

Songwriter Information for SAI Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Process

by Donya Metzger

I was born in Vancouver, BC, Canada into a Barbershop family and so was steeped in the genre growing up. I studied piano (up to Royal Conservatory Gr. VIII) as a child and began singing in a chorus at 16 (Lions Gate). I had always danced and continued that training with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance from Simon Fraser University. In my early twenties I sang with a cover band doing R&B/Funk/Top 40 songs in various 5 star hotels in Asia, so my musical life is influenced by that music. I began teaching voice in my mid-twenties and continue to do so today; I'm now a Certified Associate Teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework and a Somatic Experiencing Practitioner, teaching at Vancouver Film School and coaching individuals and ensembles worldwide. My specialty is the intersection of performance presence, vocal expression and nervous system function.

A Dress With Pockets

This piece emerged as a fun response to the movement toward including more, bigger, functional pockets in women's clothing, and the memes circulating the internet about it:

Hey, nice dress!

Thanks, it has POCKETS!!

I wrote it imagining all the things that might be possible if you had a dress with pockets: convenient availability of various items women usually carry in a purse, avoidance of the awkward feeling of not knowing what to do with your hands in social situations, and the freedom and lightness of having nothing to carry. I keep waiting for a video of a group that creates a costume with unreasonably huge pockets and fills them with ridiculous, oversize objects - gauntlet thrown!

Brand New Shoes

I wrote this piece mostly to encourage myself to be brave and take risks in my own life, such as writing and releasing original music. Funny detail: I was worried that the song would come across as preachy, but it seems to have struck just the right chord (so to speak!) as it is now one of my most popular charts. At the time my singing friends and I were learning that heel height affects vocal resonance, hence my encouragement to sing barefoot onstage.

I Might Love You... Soon

Oh, sweet new romance, when there are an abundance of things you admire about your sweetie but you're filled with trepidation about saying those three little words. Note: I wrote this piece in 2011 and that sweet romance came to an end, giving me the opportunity to re-interpret my own lyrics. Turns out all the things I admired in my sweetie are also things I love about myself! In fact, International Champion quartet Frenzy sang this song with Nikki the Diva Lead singing this to herself in the mirror, to hilarious effect.

Knock On My Door

This piece literally woke me in the night: I woke up with the hook of this song running through my mind, rolled over and sang it into my phone voice memo app, and went back to sleep. It was borne of the frustration of spending time with a lovely person who seems like a great match, only to have them tell you 'sorry, you're not my type, I only like people with [insert arbitrary quality].' Re the Viking line: I'm of Danish heritage on my Mom's side, so it's a play on that. If that line feels like a stumbling block for you, I'd be happy to work with you to figure out some lyrics that would feel like a better match.

Snow Day

Ohhhh, I do love a snow day. Living in Vancouver for almost my whole life, I've never experienced a truly Canadian snowy winter that lasts for months. A snow day here is a rare event, a treat, and a delight, and since Vancouverites can't drive in the snow (how would we practice??) we pretty much excuse ourselves from the world and snuggle in until the rain returns, if we can. I wrote this

piece to fill out the holiday album (Sister Grinch) I was working on; I needed another secular piece, and was inspired by Amy Rose's comment about the dearth of songs about snow. A facebook post asking what people loved about a snow day got tons of responses, and many of them are included in the lyrics. In fact, Amy, who sings Tenor, wrote that she loves being the first person to make footprints in crunchy snow, so that lyric went into the Tenor part for her. Snow Day won an award in the SMP Press Choral Composition in the year it was published.

Strolling Through London

Inspired by a single evening exploring London with two dear friends, this piece emerged basically fully-formed on the flight home. With Gershwin-ish harmonies and a seriously chromatic melody, this one is not for the faint of heart! If you can pull it off, the lush harmonies and rich imagery will transport your audience to the Greatest City on Earth for a delightful escape.

Uncorked

Originally written in 5 parts for SAATB, this song features crunchy jazz and a syncopated Latin feel that contrasts with the intimate lyrics. A casual listener might get the impression of a breezy Getz & Gilberto tune, but on closer inspection the words reveal a long history of painful mistakes made in a youthful romance, and the way the truth eventually demands to be 'uncorked'. Great feature for an expressive Lead with a jazz singer vibe.