. Hall completed her Master of Music in composition at Yale University in 1987.²

Hall continued her education by moving to Minneapolis to study with the renowned composer, Dominick Argento. While studying with him, she received her first commission from the Schubert Club of Saint Paul in 1987 to compose *Night Dances* for soprano Dawn Upshaw. This was a significant milestone in Hall's career

² Juliana Hall, "Welcome," Biographical information on "Juliana Hall: American Art Song Composer," accessed February 27, 2021, <http://www.julianahall.com/>.

and gave her the opportunity to receive another Schubert Club commission for a piece, titled *Winter Windows*, for Metropolitan Opera baritone David Malis in 1989. In addition, she was awarded in the same year with a Guggenheim Fellowship for her work in music composition. Hall has composed numerous works for a variety of singers, and her songs have been performed in twenty-six countries across six continents. She has written a total of sixty song-cycles and over three hundred songs based on poems. Hall's contributions to music composition have gained widespread recognition and her works continue to be celebrated for their artistic and cultural significance.³

2. Influence on Juliana Hall and Her Works

Hall approached the path of composition in a unique manner and demonstrated her own compositional philosophy through a specialized education process, resulting in a distinctive musical style. For over two decades, she dedicated herself to the study of piano, with limited exposure to classical music outside of this instrument. In contrast to many other composers, who typically have a broader repertoire, she began her composition studies by listening to a diverse range of music. The music that she was able to easily access and study, was the works of her composition professors, including Frederic Rzewski, Leon Kirchner, Martin Bresnick, and Dominick Argento.

³ "Juliana Hall: on Composing," Sparks & Wiry Cries, accessed February 18, 2023, <http://www.sparksandwirycries.org/magazine/2018/1/11/composer-profile-juliana-hall>.

These four composition professors, who had the most significant influence on her, were supportive of her efforts and believed in her abilities. They did not want her to become an academic composer, since she did not follow a traditional path of studying composition professionally. Instead, they encouraged her to become a composer who developed her own unique voice and style in her music. As a result, she devoted more time to discovering what she desired to express through her music and developing her own color of composition, instead of focusing on studying traditional musical elements such as counterpoint, harmony, orchestration, etc.

Hall found her personal style through her pianistic ability of her art song. Initially, Frederic Rzewski suggested that she should write piano pieces, but this offer led her to have a significant realization and determination. Hall was drawn to the charm of the communication between the singer and the pianist while performing music together, as opposed to the long hours of practice and solo playing, she had experienced at the piano. This realization led her to focus on composing art songs, which resulted in a well-developed and distinct piano part that beautifully complements the vocal melody. Her concentration on the piano part of her art songs had a positive impact on her compositions, allowing her to create intricate and emotive pieces that showcase

her unique style and musical sensibility. As a result, her compositions continue to captivate and inspire audiences worldwide.

Hall's mentor, Dominick Argento, opened the door to her career as a professional composer. Argento worked as a music director at the Hilltop Opera in Baltimore and taught music theory and composition at the Eastman School in New York and the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. As an art song composer, Argento often sets prose with no obvious musical potential, creating deeply moving works. One of his most celebrated works, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, received the Pulitzer Prize for Music. While studying with Argento in Minneapolis, Hall received guidance and inspiration from him, which she incorporated into her compositional techniques. Her first commission, *Night Dances*, which she received while working with him, showcases her skills while also exhibiting some of his own characteristics in her work. In recognition of her accomplishments, Hall was awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship in 1989. After leaving Minneapolis to return to her hometown of Connecticut, Hall faced a challenging period in her career. Despite working hard to write her songs, she struggled to gain recognition. During this time, Argento remained an important source of motivation and support for her. He encouraged her to persevere even when she felt depressed about the prospect of finding success as a composer. Thanks to the guidance

and support of her mentors, she continues to follow his footsteps writing songs consistently to this day. Her contributions to the music industry have been widely recognized and she remains an influential figure in the field of music composition.⁴

⁴ Juliana Hall, e-mail message to author, June 8, 2022.

Chapter 2: Juliana Hall's Compositional Characteristics in Art Songs

1. Compositional Process

Poem Selection

Prior to composing a new song cycle, Hall starts by researching and reading through a vast collection of poems online and in her own library of over two hundred poems. If a new cycle is for a commission, she may request specific poems, poets or themes from the commissioning party or organization. However, when she has complete control over the content of the cycle, she continues to read until she finds poems that fit her vision for the work. Once she has selected the poems she wants to use, she begins composing the music, ensuring that she has the appropriate permissions. When selecting poems for her cycle, Hall places a great value on the connection between the pieces. She prioritizes creating a cohesive narrative arc throughout the work. Each song contains a small story that contributes to the overall message of the cycle. Hall is careful to ensure that each poem fits seamlessly into the larger context and enhances the flow of the work. Even if she is particularly fond of a particular poem, she will not employ it in her composition if it does not fit with the entire message and narrative arc of the cycle. Last but not least, she considers the quality of universality to be of utmost importance in her compositions. She strives to create works that speak to what humans share in common, regardless of their ancestry, geography, or any other determining factor. Hall's commitment to universality ensures that her music resonates with audiences from diverse backgrounds and cultures, unifying them through the shared human experience. By crafting works that are both deeply personal and

universally relatable, she has cemented her reputation as a gifted and empathetic composer.⁵

Poem Analysis

When analyzing poetry, Hall's priority before approaching it academically is to secure correct text-setting. Clumsy text-setting is something that even a singer with good technique cannot overcome. To feel the sensory parts of words, she reads the poem aloud, prioritizing the sensation over the meaning of words. This enables her to empathize with how a singer feels the words with their whole body as they sing. Feeling the rhythm characteristic of texts while repeatedly reading them in this way is an essential step in expressing them in the music. To gain a deeper understanding of the poetry, she studies the social background and changes of the time when the text was written. She believes that this process of the study plays a large role in how composers set texts acoustically. Additionally, she researches information about the literary background at the time the text was created and the era in which the author lived. Finally, she seeks to understand the meaning of the words used. For instance, if a poem refers to a specific mythological figure or creature or a historical event or figure, it is necessary to know the meaning in order to figure out the context and story as a whole.⁶

⁵ Juliana Hall, e-mail message to author, June 8, 2022.

⁶ "Juliana Hall: on Composing," Sparks & Wiry Cries, accessed February 18, 2023, <http://www.sparksandwirycries.org/magazine/2018/1/11/composer-profile-juliana-hall>.

2. Compositional Characteristics

Hall's Compositional Idea and Invention

Hall writes her art songs by primarily focusing on text-setting. She then creates a tonal system which serves the text-setting; a system she calls extended tonality. This means that her music moves from one tonal center to another, rather than being notated with key signatures and composed entirely in a single key. She describes herself as an intuitive composer, and when she studied with Frederic Rzewski, he used to refer to her method as “crushing through the work.” She quickly sketches out what she feels intensely from start to finish, focusing on what feels appropriate for the text rather than being constrained by certain traditional musical techniques. Through repeated training, she has developed a keen ability to understand strong musical and linguistic sensibilities, colors, moods, passage transitions, rhythms, textures, effects, and more, despite the uncertainty of starting a new piece without a plan or predetermined formal structure.⁷

The Relationship between Text and Music

The interaction between music and literature is at the core of everything that Hall has ever composed, even her instrumental pieces. As all her compositions are based on text, her music is designed to amplify the truth and beauty that her chosen poets wish to express. In her works, all the moods and sounds she envisions are rooted in the texts themselves. Instead of relying on academic compositional techniques, she draws inspiration from the literature, poetry, diaries, and other texts to

⁷ Juliana Hall, e-mail message to author, June 8, 2022.

create a natural world of sound. She determines which key to use, where to place the shape of the melody, and the complete rhythmic structure of a piece based on the text she has chosen. This method of composition is one to which she has stubbornly adhered, to the extent that she cannot discern any difference between the cycle she wrote in 1992 and her most recent works.⁸

Approach to Writing Voice and Piano

When Hall begins composing art songs, she places great importance on supporting the lyrics and accurately expressing the nuances of words in her vocal melody, creating simple melodies and speech-like lines. There are several compositional techniques that she prefers for polishing her vocal melody, such as word-painting, meter change, and motivic ideas. Word-painting deepens the audiences understand by melodically supporting extreme expressions which often provoke an image. Changing meter is a device used to emphasize the stress of a word or to flexibly change meter according to the change of beat that appears after the use of word-painting. In addition, Hall creates motivic ideas, which are short musical fragments to recall a specific subject, through recurring phrases. By utilizing those techniques, Hall concentrates on sound, effect, rhythm, texture, articulation, and more, to create music that enhances the text.

Hall's background as a piano major contributes a unique character to her piano parts. It too is devised to enhance the text. The piano part is used to

⁸ "Juliana Hall: on Composing," Sparks & Wiry Cries, accessed February 18, 2023, <http://www.sparksandwirycries.org/magazine/2018/1/11/composer-profile-juliana-hall>.

complement the atmosphere of the poem, displaying a more diverse range of musical techniques and tendencies than the voice part. Furthermore, the piano part requires specialized and high-level skills from pianists.⁹

⁹ Juliana Hall, e-mail message to author, June 8, 2022.

Chapter 3. Analysis of Songs

3-1. *Night Dances* (1987)

Night Dances shines a light on what night brings, from the sounds of a cricket singing to the image of a spider sewing a web, exploring the sounds and sensations of nightmare and insomnia, luxuriating in a lullaby bringing peace to a baby amid a storm at sea, and a final plea for music, that magic melody that soothes the soul, bringing with it rest and the peace of dreams.¹⁰

Night Dances was written in 1987, when she went to Minneapolis to complete her studies with Dominick Argento. Argento (1927-2019) was an exceptional American composer, who worked as a professor at University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and composed numerous masterpieces for and premiered by Minnesota-based artists. The Schubert Club, which is a non-profit arts organization in Saint Paul, Minnesota, commissioned Hall to write a song cycle for a rising soprano, named Dawn Upshaw. When the Schubert Club shared Chicago's Ravinia festival to hear her voice, Hall witnessed that Upshaw's singing technique was limitless and was able to fulfill Hall's musical ideas. Hall began by selecting six poems by Elizabeth Bishop, Emily Brontë, Emily Dickinson and Edna St. Vincent Millay. She endeavored to reflect a wide variety of styles of four major poets in her songs. Although these works are from four different poets, they have a common atmosphere of darkness, and a common touch with small lights such as hope.¹¹ In addition, Hall herself is a female

¹⁰ Juliana Hall, "*Night Dances*," Song cycle information on "Juliana Hall: American Art Song Composer," accessed January 20, 2023, <http://www.julianahall.com/>.

¹¹ Lenena Holder Brezna, "The Night Dances: An Analysis of Juliana Hall's *Night Dances* (1987)" (DMA diss., University of Memphis, 2016).

composer and places great significance on the fact that all four poets are female. This cycle, which created through the sentiments of several women, raises the femininity of something in common. Although Hall initially planned to create this work as a cycle of seven songs including Sylvia Plath’s poetry, she could not obtain permission to use Plath’s poet. As a result, Hall ended up completing the cycle with six songs. The cycle became very significant for Hall to start a wonderful career as she gained acclamations from the audience.¹²

The Connection of Poem and Music

1. Poetic Connections

Night Dances is a collection of poems that describe various situations that take place from sunset to sleep during the dark night, arousing the feast of the night throughout the song cycle. Six poems written by different poets show beautiful harmony to complete one song cycle.

“The Cricket Sang”

- I. The cricket sang,
And set the sun,
And workmen finished, one by one,
Their seam the day upon.
- II. The low grass loaded with the dew,
The twilight stood as strangers do
With hat in hand, polite and new,
To stay as if, or go.
- III. A vastness, as a neighbor, came,—
A wisdom without face or name,
A peace, as hemispheres at home,—
And so the night became.

By Emily Dickinson

¹² Juliana Hall, e-mail message to author, June 8, 2022.

This poem opens the first door of *Night Dances* and creates a sense of anticipation and tension toward the night. As the title suggests, the sound of chirping crickets shows a good sign that darkness is approaching, and the night has begun. It depicts a calm and peaceful atmosphere with the tension of not knowing what will happen on a dark night.

“Some Things Are Dark”

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| I. | Some things are dark --- or think they are. | N |
| | But, in comparison to me, | N |
| | All things are light enough to see | N |
| | In any place, at any hour. | N |
| | | |
| II. | For I am Nightmare: where I fly, | S |
| | Terror and rain stand in the sky | S |
| | So thick, you could not tell them from | N |
| | That blackness out of which you come. | N |
| | | |
| III. | So much for ``where I fly": but when. | S |
| | I strike, and clutch in claw the brain--- | S |
| | Erebus, to such brain, will seem | S |
| | The thin blue dusk of pleasant dream. | S |

By Edna St. Vincent Millay

(N and S specified next to the poem are indications to distinguish between narration and singing parts on the song.)

The poem begins its introduction by using and emphasizing the adjective “dark” that best describes night. Unlike the previous poem, Millay's poem describes the coming night in a relatively negative aspect. In the dark, the nightmare becomes the subject of the poem, introducing the negative aspects of the night and reminding us of a night that is contrary to the previous poem.

“Song”

- I. This shall be thy lullaby
Rocking on the stormy sea,
Though it roar in thunder wild
Sleep, stilly sleep, my dark haired child.
- II. When our shuddering boat was crossing
Elderno lake so rudely tossing
Then 'twas first my nursling smiled;
Sleep, softly sleep, my fair browed child.
- III. Waves above thy cradle break,
Foamy tears are on thy cheek
Yet the Ocean's self grows mild
When it bears my slumbering child.

By Emily Brontë

Brontë wrote a poem reminiscent of lullaby for the protagonist's child.

Continuing the negative atmosphere from the previous poem, titled “Some things are dark,” the narrator hopes that his child will sleep peacefully in spite of shaking and shuttering darkness atmosphere. It overcomes nightmares and brings to mind the earnest voices of parents in the darkness shouting “Sleep, stilly and softly sleep, my child.”

“Sleep, Mourner, Sleep!”

Sleep, mourner, sleep! — I cannot sleep,
My weary mind still wanders on;
Then silent weep — I cannot weep,
For eyes and tears are turned to stone.

By Emily Brontë

This poem is about a mourner who cannot bear to sleep at night. It describes a heartbreaking situation of the mourner who does not even deserve to shed tears during sleepless hours which shows the misery of a human being.

“A Spider Sewed at Night”

A spider sewed at night
Without a light
Upon an arc of white.

If ruff it was of dame
Or shroud of gnome,
Himself, himself inform.

Of immortality
His strategy
Was physiognomy.

By Emily Dickinson

In enormous contrast to the previous poem of the mourner, several interesting metaphors to explain how a spider makes a web just as it describes itself in the middle of the night. It is a poem that demonstrates someone else who works hard without losing vitality even in the dark when someone is trapped in darkness and sadness and cannot do anything.

“Sonnet”

I am in need of music that would flow	A
Over my fretful, feeling finger-tips,	B
Over my bitter-tainted, trembling lips,	B
<u>With melody, deep, clear, and liquid-slow.</u>	<u>A</u>
Oh, for the healing swaying, old and low,	A
Of some song sung to rest the tired dead,	C
A song to fall like water on my head,	C
<u>And over quivering limbs, dream flushed to glow!</u>	<u>A</u>
There is a magic made by melody:	D
A spell of rest, and quiet breath, and cool	E
Heart, that sinks through fading colors deep	F
To the subaqueous stillness of the sea,	D
And floats forever in a moon-green pool,	E
Held in the arms of rhythm and of sleep.	F

By Elizabeth Bishop

The term of sonnet is a poetic form with fourteen lines, using various rhyme schemes written in iambic pentameter.¹³ Bishop employs “Sonnet” as the title and claims that the protagonist longs for a melody and song that will give comfort and rest to the weary dead in the fourteen lines, shouting in silence. By locating this poem at the end of the entire song cycle, Hall chooses this poem as a role to comfort and organize the narrator's various and negative emotions from last night and darkness. Bishop improves the perfection of the poem by matching the rhyme to suit the characteristics of sonnet. Although the form of the poem and the music match, the regularity of the rhyme does not greatly affect Hall’s music, which focuses on the expression and delivery of texts.¹⁴

¹³ “Sonnet,” Britannica, Inc, accessed January 5, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/art/sonnet>.

¹⁴ Brezna, “The Night Dances,” 60-61.

2. Musical Connections

Since Hall studied the piano professionally before she became a composer, she knew exactly how to highlight the role of the piano in the art songs. She uses the piano as background music, develops music that leads the atmosphere of the poem, and applies it as a tool to further support the singer. On the other hand, she considers the singer's melody as another significant role. She regards as her best technique to convey the nuances of lyrics from the poems most naturally, and the methods she adopts include word-painting and imaginative text-setting. Using these tools, she selects melodies and rhythms that most closely deliver the lexical meaning and nuances of words used in everyday life. The first song, "The Cricket Sang," plays an important role throughout the song cycle. The four types of accompaniment techniques, presented in measure 1 to 7, appear in various or expanded forms in the remaining five songs, through which Hall maintains the unity of the song cycle and leads to the connection of poetic contents. Also, the accompaniment shape that occurs in the third song, titled "Song," appears at the end of the last song, "Sonnet," and decorates the end of the song cycle.

Analysis of Songs

1. “The Cricket Sang”

Hall introduces four musical elements in the prelude of the song, implicitly expressing the mood and message. In addition, flexible meters frequently tend to appear when trying to induce natural phrases and emphasize text.

Serenely ($\text{♩} = 66$)

The image displays a musical score for the prelude of "The Cricket Sang" by Hall. The score is written for piano and includes a vocal line. The tempo is marked "Serenely" with a quarter note equal to 66 beats per minute. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor). The score is divided into two systems, with the first system covering measures 1-4 and the second system covering measures 5-7. Four musical elements are highlighted with red boxes and numbered 1 through 4:

- Element 1:** A red box highlights the first measure of the piano accompaniment, which begins with a treble clef, a 5/4 time signature, and a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic marking. The bass line consists of a sustained chord.
- Element 2:** A red circle highlights a specific melodic phrase in the vocal line of the second measure, marked with a fermata and the instruction "8va" (octave).
- Element 3:** A red box highlights the piano accompaniment in the third measure, which has changed to a 4/4 time signature. The bass line features a prominent chord with a sharp sign (#).
- Element 4:** A red box highlights the piano accompaniment in the fifth measure, which has changed to a 4/4 time signature. The bass line features a prominent chord with a sharp sign (#).

Additional markings in the score include "Ped." (pedal) and "*" (accents) in the piano part, and "8va" (octave) markings in the vocal line. The score concludes with a final 4/4 time signature.

Figure 1. “The Cricket Sang,” mm. 1-7, musical elements.

The first device is an upward glissando, a sound that announces the beginning of a song or the beginning of the night, reminiscent of the stage curtain rising before the performance. The second device is shown as a note embodying the jump of a cricket, the main character of the poem, using a grace note. The third device is a composition of dissonance expresses the negative and dark image coming from the night. The use of repeated clusters consisting of semitones in the fourth device serves an important purpose in the song. These clusters help to create a specific atmosphere between phrases and serve as an interlude to prepare for the next phrase. This technique plays a role to build tension and create a sense of anticipation for what is to come. (Figure 1).

The image shows a musical score for the first system of 'The Cricket Sang' (measures 8-10). The score is written for voice and piano. The voice part is in 4/4 time, and the piano part is in 4/4 time. The lyrics are 'The crick - et sang, And set the'. The score includes several annotations: a red circle around a grace note on the word 'crick' with a circled '2' and a circled '1' above it; a red box around a five-note melodic phrase on 'sang,' with a circled '5' above it; a red box around a piano accompaniment phrase on measure 9 with a circled '3' and 'mp' below it; and a red arrow pointing from the piano accompaniment to the voice part. The score also includes dynamic markings like *ppp* and *mp*, and performance instructions like 'Ped.' and asterisks.

Figure 2. “The Cricket Sang,” mm. 8-10, musical elements.

As mentioned above, when the voice part begins, the musical devices introduced in the prelude can also be found in the melody. The use of staccato on the G# and D notes for the word, “cricket” reminds of the grace note shown earlier. This sound shape is seen as cricket motive that reminiscent of a jumping cricket. Also, to

express the verb, “sang,” the scales stacked from middle C to E, an octave above, reminds of an upward glissando. This phrase, which seems to have drawn a melody actually sung, proves that Hall uses a musical technique called word-painting (Figure 2).¹⁵



Figure 3. “The Cricket Sang,” mm. 11-15, highlighted text.

Hall describes the setting of the sun well using intervals of major 2nd, perfect 4th, and minor 2nd. However, she takes a radical turn in the next verse, using augmented 4th, minor 2nd, and augmented 5th. An interesting fact in this phrase is that the stress of the words and the melody does not match. In general, high notes are placed in the important accents of words, but Hall emphasizes text more among the instability given by irregular positioning for text and dissonant notes (Figure 3).

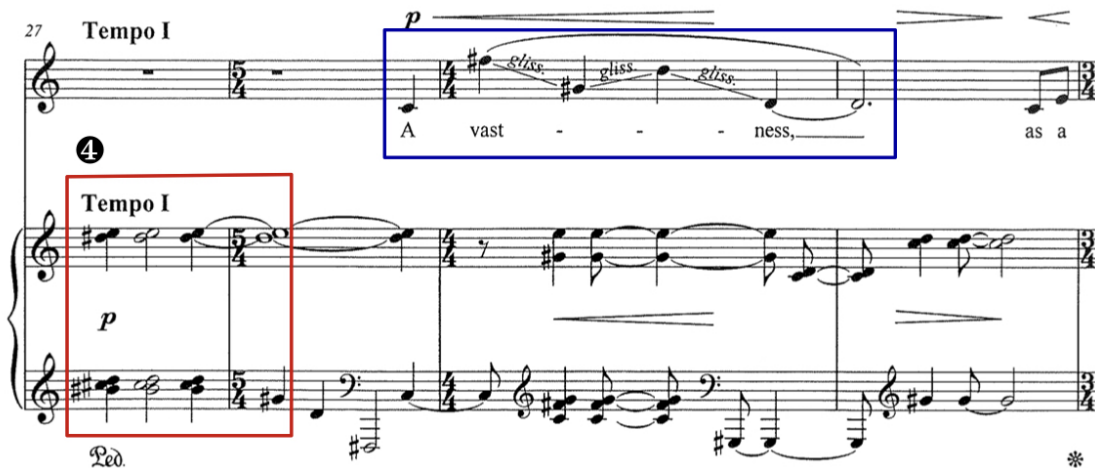


Figure 4. “The Cricket Sang,” mm. 27-30, interlude.

¹⁵ Brezna, “The Night Dances,” 13-23.

The figure above is one example where the fourth device is used as an interlude. The chord with a narrow interval composed of semitones repeats. When the voice starts, the interval between notes is widened to show the sound of various colors, but still maintains the chromatic sound (Figure 4).

The musical score shows three staves: vocal, piano right hand, and piano left hand. The vocal line begins at measure 39 with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The lyrics are "And so the night be - came." The piano accompaniment features a red box around measures 40 and 41, with dynamics *mp* and *pp*. A circled note with a sharp sign is also highlighted. Pedal marks are present at the bottom of the piano part.

Figure 5. “The Cricket Sang,” mm. 39-41, finale.

The fourth device appears again at the end of this song, highlighting its significance to Hall. Previously, the fourth element had always consisted of four or five notes including the chromatic scale. However, Hall uses the interval of major 3rd with the note Ab and resolves it with the note G in the finale. The addition of a grace note at the end serves as a reminder of the cricket, the main character of the song (Figure 5).¹⁶

¹⁶ Brezna, “The Night Dances,” 13-23.

2. "Some Things Are Dark"

With suspense and anxiety ($\text{♩} = 112$) (p. 1720)

pp Whispered

Some things are dark or think they are.

pp

Ped.

Figure 6. "Some Things Are Dark," mm. 1-2, introduction.

Through this piece, Hall utilizes the continuous use of sixteenth notes and various arpeggiated accompaniments to express emotions that fluctuate with anxiety. It offers a sense of unity by slightly changing the shape of a note in the piano part throughout the song, building up the atmosphere and tension (Figure 6). In the voice part, Hall does not view the poem as a written structure but divides it into narrated and sung sections at her discretion to convey the content more effectively. Examples as follow are provided above and below (Figure 6 & 7).

¹² *pp*

you could not tell them from That black - ness

pp 6

Ped. *

Figure 7. "Some Things Are Dark," mm. 12, recitative.

Hall's division of the poem into narrated and sung sections distinguishes between those parts that carry strong messages and those that are less important. In particular, the narration resembles “Sprechstimme,” which is a technique in which the voice is used to approximate speech rather than singing in a traditional sense. This technique blurs the boundaries between speaking and singing and is often associated with the expressionist movement in German music. The first example, when drawing recitative in a musical score, it maintains the consistent tone by repeatedly using the same note to create a speaking sound, while the second example uses x-noteheads (cross noteheads) to represent spoken text. The music notation requires a singer to convey a tone somewhere between the speaking and the singing, as determined by the singer’s discretion.¹⁷



Figure 8. “Some Things Are Dark,” mm. 6, first singing section.

Hall begins with a recitative form for the first stanza and then introduces a melody for the second stanza. She places the melody for the text “For I am a

¹⁷ Brezna, “The Night Dances,” 24-34.

Nightmare” with the intention of overwhelming the audience with a powerful message through her musical technique. In this section, she employs an accompaniment form like the arch-shaped arpeggio accompaniment introduced in the intro, but with a different pitch, to create a new mood (Figure 8).

15 *ff*
fly": but when I strike, and

17 *Allargando* *A tempo* *fff*
clutch in claw the brain

Allargando *A tempo*

fff *pp*

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

Ped. * *Ped.*

Figure 9. “Some Things Are Dark,” mm. 15-18, climax.

Hall creates the climax of this song by blending the singing and the recitative parts. The composition appears to be a singing part based on the drawn pitch, but the repetition of the same pitch with a natural A note in the same beat in measures 16 and 17 reveals her intention to elevate the lower range recitative to the higher range. In other words, Hall intends for the singer to express the pain of the main character, by

depicting in lyrics such as “strike,” “clutch,” and “claw,” through a high-pitched recitative that evokes a sense of urgency and intensity (Figure 9).

3. “Song”

This song is divided into three sections: Section I, Section II, and Section III. The C major chord that starts indistinctly in the Section I progresses through Section II using various chromatic scales. In Section III, the use of chromatic notes is reduced, and the tonality of the C chord becomes more obvious, and the final C major chord serves as a decorative finale.

I

With tenderness ($\text{♩} = 126$)

mf This shall be thy

mp

3 lul - la - by *gliss.* *gliss.* Rock - ing on the *gliss.* *gliss.*

Figure 10. “Song,” mm. 1-4, introduction (Section I).

Section I, the introduction of this song, begins with an arpeggiated accompaniment that follows the accompaniment from the previous song, “Some Things Are Dark.” The melody for “This shall be thy lullaby” in the vocal part reemerges in Section III as the main theme of the song, providing a sense of unity throughout (Figure 10).

Figure 11 shows a musical score for measures 12-14. The vocal line (top staff) begins at measure 12 with the lyrics "dark - haired child." The tempo markings above the vocal line are "A little slower", "Rit.", "Tempo I", and "Accelerando". The piano accompaniment (bottom two staves) starts with a dynamic of *mp* and changes to *pp* at measure 13. The piano part also features the tempo markings "A little slower", "Rit.", "Tempo I", and "Accelerando".

Figure 11. “Song,” mm. 12-14, Section II.

In Section II, the atmosphere shifts rapidly to *Accelerando*, contrasting with the preceding *Ritardando* (Figure 11).

Figure 12 shows a musical score for measures 21-23. The vocal line (top staff) begins at measure 21 with the lyrics "smiled; Sleep, soft - ly sleep, my". The tempo markings above the vocal line are "Tempo I" and "Rit.". The piano accompaniment (bottom two staves) starts with a dynamic of *p* and changes to *mp* at measure 23. The piano part also features the tempo markings "Tempo I" and "Rit.". The piano part includes "Ped." and "* Ped." markings.

Figure 12. “Song,” mm. 21-23, Section III.

In Section III, the use of chromatic scales is reduced, leading to a full and prominent C chord. By using Ab instead of G# in the left hand of piano, the note of G sound is emphasized, and the G and E notes are more pronounced, further emphasizing the C chord (Figure 12).

30 Rit. ----- A little slower to the end
 Yet the Ocean's

32 self grows mild When it bears my

34 *gliss.* *gliss.* Rit. -----
 slumbering child.

Rit. -----

CM *

Figure 13. "Song," mm. 30-35, thematic phrase.

The main theme of the song reappears in measure 31 and 32, marking the conclusion of the dramatic change in Section II and reminding us of the slow and peaceful atmosphere established in the beginning. The C chord, which has been treated vaguely until this point, finally reaches a definite conclusion with the appearance of C major chord in the final measure (Figure 13).¹⁸

¹⁸ Brezna, "The Night Dances," 35-48.

4. “Sleep, Mourner, Sleep!”

As a professional piano-trained composer, Hall typically views the harmony between piano and voice parts as equal in her previous songs. However, in this song, the piano part serves more as a background, providing harmonious accompaniment. The four elements introduced in the first song, “The Cricket Sang,” are used again in this song, contributing to the overall unity among the songs in the cycle (Figure 14).

Serenely (♩ = 66)

The score shows a piano accompaniment in 5/4 time. Three elements are highlighted with red boxes and numbered: 1 (mp), 2 (8va), and 3 (Ped.).

Figure 1. “The Cricket Sang,” mm. 1-7, musical elements.

Impassioned (♩ = 63)

The score shows a voice line and piano accompaniment in 4/4 time. The voice line has lyrics: "Sleep, _____ mourn - er, sleep! _____ I can - not _____". Three elements are highlighted with red boxes and numbered: 1+2+3, 3, and p.

Figure 14. “Sleep, Mourner, Sleep” mm. 1-3, musical elements from “The Cricket Sang”.

Hall also employs a descending melody throughout the song when the texts convey negative connotations. In the case, the melody of the vocal part descends as the self-deprecating protagonist delivers a sorrowful and remorseful message (Figure 15).

The musical score consists of two systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system (mm. 10-12) features a vocal line starting at measure 10 with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The melody descends from a G4 note to a B3 note over the first two measures, then continues to a D3 note in measure 12. The piano accompaniment consists of sustained chords in the right hand and moving lines in the left hand. The second system (mm. 13-15) starts at measure 13 with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The vocal line descends from a G4 note to a B3 note in measure 13, then to a D3 note in measure 14, and finally to a B2 note in measure 15, marked with a glissando (*gliss.*). The piano accompaniment continues with sustained chords and moving lines. The score includes dynamic markings (*f*, *pp*, *mp*), articulation marks (accents), and performance instructions like *Red.* and ***.

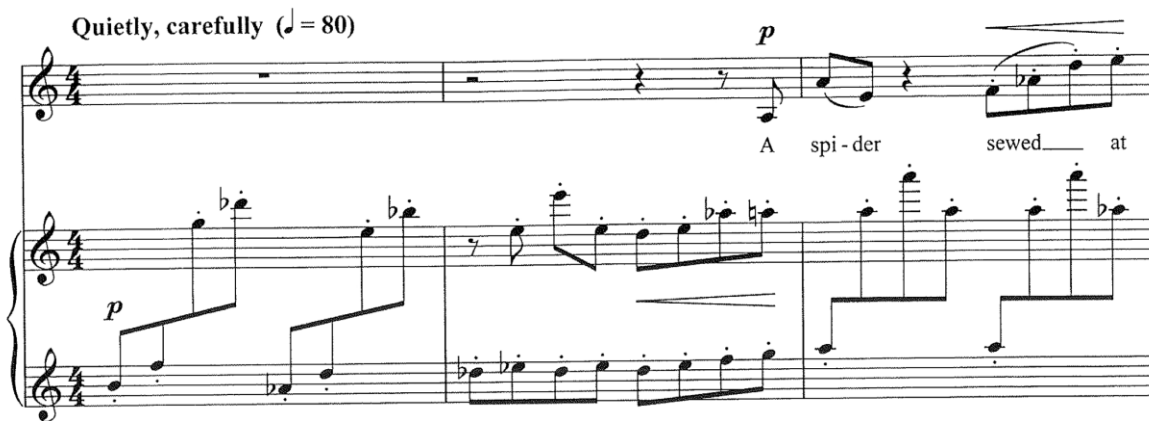
Figure 15. “Sleep, Mourner, Sleep” mm. 10-15, descending melody.

5. “A Spider Sewed at Night”



Figure 16. A photo of a spider's web.¹⁹

Quietly, carefully ($\text{♩} = 80$)



p A spi - der sewed at

Figure 17. “A Spider Sewed at Night” mm. 1-3, imaginative musical setting.

Hall applies several of her own compositional techniques to this song to embody the image of a spider spinning a web through music. As shown in the photo,

¹⁹ A photo of a spider's web from Naver blog 미로 [Miro, a maze], accessed February 1, 2023, <https://blog.naver.com/gibum71/222510748422>.

the spider's webs are angular and interconnected. However, like the gaps where the spider's feet fall, Hall uses notes with large leaps, augmented and diminished of 4ths or 5ths, and staccato to move across the web, representing the spider working all night to make it tight (Figure 16 & 17).

The image shows a musical score for the piece "A Spider Sewed at Night" from measures 7 to 10. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins at measure 7 with the lyrics "arc of white." The word "arc" is circled in red, and a red circle highlights the glissando and slur over it. The piano accompaniment features a melody with grace notes and triplets. The score includes dynamic markings (p, mp), tempo markings (Rit., A tempo), and articulation marks (accents, slurs).

Figure 18. “A Spider Sewed at Night” mm. 7-10, word-painting.

In addition, the musical elements used in “The Cricket Sang” are also evident in this song. Specifically, the second element creates a light and pleasant musical effect with its grace notes that evoke the sounds of crickets and spiders. The piano in this piece devises a vivid poetic image, with the singer’s lyrics serving as a guide. Moreover, the use of frequent word-painting further enhances the musical perfection. For instance, in the line “arc of white,” Hall masterfully portrays the shape of the arc using glissando and a slur on the word “arc.” She also uses a high C natural to express the clarity and brightness of the color white. This choice of a higher C rather than a

lower C, while still within an octave of the basic pitch, adds a delicate touch and reinforces the image of a bright and clear white (Figure 18).²⁰

The image shows a musical score for the piece "A Spider Sewed at Night" from measures 15 to 21. It is written for voice and piano. The first system (measures 15-18) has a vocal line with lyrics: "gnome, Him-self, him-self in-form." and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes dynamics like *pp* and *p*, and trills. The second system (measures 19-21) has a vocal line with lyrics: "Of im-mor-tal-i-ty His stra-te-gy Was phy-si-og-no-my." and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes dynamics like *mf* and *f*, and a red box highlights a specific chord progression in the final measure.

Figure 19. "A Spider Sewed at Night" mm. 15-21, use of E chord.

Towards the end of the piece, Hall embellishes an E chord with a variety of chord progressions. She repeatedly employs the E dominant 7th or 9th chords from measure 16 to 20 and concludes with the use of an E major triad to symbolize the spider's identity. The final lyrics, "His strategy was physiognomy," depict the

²⁰ Brezna, "The Night Dances," 54-59.

appearance of a spider and are accompanied by the E major chord, further emphasizing the creature's image (Figure 19).

6. "Sonnet"

Sonnet is a seventeenth century poetic form consisting of fourteen lines. It is known for its emphasis on rhyme scheme. In Hall's composition, she has unified the form of the poem and the music but has also allowed for the music to develop freely, without being limited by the structure of the poem. This results in a harmonious fusion of the two forms, while still allowing each to maintain its individual identity and integrity.

With warmth, freely ($\text{♩} = 69$)

mp *mf*

I am in need of mu - sic that would flow. O - ver my

fret - ful, feel - ing fin - ger - tips, O - ver my bit - ter - taint - ed, trem - bling

p

lips, With mel - o - dy, deep, clear, and li - quid - slow.

Figure 20. "Sonnet" mm. 1-10, a cappella in introduction.

If previous songs conveyed the message through speaking, with the use of sprechstimme or segmental glissando, the first stanza of this piece from measure 1 to 10 is delivered in the form of a cappella, accompanied only by the melody. The unaccompanied music emphasizes the change in content and atmosphere from the previous poems. This sets the first section apart and highlights its distinctiveness (Figure 20). Starting in measure 11, Hall shifts her focus to using music to earnestly convey the poetic content. She considers the second stanza to be the climax of the song, rather than relying solely on the rhyme scheme. The last line of the second stanza is thus emphasized as the high point of the piece (Figure 21).

17
o - ver qui-ver-ing limbs, dream flushed to glow!
Ped. *

Figure 21. "Sonnet" mm. 18-19, climax.

The image shows a musical score for the song "Sonnet" in measures 20-23. The top staff is the vocal line, starting with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The lyrics are: "There is a ma-gic made by mel-o-dy: A spell of rest, and". The bottom two staves are the piano accompaniment. The piano part begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features an upward glissando in the right hand. Three specific musical elements are highlighted with circled numbers: 1. An upward glissando in the right hand of the piano. 2. A broken dissonant chord in the right hand of the piano. 3. A broken dissonant chord in the right hand of the piano, which repeats the previous melody. 4. Repetitive use of chords in the right hand of the piano, which acts as an interlude.

Figure 22. “Sonnet” mm. 20-23, musical elements from “The Cricket Sang.”

Hall places great importance on the connection between multiple songs in a cycle and incorporates musical elements from the first song in the final song of the cycle. For example, the upward glissando in the piano part that opened the door in “The Cricket Sang” is used again in the opening of the third stanza, once again drawing attention to the beginning of a new section. This highlights the interconnection of the songs and contributes to the overall coherence of the cycle. In addition to the upward glissando, the third musical element, which is the broken dissonant chord, appears in the right-hand of the piano and repeats the previous melody of the singer like an echo. The major 2nd chord on the left-hand in the piano part hints at the notes to come. The fourth element, the repetitive use of chords, acts as an interlude, connecting the lines of the poem and providing a smooth transition within the song. These various elements, along with the techniques mentioned earlier, all contribute to the overall musicality (Figure 22).

33 $\text{♩} = 116$ *p*
 of the sea, And floats for - ev - er

36
 in a moon - green pool, Held in the

pp
Ped. * *Ped.* *
 Rit.----- A tempo Rit.-----

38
 arms of rhy - thm and of sleep.

Rit.----- A tempo Rit.-----

1987

Figure 23. "Sonnet" mm. 34-40, finale.

If the musical techniques of the first song were described in the previous section, the accompaniment form of the third song, “Song,” reappears from measure 34. It appears that Hall is utilizing the third stanza of “Sonnet,” which has similar content to the third poem, to create a sense of reenactment of the third song. Additionally, the final chord returns to the C major chord that was presented at the end of “Song,” thus concluding the final song of the cycle (Figure 23).²¹

²¹ Brezna, “The Night Dances,” 60-68.

3-2. *Christina's World* (2016)

The five songs of *Christina's World*,” on poems by Christina Rossetti, loosely follow a narrative arc beginning with the joyful emotions of true love, and continuing with darker observations about the nature of being alive and of the questions of life and death, the tension of which is resolved at the end of the cycle with a positive sense that as one approaches the end of this life, all will be well and find a place of welcome and rest.²²

Christina's World was written for a talented soprano, Gwen Coleman, who is currently Professor of Voice at the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. In 2015, Coleman and Hall corresponded via email to discuss the possibility of a commissioned work. Coleman chose five poems written by Christina Rossetti and Hall arranged them in a particular order to create a larger narrative on a spiritual theme, illustrating a progression from blissful life and love to eventual death and salvation. The song cycle *Christina's World* is named for Christina Rossetti and is reminiscent of the well-known painting *Christina's World* by American painter Andrew Wyeth that Coleman had hanging on the wall in her studio. The Cincinnati Song Initiative, which was a newly formed art song organization, offered an opportunity for the debut performance of *Christina's World*. The piece was sung by Gwen Coleman and accompanied by Marie-France Lefebvre, in the Spring of 2017.²³

²² Juliana Hall, “*Christina's World*,” Song cycle information on “Juliana Hall: American Art Song Composer,” accessed February 15, 2023, <http://www.julianahall.com/>. “Quotation”

²³ Juliana Hall, e-mail message to author, June 8, 2022.

The Connection of Poem, Music, and Painting

1. Poetic Connections

“A Birthday”

- I. My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot;
My heart is like an apple-tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these

- II. Because my love is come to me.
Raise me a dais of silk and down;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves, and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves, and silver fleurs-de-lys;
- III. Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

The five poems, used in *Christina's World*, portray a blissful life, although they were selected from various collections by Christina Rossetti. Hall chooses a poem, “A Birthday,” as the first part of the cycle of *Christina's World* to demonstrate the beauty of life and an expectation of true love, by expressing that the lover is coming to the protagonist. The poem repeats the phrase, “my heart,” to express great joy by comparing nature or familiar objects in our lives. Rossetti divides sixteen lines into two stanzas, having irregular rhythmic patterns and rhymes.

“Who Has Seen the Wind?”

Who has seen the wind? Neither I nor you; But when the leaves hang trembling, The wind is passing through.	Who has seen the wind? Neither you nor I; But when the trees bow down their heads, The wind is passing by
---	--

The next poem expresses human weakness and the powerful force of nature that cannot be seen by the human eye. The use of the wind in the texts intensifies the depth of the poem, by devising a figurative concept to express the idea that cannot be seen in an easier manner. The wind symbolizes a variety of emotions, including love, kindness, evil, hunger, and compassion, which impact human. The poem repeats a question and an answer, saying “Who Has Seen the Wind?” and “Neither I nor you”. This means that human beings are all the same, all suffering from the inability to control the forces of nature.

“Amor Mundi”

- I. “Oh where are you going with your love-locks flowing
On the west wind blowing along this valley track?”
“The downhill path is easy, come with me and it please ye,
We shall escape the uphill by never turning back.”
- II. So they two went together in glowing August weather,
The honey-breathing heather lay to their left and right;
And dear she was to dote on, her swift feet seemed to float on
The air like soft twin pigeons too sportive to alight.
- III. “Oh what is that in heaven where gray cloud-flakes are seven,
Where blackest clouds hang riven just at the rainy skirt?”
“Oh that’s a meteor sent us, a message dumb, portentous,
An undeciphered solemn signal of help or hurt.”

- IV. “Oh what is that glides quickly where velvet flowers grow thickly,
Their scent comes rich and sickly?” — “A scaled and hooded worm.”
“Oh what’s that in the hollow, so pale I quake to follow?”
“Oh that’s a thin dead body which waits the eternal term.”
- V. “Turn again, O my sweetest, — turn again, false and fleetest:
This beaten way thou beatest I fear is hell’s own track.”
“Nay, too steep for hill-mounting; nay, too late for cost-counting:
This downhill path is easy, but there’s no turning back.”

“Amor Mundi” means Love of the World, in which the poem displays sorts and values of love, defined by humanity. Also, Rossetti illustrates that the protagonist stands at the crossroad of her choices between life and death, controlled by its lover’s whisper. Rossetti utilizes uphill and downhill as a metaphor for life and death. The protagonist eventually heads to the downhill, which it depicts the death, at the last stanza with an extreme scene. The tension and urgency that may come from the dialogue between the questioner and the respondent further enhances the delivery of the poem. Moreover, In the middle of a conversation, narration is used as a good means to convey the specific content of a poem.

“When I Am Dead, My Dearest”

- I. When I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress tree:
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

- II. I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain:
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.

This poem directly refers to the poet’s thoughts about death, by utilizing the downhill motive in “Amor Mundi”. Hall selects this poem to lead a scene delivering the message of the protagonist about death. The protagonist represents modesty on a journey to death, accepting ambiguity between being remembered and forgotten by others.

“Up-Hill”

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day’s journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?
A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
Those who have gone before.
Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?

They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
Of labour you shall find the sum.
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yes, beds for all who come.

According to the third poem, titled “Amor Mundi,” the uphill means life.

The first stanza in this poem begins with important and comprehensive message, questioning the weary and demand life. As a result, the poem claims that life is to climb up toward the uphill and to seek the rest to relieve a burden while alive.

2. Musical Connections

Juliana Hall adapts specific compositional techniques to unify individual songs throughout the entire cycle. Hall pays attention to the precise delivery of lyrics through tone and rhythm, with wonderful harmony between the piano and the voice. The techniques she selects are motivic connections, word-painting, imaginative text-setting, and meter change. Hall uses two types of motivic ideas by locating them in the voice part or in the piano part. For the voice part, the same melodies reappear in the repeated words as a motive to emphasize the meaning of the words. The motive in the piano part is in charge of maintaining consistency for the mood of songs from the cycle. Word-painting, which is one of Hall’s favorite devices, visualizes the images of words, and she employs well-chosen notes and rhythms to express the mood and the scenery from the words. Text-setting has a similar role to word-painting, but concentrates on intonation, pronunciation, and accent from words rather than the images. Furthermore, Hall echoes pronunciation from the dictionary and accents, by using rhythms and beats. Lastly, Hall

utilizes meter-change to divide sections and to move to a different atmosphere in one song. When the meter is changed, she also changes the patterns and dynamics of the piano to convey lively stories and atmosphere.²⁴

3. The Relationship between Painting, Cycle and Poem



Figure 24. *Christina's World* by Andrew Wyeth.²⁵

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Used with permission from Artists Rights Society and Art Resource.

This is a painting, titled *Christina's World*, which was painted by Andrew Wyeth in 1948 (Figure 24). Hall noticed this piece from Gwen Coleman's studio. According to the description of The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, Wyeth found the

²⁴ Tabitha Burchett, "When the South Wind Sings: a Song Cycle by Juliana Hall." (DMA diss., The Indiana University, 2019.)

²⁵ *Christina's World*, The Museum of Modern Art, accessed April 20, 2021, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/78455>.

woman, wearing a pink dress and crawling across a grassy field toward a house on the top of a hill one day. She refused to use a wheelchair to overcome her difficulty, despite of her disability. Her appearance inspired Wyeth to create this painting, expressing “her incredible conquest,” which is an important aspect of everyone’s life. Juliana Hall deals with spiritual subjects, such as life, death, love, and salvation, which are parts of a progression in lives. To be specific, Hall begins with “A Birthday,” meaning literally birth and intrinsically love, and ends her cycle with “Up-Hill,” depicting the end of life, after several physical and emotional experiences. This picture also depicts the journey of life itself, in which she is on the way to the house on the top of the field, reflecting the end of her life. In this aspect, Hall and Wyeth have a profound and deep connection to express the image of a life by different methods of art.

Wyeth and Rossetti also have a conversation each other, by using common elements for each work. For instance, Rossetti employs the word “grass” in “When I Am Dead, My Dearest,” symbolizing her modesty about death. Wyeth also contrasts rough grass on the downhill with neat grass on the uphill. He utilizes these contrasting elements to show the opposite features from life and death. Moreover, Rossetti creates “Up-Hill” to depict the end of life, bringing up the scene toward the heaven. In Wyeth’s painting, he illustrates a woman crawling toward uphill. Hall and Coleman beautifully made the perfect bridge between Wyeth and Rossetti, sharing a similar idea to echo a life they imagine in their masterpiece, by composing a creative cycle.²⁶

²⁶ Juliana Hall, e-mail message to author, June 8, 2022.

Analysis of Songs

1. "A Birthday"

Piano

A Quiet Joy (♩ = 60-66)

The image shows the opening of the piano part for the song "A Birthday". It consists of three staves: a vocal line (top), a right-hand piano line (middle), and a left-hand piano line (bottom). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked "A Quiet Joy (♩ = 60-66)". The right-hand piano line starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a syncopated melody. The left-hand piano line starts with a bass clef and includes a pedal point marked "Ped." on a G# note. The first two measures are shown, with a double bar line after the second measure. A small asterisk is located at the bottom right of the score.

Figure 25. "A Birthday," mm. 1-2, opening.

Hall displays diverse forms and shapes of syncopations in the piano part throughout this song. The introduction begins with leaping and syncopated notes at the octave in G clefs for both hands (Figure 25). The right hand plays a pedal note of a specific E while the left hand plays a melody. The syncopation in the right hand represents heartbeats as the protagonist feels excited. When the vocal line starts, the pitches in the syncopation begin to change (Figure 26).

The image shows a continuation of the piano part from Figure 25, specifically measures 5-6. The key signature remains one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. A blue arrow points down to the first measure. The right-hand piano line features a syncopated melody with a long note in the first measure. The left-hand piano line continues with a melody. Pedal points are marked with "Ped." and asterisks. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a 3/4 time signature.

Figure 26. "A Birthday," mm. 5-6, expanded syncopation.

After the first stanza of the poem, a diminutive syncopation appears to support the meaning of the text, “a watered shoot.” The syncopated eighth notes in the opening are replaced by the syncopated sixteenth notes (Figure 27). These split sixteenth notes keep appearing more in the right hand in the measures that follow.



Figure 27. “A Birthday,” mm. 9, diminution of syncopation.

Hall completes the A section, accompanying with the sixteenth notes, and moves to B section, where the second stanza in the poem begins, by expanding the syncopation in measure 26 (Figure 28).



Figure 28. “A Birthday,” mm. 25-26, expansion of syncopation (B section.)

The extended syncopation converts into a chord form accompanied by arpeggiandi to change the atmosphere in the section conveying a new message (Figure 29).

The image shows a musical score for two staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, starting at measure 31 with a whole rest. It then begins with the lyrics "Carve it in doves, and". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in treble and bass clefs. It features arpeggiated chords and a glissando effect. The score is in 2/4 time and includes dynamic markings like "mp".

Figure 29. “A Birthday,” mm. 31-32, chord with glissando.

Hall also adds two beats, by using meter-change, as a brief interlude to expect a new mood. The words of “a dais of silk and down” and “vair and purple dyes,” at the previous line, cause the new shapes of accompaniment. The arpeggiandi recall the sound of a harp and leads delivering the text. Also, Hall achieves to convert to dreamlike atmosphere.

The opening reappears with the similar accompaniment in measure 42 to repeat and emphasize the refrain. This repetition implies that the piece is heading to the finale and Hall locates a long postlude with a combination of two distinguished accompaniments at the end, including syncopated melodies and chords with glissando (Figure 30).

50

52

54

mp

mf

Figure 30. "A Birthday," mm. 50-55, postlude.

Voice

Hall utilizes motives to highlight the significant word of “My heart,” and unites melodies and the meaning from the text. “My heart,” which is the first word of every sentence in this poem, which it echoes the direct emotion of the protagonist. Also, the intervals of perfect 4th and minor 2nd among three notes occur whenever the word, “my heart,” appears (Figure 31).

The musical score for "A Birthday" is presented in two systems. The first system, measures 3-4, shows the voice part with the word "My" and a piano accompaniment. A blue arrow points to the word "My". The second system, measures 5-8, shows the voice part with the words "heart is like a singing bird" and "Whose", and a piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment features a melisma from G# to C#.

Figure 31. “A Birthday,” mm. 4-5, motive of my heart.

Moreover, Hall prefers to develop a sense of how the words feel in the mouth of a singer. She mentions that having a sense of the physical characteristics of words helps a great deal when setting texts. Thus, she adapts the use of text-setting and word-painting to visualize and describe the texts with appropriate notes and rhythms. For instance, in measure 6, Hall employs the melisma from G# to C# as “singing bird.” The composer

also considers IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet), accent, and length of vowel in words. For instance, the first [I] is the longest vowel in “singing bird,” and Hall adds a long descending melody for it and C# and a quarter note to stress the important word, which is bird (Figure 32).²⁷

Figure 32. “A Birthday,” mm. 6, word-painting and text-setting.

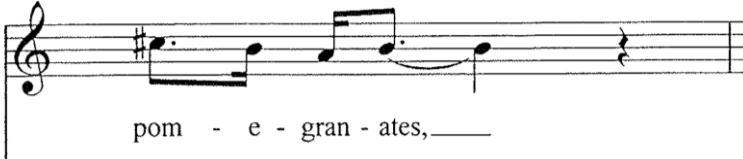
Another word-painting technique is utilized in measure 12 and 13, written “whose boughs are bent with.” To depict boughs, Hall draws a large arch melody by notes like a bough of a tree, including C, Gb, F, Eb, C, Db and E. Two notes of C and Db in the melody are associated with a scene of bent boughs (Figure 33).

Figure 33. “A Birthday,” mm. 12-13, word-painting.

²⁷ Juliana Hall, e-mail message to author, June 8, 2022.


Hall concentrates on setting the physical aspects of words and phrases in the entire song, but there are three examples of descriptive text-setting that supports singer's diction to deliver obvious sounds of texts in this essay (Figure 34).²⁸

33




pom - e - gran - ates, ___

Pomegranates [ˈpɒməgrænɪts]



gold and sil - ver grapes, -

Gold and silver grapes [ɡoʊld ænd ˈsɪl vər greɪp]



fleurs - de - lys; ___

Fleurs-de-lys [flœr-də-li :]

Figure 34. “A Birthday,” mm. 33, 37, and 40, text-setting.

Pomegranates has an accent on “po,” located in a strong and first beat in a measure and the use of a dotted note and sixteenth notes represents the scanning nuance of a word. In gold and silver, Hall writes the long length of notes for dyphthongs such as [goʊld] and [greɪp] and puts accented and important words on strong beats, including gold and silver. Lastly, fleurs-de-lys delivers a charming sense of French well.

²⁸ “Pomegranates, gold, and fleur,” Dictionary.com, accessed November 20, 2022, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/pomegranate>, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/gold>, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/fleur>.

2. “Who Has Seen the Wind?”

Hall starts with melodies depicting the wind in the beginning of the piano part, lasting until the end and approaches to this beautiful song with motivic ideas, which are the main techniques. The musical motives in this song depict specific moods or words for both of piano and voice.

Piano

1 Delicately (♩ = 116)

The musical score is for the piano introduction of the piece. It is written in 4/4 time and begins with a tempo marking of 'Delicately' and a quarter note equal to 116 beats per minute. The score consists of three measures. The right hand (RH) features arpeggiated accompaniment, with notes beamed together and slurs indicating the flow of the arpeggios. The left hand (LH) provides a bass line with notes that are a perfect fifth below the RH notes. The first measure starts with a piano (*pp*) dynamic. Pedal markings are present: a first pedal in the first measure, and second and third pedals in the second and third measures respectively. A '8vb' marking is also present in the first measure of the LH part.

Figure 35. “Who Has Seen the Wind,” mm. 1-3, introduction.

In the introduction, the arpeggiated accompaniments in the right hand of the piano part prove the scene of wind as if describing the sound of wind. The progression of chords in the bass part leads the melody, maintaining perfect 5th relationship, using notes of D, Ab, and Eb (Figure 35).

The image displays two musical excerpts from the score for "Who Has Seen the Wind." The top excerpt, measures 6-7, features a vocal line with the lyrics "wind?" and "Nei-ther" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a *Ped.* marking and an asterisk. The bottom excerpt, measures 18-19, shows the vocal line with "Nei-ther" and a piano accompaniment with a *mp* marking and a *p* marking. A blue arrow points from the piano part of measure 18 up to the piano part of measure 7, indicating a motivic connection between the two passages.

Figure 36. "Who Has Seen the Wind," mm. 7&18, motive in piano.

There is an interesting part that puts a motivic idea into the piano part. Comparing measure 7 to 18, when Db and Bb alternates on the left hand in the piano, it foretells that the sentences, "neither I nor you" or "neither you nor I" will appear in the voice part. The frequent repetition of the note of D in piano and voice parts proves Hall's intention emphasizing the crucial word, which is "you" (Figure 36).

Voice

Hall's motivic technique continues in voice as well. As the title suggests, the most important theme, which is wind, in the poem, appears repeatedly throughout the song. Also, the melodic motive constantly reoccurs with the appearance of wind, by mixing ascending and descending melodies in one phrase. Hall illustrates the image of the wind, passing over the mountain (Figure 37).

The image shows a musical score for the song "Who Has Seen the Wind?". The score is in 3/4 time and features a voice line and a piano accompaniment. The voice line begins at measure 4 with the lyrics "Who has seen the wind?". The piano accompaniment consists of a right hand with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and a left hand with a bass line. A red box highlights the voice line from measure 5 to measure 6, which contains the words "the wind?". The notes in this box are G4, A4, B4, and A4, forming a half-note phrase. The piano accompaniment continues with a similar rhythmic pattern throughout the measures shown.

Figure 37. "Who Has Seen the Wind," mm. 5-6, wind motive.

Another characteristic in this wind motive is found when wind is in the object, Hall uses notes of E, D, and B. When it is in the subject, F and E, or Eb and D. In other words, half notes are used in wind. It shows her details, which differ according to the word order (Figure 38).

4 *p* Who has seen the wind? —

6

This musical score shows measures 4 through 6. The vocal line (treble clef) has a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The lyrics are "Who has seen the wind?". A red box highlights the notes for "the wind?". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with slurs and accents. The bass line (bass clef) has a dynamic marking of *p* and includes a fermata over the final measure.

16 *mp* Who has seen the wind? —

17

This musical score shows measures 16 through 17. The vocal line (treble clef) has a dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano). The lyrics are "Who has seen the wind?". A red box highlights the notes for "the wind?". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) continues with the rhythmic pattern. The bass line (bass clef) has a dynamic marking of *p*.

“Who Has Seen the Wind,” mm. 5-6 & 17, wind motive, object.

22 down their heads, —

24 *f* The wind is

25

This musical score shows measures 22 through 25. The vocal line (treble clef) has a dynamic marking of *f* (forte). The lyrics are "down their heads, — The wind is". A red box highlights the notes for "The wind". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a more active rhythmic pattern. The bass line (bass clef) has a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte).

12 *mp* The wind is

24

This musical score shows measures 12 and 24. The vocal line (treble clef) has a dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano). The lyrics are "The wind is". A red box highlights the notes for "The wind". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a rhythmic pattern. The bass line (bass clef) has a dynamic marking of *p*.

Figure 38. “Who Has Seen the Wind,” mm. 12 & 24, wind motive, subject.

A new motive comes from “Neither I nor you,” supported by the piano motive. The relationship of major 2nd, minor 3rd among C, Bb, and Db, also major 3rd and major 2nd among D#, B, and C#. As “I” is placed in C and “you” placed in D, Hall’s modesty to elevate her opponent rather than herself is reflected in her personality (Figure 39).

The image displays two musical systems. The first system, starting at measure 8, features a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics "I nor you:" and a piano accompaniment in grand staff. A blue arrow points to the first measure of the vocal line. The piano accompaniment has a rhythmic motive in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system, starting at measure 18, features a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics "Neither you nor I:" and a piano accompaniment in grand staff. A blue arrow points to the vocal line. The piano accompaniment has a rhythmic motive in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The score includes dynamic markings like "mp" and "p", and performance instructions like "Ped." and "* Ped.".

Figure 39. “Who Has Seen the Wind,” mm. 8 & 19, motive.

3. “Amor Mundi”

Piano

1 With Suspense ($\text{♩} = 120$)

Figure 40. “Amor Mundi,” mm. 1-3, triplet notes.

Hall divides this piece into five sections and presents them in context to the flow and content of the poem. The accompaniment part in each section has a similar shape, but with subtle differences, the overall unity of the song and the unique characteristics of each part are harmoniously expressed. A characteristic of the overall accompaniment is the use of continuous triplet notes from the beginning to the end of the song (Figure 40). However, Hall transfers the triplet used in the right hand to the left hand at the climax and uses a chord form and fortissimo to deliver a dramatic impression (Figure 41).

90 *ff*

Figure 41. “Amor Mundi,” mm. 90-91, climax.

In addition, the overall purpose of this song is to deliver an accurate message to the audience by doubling the voice melody in the accompaniment and unifying the singer's voice and the piano sound through the obvious delivery of the melody. The last postlude sums up the long piece of music that has been developed so far by using a mixture of harmonic chords and broken chords, which are previously used accompaniment forms.

Voice

A notable aspect of the poem is that many passages begin with an exclamation. This feature uses the term “Anacrusis” and contains one of the significant meanings in the poetry literature. To express this method, Hall accurately conveys anacrusis by using incomplete measure for all phrases beginning with Oh! and placing interjections on a weak beat (Figure 42).

The image shows a musical score for the fourth measure of the piece "Amor Mundi." It consists of three staves: a vocal line and two piano accompaniment staves. The vocal line begins with a whole rest in the first measure, indicating an anacrusis. The lyrics "Oh where are you go - ing with your" are written below the vocal line. The piano accompaniment features triplets in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The dynamic marking *mp* is present above the vocal line.

Figure 42. “Amor Mundi,” mm. 4, anacrusis.

Hall also tends to use a technique that mixes word-painting and text-setting for voice parts. In particular, downhill and uphill, which are often mentioned in this song, have different directions of melodies, ascending and descending, so the scenes given by the words are drawn in the score (Figure 43).

10 *mp*

"The down - hill path is

16

cape the up - hill by

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The first system, starting at measure 10, features a vocal line in 2/4 time with lyrics "The down - hill path is" and a piano accompaniment with triplets in the right hand and a sustained bass line in the left hand. The second system, starting at measure 16, features a vocal line with lyrics "cape the up - hill by" and a piano accompaniment with triplets in the right hand and a sustained bass line in the left hand. Both systems include dynamic markings of *mp* and a key signature of one flat.

Figure 43. "Amor Mundi," mm. 11 & 17, word-painting & text-setting.

4. “When I Am Dead, My Dearest”

Piano & Voice

1 A Sentimental Waltz ($\text{♩} = 104\text{--}112$)



The image shows the first two measures of the waltz introduction. It consists of two staves: a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The piano part features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The dynamic marking is *mp* (mezzo-piano). The tempo is indicated as 104-112 beats per minute.

Figure 44. “When I Am Dead, My Dearest,” mm. 1-2, waltz intro.

Unlike the sad content of this poem dealing with death, Hall creates a contradictory atmosphere by adopting a waltz-type accompaniment. Written in $\frac{3}{4}$ time, it can be seen that the song uses a hyper meter due to the right-hand melody reminiscent of $\frac{6}{8}$ time (Figure 44).



The image shows two systems of the musical score, measures 53-59. The top system (measures 53-56) features a vocal line with the lyrics "I shall not see the shadows," and a piano accompaniment. The bottom system (measures 57-59) features a vocal line with the lyrics "I shall not feel the rain;" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part has a complex, syncopated rhythm. Red brackets are drawn under the piano accompaniment in both systems, highlighting the hyper meter. The dynamic marking is *p* (piano).

Figure 45. “When I Am Dead, My Dearest,” mm. 53-59, hyper meter.

This hyper meter disappears from the piano in measure 53, where the B section starts, and the voice part takes over, and the piano takes over again in the next verse (Figure 45).

5. “Up-Hill”

Piano

In the last song of the cycle, the progression of the parallel chords leads the mood of the song. A parallel structure was adopted to express the poetry, which is a form of conversation between a questioner and a respondent, and the transmission of poetry is maximized by accurately distinguishing between a question and a response by using a motivic accompaniment (Figure 46).

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Up-Hill". It is divided into two systems. The first system, labeled "1 An Arduous Path (♩ = 66)", shows the piano accompaniment for measures 1-2. The piano part consists of a treble and bass clef with a 4/4 time signature. The right hand plays a series of chords, and the left hand plays a simple bass line. The second system, starting at measure 9, includes a voice part. The voice line is in a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics "Yes, to the" are written below the notes. The piano accompaniment continues with parallel chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p* (piano) and *mp* (mezzo-piano), and a tempo marking of ♩ = 66.

Figure 46. “Up-Hill,” mm. 1-2 & 9-10, motive.

Voice

Hall also shows a mixture of text-setting and word-painting in this song as well. To accurately echo the lyrics, “take the whole long day,” it shows a challenging image of using a flexible meter. By securing a long length of notes with triplets, the dictionary meaning of “whole and long” and the sound value of diction are conveyed accurately (Figure 47).

The image displays a musical score for the song "Up-Hill," focusing on measures 13 through 15. The score is written for voice and piano. The voice part begins at measure 13 with the lyrics "day's jour - ney" and continues through measure 15 with "take the whole long day?". The piano accompaniment is in 4/4 time and features a steady bass line. The lyrics are: "day's jour - ney take the whole long day?". The word "jour" is hyphenated. The lyrics "take the whole long day?" are spread across measures 14 and 15. The piano part includes a *mf* dynamic marking. The score uses a flexible meter, with triplets used to extend the notes for the words "whole" and "long".

Figure 47. “Up-Hill,” mm. 13- 15, text-setting & word-painting.

Conclusion

Through this study, I discovered Juliana Hall's unique methods of composition, which she has consistently followed for forty years. An opportunity to study composition at Yale University, where she was majoring in piano, proved to be a significant turning point in her career as a composer. Although she started composing later than others, she was fortunate to receive valuable advice and guidance from her wise teachers, who helped her to establish her own voice through composition. After performing as a solo pianist for over twenty years, she became drawn to vocal music with lyrics and piano, creating deeply moving music, eventually making a name for herself in the field.

Juliana Hall's compositional process expresses her own personal style, and reflects her character, philosophy, and sincerity. Whether she is commissioned to write a piece or is dedicating a song to a singer she admires, Hall always draws inspiration from the original form of the poem, making it the foundation of her music. She transforms the tone of the words into pitch, rhythm, and texture. Additionally, her background as a pianist allows her to enrich her songs by supporting the atmosphere and nuances of the poetry. Overall, Hall's approach to composition is deeply personal and rooted in her own artistic vision.

I selected *Night Dances* of 1987 and *Christina's World* of 2016 for this study to demonstrate Hall's consistent method of composition. *Night Dances* was her first song cycle to earn professional recognition, proving her potential. After receiving the commission, she adapted the poems of several poets to fit her chosen theme and combined them to tell a larger story. The vocal lines in this work were meticulously

composed using her intuitive text-setting method, while the piano part employed various techniques to add splendor to the music. Moreover, unity, which Hall considered to be very important, is achieved by using musical elements throughout the cycle that were presented in the first song.

Christina's World is a cycle she wrote in 2016 for Gwen Coleman, based on a poem by Christina Rossetti. The title of *Christina's World* was derived from the poet's name, and through this research, I realized that a painting with the same exact title by Andrew Wyeth has deep connections with her cycle. Before interviewing Hall, I had found commonalities between them. Subsequently, after our interview, I learned that her cycle was thematically composed to complement Wyeth's painting. It was fascinating to learn about her ability to draw inspiration from diverse sources. Thus, I was satisfied with my research method and approach, which enabled me to uncover this fact on my own. The two cycles I compared have different charms and musical characteristics, but Hall's approach has remained steadfast.

Going forward, when another music student studies Hall's works, it is recommended to explore the diverse sources that inspired Hall. In addition to immersing herself in the poetry, she includes the era and background of both the poetry and the poets. Additionally, singers should become very familiar with the poetry by reading it aloud as Hall did herself. This process is a clue to her text-setting and word-painting; how she imbues the melody with meaning through the sound of the words. Her sincere desire for the poets' lyrics to be conveyed to the audience will be revealed more beautifully through practice.

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Night Dances: Six Songs for Soprano and Piano

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1. The Cricket Sang

- mm. 1-7
- mm. 8-10
- mm. 11-15
- mm. 27-30
- mm. 39-41

2. Some Things Are Dark

- mm. 1-2
- mm. 6
- mm. 12
- mm. 15-18

3. Song

- mm. 1-4
- mm. 12-14
- mm. 21-23
- mm. 30-35

4. Sleep, mourner, sleep!

- mm. 1-3
- mm. 10-15

5. A spider sewed at night

- mm. 1-3
- mm. 7-10
- mm. 15-21

6. Sonnet

- mm. 1-10
- mm. 18-19
- mm. 20-23
- mm. 34-40

Christina's World (2016)

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1. A Birthday

- mm.1-2
- mm.4-6
- mm.9
- mm.12-13
- mm.25-26
- mm.31-32
- mm. 33, 37, and 40
- mm.50-55

2. Who has seen the wind?

- mm. 1-3
- mm. 5-8
- mm. 12
- mm. 17-19
- mm. 24

3. Amor Mundi

- mm.1-4
- mm.11
- mm. 17
- mm.90-91

4. When I Am Dead, My Dearest

- mm.1-2
- mm.53-59

5. Up-Hill

- mm.1-2
- mm.9-10
- mm.13-15

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Proposal ID#: PRO20211208

Dear IlHong,

Your proposal, "Juliana Hall's World: Analysis of Night Dances (1987), Propriety (1992), Upon this Summer's Day (2009), and Christina's World (2016)," has been reviewed is approved in accordance with the expedited review guidelines established by federal regulation 45 CFR 46.110 (b)(1)(ii).

Approval of this research will continue until 02/09/2023. If you plan to continue the research after that date, please inform the IRB one month in advance.

Please keep in mind that it is your responsibility to notify and seek approval from the IRB of any modifications to your project, and that it is your responsibility to report to the IRB any adverse events that occur related to this study. Additional information and both adverse event reporting and modification request forms are available online on the IRB web site:

<https://www.hartford.edu/about/campus-leadership/office-provost/faculty-development/humansubjects-committee/requirements.aspx>

If you have any questions, please contact irb@hartford.edu.

The University of Hartford has an Assurance of Compliance on file with the Office of Human Research Protections (Federalwide Assurance - FWA #00003578).

Congratulations and good luck with your study.

Sincerely,

Jessica Pawlik-York

Jessica Pawlik-York
Chair, Institutional Review Board

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