

PROGRAM



Life (John O'Reilly)

from *Three Songs*

Life and Death (Jessie Middleton)

A Death Song (Paul Dunbar)

Grief (LeRoy V. Brant)

Harry Thacker Burleigh (USA)

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (England)

Howard Swanson (USA)

William Grant Still (USA)

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Bewilderment (Langston Hughes)

Hyacinth (Edna St. Vincent Millay)

from *Six Songs on Poems by Edna St. Vincent Millay*

I Want to Die While You Love Me (Georgia Douglas Johnson)

from *Miss Wheatley's Garden*

Love Let the Wind Cry...How I Adore Thee (Sappho)

Florence Price (USA)

Margaret Bonds (USA)

Rosephanye Powell (USA)

Undine Smith Moore (USA)

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Mamma mia, non gridate (Anonymous)

from *2 Venetian Songs*

Die Nacht (Joseph von Eichendorff)

from *Drei Lieder, Op. 19*

Quand je serai mort* (Carl Brouard)

from *Reflets d'âme*

Pregón* (Emilio Ballagas)

from *Three Afro-Cuban Songs*

Joseph Bologne (Guadaloupe)

Robert Owens (USA)

Carmen Brouard (Haiti)

Mariela Rodríguez (Cuba)

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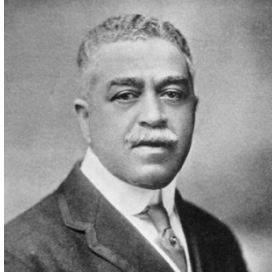
Don't Feel No-Ways Tired (traditional)

Jacqueline Hairston (USA)

*U.S. premiere

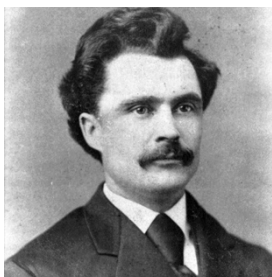
NOTES, TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

"Life" | Music by Harry T. Burleigh | Words by John Boyle O'Reilly



Henry Thacker ("Harry") Burleigh (1866–1949) was an American composer, arranger, and professional singer known for his baritone voice. In 1892 he won a scholarship to study at the National Conservatory of Music in New York where he studied with Victor Herbert and Antonín Dvořák. He learned plantation songs and spirituals from his grandfather, a former slave. With Dvořák's encouragement, he began to transcribe and arrange them. Though today Burleigh is best known for his arrangements of spirituals, his art songs and song cycles

were performed by numerous well-known classical singers in the early twentieth century. He sang professionally during his entire adult life, and during a tour of London with composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, he sang for King Edward VII and other English nobility. He served as a staff editor for the G. Ricordi publishing house in New York for 28 years and was a founding member of ASCAP.²



John Boyle O'Reilly (1844–1890) was an Irish poet, journalist and civil rights activist. He fought for Britain but was arrested and sentenced to twenty years penal service in Australia for treason. He escaped to the United States, where he continued to work for Irish freedom and became a popular lecturer. By 1875 he had gained notoriety as a published poet. He was a staunch advocate for the rights of African Americans and frequently gave talks on "civil rights and human freedom."³

Life | Song text combines two short poems by John Boyle O'Reilly: "Loving is Dreaming" and "Life is a Confluence."

On the surface, this song appears simplistic, perhaps naïve. However, the openness and starkness of the harmonic progression alongside the text suggests a sophisticated awareness of the human condition, the presence of evil among us, and the infinite importance of love. Burleigh's combination of two poems (each stanza is a separate poem) becomes a summation of life and its purpose: to move toward beauty and love.

**Life is a certainty, death is a doubt;
Men may be dead while they're walking about;
Love is as needful to being as breath;
Loving is dreaming, and waking is death.**

**Hunger goes sleeplessly thirsting for food;
Evil lies painfully yearning for good;
Life is a confluence: nature must move,
Like the heart of the poet, toward beauty and love.**

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS



Mezzo-soprano **Cherry Duke** has performed over 50 principal roles with opera companies and orchestras throughout the US and abroad, including the world premiere, tour, and original cast album of the acclaimed 2012 opera, *DOG DAYS*. Duke toured with the American Spiritual Ensemble from 2011–14, and sang with them virtually in 2020. She was a soloist in *A SPIRITUAL MESSIAH* created by John Wesley Wright and performed in recital with Wright in *A SPIRITUAL CHRISTMAS*. Recently, Duke was a soloist with the El Paso Symphony Orchestra in the world premiere the *EL PASO REQUIEM* and played Julia Child in *BON APPÉTIT* with El Paso Opera. As an Artistic Associate with El Paso Opera, Duke is a co-producer of the annual *GIVING VOICE* festival, designed to amplify Latinx voices in opera. In the summers of 2021 and 2022 she attended “Singing Down the Barriers,” a week-long intensive course of study with top scholars and performers of vocal works by Black composers. Cherry Duke has served as director of opera and professor of voice at the University of Texas at El Paso since 2015.



Accomplished concert pianist and coach/accompanist **Esequiel Meza, Jr.** has coached multiple productions for El Paso Opera, served as Music Director for Stagedoor Manor Institute of the Performing Arts in New York, and as an accompanist for Arizona Opera. Other music directing credits include New Mexico State University and Doña Ana Lyric Opera Company, Music Theater of El Paso, Cimarron Circuit Opera Company, and Southern Arizona Light Opera Company. He has performed as guest soloist with the Juarez Bi-National Symphony Orchestra and the symphonies of Corpus Christi, Bordeaux, and Shreveport. Meza has won several awards and has taught on the faculty of the University of Oklahoma where he was also Assistant Dean of Fine Arts and at the University of Bordeaux III in Talence, France. He holds degrees in piano performance from Sam Houston State University, the University of Arizona, and Indiana University. Since 2016, Dr. Meza has been the principal pianist and vocal coach for Opera UTEP.

SHEET MUSIC INFORMATION

KEY:



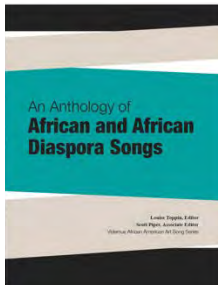
Title of Book, Song, or Cycle | Publisher

Price, Link to buy

Information about keys

- Songs from this recital found in this publication.

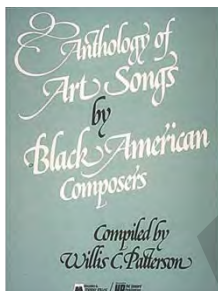
Anthologies with Multiple Composers



An Anthology of African and African Diaspora Songs - 60 Songs (Ed., Louise Toppin and Scott Piper) | Videmus

\$55.00, [ClassicalVocalRep.com](https://www.classicalvocalrep.com)

- I Want to Die While You Love Me (Powell/Johnson)
- Die Nacht (Owens/Eichendorff)



Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers (Compiled by Willis Patterson) | Edward B. Marks Music Company

\$24.99, [ClassicalVocalRep.com](https://www.classicalvocalrep.com)

- A Death Song (Swanson/Dunbar)
- Grief (Still/Brant)
- Love, Let the Wind Cry...How I Adore Thee (Moore/Sappho)



Anthology of Latin American and Iberian Art Songs by Women Composers (Ed., Patricia Caicedo) | Mundo Arts

\$85.00, [ClassicalVocalRep.com](https://www.classicalvocalrep.com)

"Pregón" is performed on this program in a lower key than the one published. Transposition courtesy of the composer.

- Tres Poemas Negros (Rodríguez/Ballagas)



Art Songs and Spirituals by African American Women Composers (Ed., Vivian Taylor) | Hildegard Publishing Company

\$39.95, [ClassicalVocalRep.com](https://www.classicalvocalrep.com)

- Love, Let the Wind Cry...How I Adore Thee (Moore/Sappho)

RESOURCES FOR CONTINUED STUDY

African Diaspora Music Project

<http://africandiasporamusicproject.org/>

Contains a robust database, searchable by composer, voice or orchestral repertoire, title, poet.

African Diaspora Music Project

African American Art Song Alliance

<https://www.darryltaylor.com/alliance/>

Home of interchange between performers and scholars interested in art song by African-American composers.



American Composers Alliance

<https://composers.com/>

A non-profit publisher of American concert music, past and present. Their website has a robust searchable database of scores not available elsewhere.



Song of America

<https://songofamerica.net/>

Launched in November 2009, *Song of America* is a project of the Hampsong Foundation. Its goal is to build and curate a comprehensive archive of American song that tells the story of our culture and nation, through the eyes of our poets and the ears of our composers.



AfriClassical

AfriClassical.com

A website on African heritage in classical music.

African Diaspora Sacred Music and Musicians (ADSMM) Program

<https://www.adsmm.org/>

An archiving, research and performance program of the CSU Dominguez Hills Music Department, implemented in partnership with the University Africana Studies Department and the University Library. The program is multidimensional, and includes the Georgia and Nolan Payton Archive of Sacred Music, the Dominguez Hills Jubilee Choir, and the African Diaspora Sacred Music and Musicians Network and Forum. The ADSMM also presents an African Diaspora Sacred Music and Musicians Performance Program, highlighted by the Annual Living Legends Festival.

Art Song Augmented

<https://www.artsongaugmented.org/>

An online forum devoted to art songs by underrepresented composers whose music has been marginalized.



SOURCES & REFERENCES

¹ "People who come from a particular nation, or whose ancestors came from it, but who now live in many different parts of the world are sometimes referred to as the diaspora."

"Definition of diaspora," Collins Dictionary,

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/diaspora> (accessed May 28, 2022).

² Jean Snyder. "Burleigh, Henry [Harry] T(hacker)," *Grove Music Online*. <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.utep.idm.oclc.org/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002248537> (accessed July 4, 2022).

³ Cyril Clemens. "JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY, NEGLECTED NEW ENGLAND POET." *Poet Lore*, Winter, 1948, 361, <https://utep.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.utep.idm.oclc.org/magazines/john-boyle-oreilly-neglected-new-england-poet/docview/1296843611/se-2?accountid=7121>.

⁴ Stephen Banfield, Jeremy Dibble, and Anya Laurence. "Coleridge-Taylor, Samuel." *Grove Music Online*. <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.utep.idm.oclc.org/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002248993> (accessed June 1, 2022).

⁵ "Samuel Coleridge-Taylor," *The African American Art Song Alliance*, <https://artsongalliance.org/composers/samuel-coleridge-taylor> (accessed May 28, 2022).

⁶ The printed music has "cry" before "sigh", which is a reversal of Middleton's original poem. The performer has chosen to change the order to conform to the original, which seems supported by the emphasis implied in the music.

⁷ Eileen Southern. "Swanson, Howard." *Grove Music Online*. 2001. <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.utep.idm.oclc.org/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000027192> (accessed July 4, 2022).

⁸ Joseph William Gilroy, "Understanding Paul Laurence Dunbar: A Life and Career in Context." (Master of Arts thesis, North Carolina State University 2007).

⁹ John Graziano. "Dunbar, Paul Laurence." *Grove Music Online*, 22 Sep. 2015 <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.utep.idm.oclc.org/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002284246> (accessed July 4, 2022).

¹⁰ Although Swanson's song is based on one of Dunbar's dialect poems, in the published music, it is noted that this song may be sung with or without dialect.

¹¹ Gayle Murchison and Catherine Parsons Smith. "Still, William Grant." *Grove Music Online*. 2001. <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.utep.idm.oclc.org/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000026776> (accessed July 5, 2022).

¹² "Grief," *Song of America*, <https://songofamerica.net/song/grief-1/> (accessed July 5, 2022).

¹³ Rae Linda Brown, "Price [née Smith], Florence Bea(trice)." *Grove Music Online*, 2020, <https://doi-org.utep.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/omo/9781561592630.013.90000367402> (accessed June 1, 2022).

¹⁴ Rae Linda Brown, "Hughes, (James Mercer) Langston", *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://doi-org.utep.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.48287> (accessed June 1, 2022).

¹⁵ Barbara Garvey Jackson and Dominique-René de Lerma. "Bonds [Richardson], Margaret Allison." *Grove Music Online*. 30 Sep. 2020. <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.utep.idm.oclc.org/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-90000318953> (accessed July 6, 2022).