

**THE COMPOSITIONAL STYLE OF JUDITH LANG ZAIMONT
AS FOUND IN *NATTENS MONOLOG (NIGHT SOLILOQUY)*,
SCENA FOR SOPRANO VOICE AND PIANO
WITH TEXT BY DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD**

A Written Document

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts**

in

The School of Music

by

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August 2005

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to those who helped me and encouraged me to complete this written document. First of all, I want to thank Dr. Lori Bade, chair of the Committee, for her enduring patience, continuous advice, and undying support through at my years of vocal study. Her distinguished academic work has indeed established the basis for my academic orientation. Also, I am very grateful for Dr. Jeffrey Perry, who introduced and inspired a new and significant paradigm regarding music theory. In addition, I would like to thank Professors Robert Grayson and Patricia O'Neill for providing expert advice and constant encouragement. Finally, I would like to thank my family for their patience and encouragement throughout my doctoral study.

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ABSTRACT

American composer, Judith Lang Zaimont (b. 1945), has composed a considerable number of solo vocal works as well as multiple works encompassing a variety of genres. Zaimont's *Nattens Monolog (Night Soliloquy)*, scena for soprano and piano, is one of several lengthy solo vocal works. Although written for solo voice, the music takes on the form of opera without operatic materials such as costume or staging. Commissioned by Arleen Auger, soprano, and Dalton Baldwin, pianist, *Nattens Monolog* was composed in 1984 and first performed by them at Lincoln Center in March of 1985.

The primary focus of this paper will be to: 1) share information regarding Judith Lang Zaimont the composer, 2) provide information regarding the writer of the text, Dag Hammarskjöld and 3) highlight compositional techniques of Judith Lang Zaimont found in *Nattens Monolog*. The intention is also to give the singer a guide for preparation of this work through in-depth commentary and exploration of the text.

The written document is comprised of five chapters: Chapter One provides biographical information and commentary on the compositional style of Judith Lang Zaimont; Chapter Two introduces Dag Hammarskjöld and his journal, *Markings*; Chapter Three makes in-depth commentary and exploration of the text; Chapter Four contains a detailed, theoretical study of *Nattens Monolog*; and, finally, the Conclusion is found in Chapter Five. An Appendix follows Bibliography containing the complete listing of Zaimont's solo vocal works.

CHAPTER ONE
JUDITH LANG ZAIMONT

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Judith Lang Zaimont, an American composer, pianist, and teacher, was born November 8, 1945, in Memphis, Tennessee, and was raised in Queens, New York. She started studying music at the age of five and began to compose music for the piano at the age of eleven. At age twelve, she received a scholarship from the Julliard Preparatory School to study piano, theory, and duo-piano. Her musical education continued simultaneously with beginning a career in performance. Zaimont and her sister, Doris Lang Kosloff, performed duo-piano recitals and made their Carnegie Hall debut in 1963. They continued their performing career until 1967. Zaimont received a Bachelor of Arts degree in music from Queens College in 1966 and an Artist Master's degree in piano from the Long Island Institute of Music in 1966. In addition, in 1978, Zaimont earned the Master of Arts degree in composition from Columbia University.¹ During her school years, she studied piano with Rosina L'Hevinne and Leland Thompson; theory and duo-piano with Ann Hull; composition with Hugo Weisgall (Queens College), Leo Kraft (privately), Jack Beeson (Columbia University); and orchestration with André Jolivet (Fellowship in Paris).²

Zaimont has won a number of significant prizes and awards including the following: four Junior Composers Competitions sponsored by the National Federation of Music Clubs, a Broadcast Music, Inc. Student Composers Award, the Debussy Fellowship of the Alliance Française, a Guggenheim Fellowship and a MacDowell Fellowship. Through these awards, she

¹ Jane Weiner LePage, *Women Composers, Conductors, and Musicians of the Twentieth Century: Selected Biography*, vol. ii (Metuchen, N.J. & London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1983), 325.

² Linda Susan McNeil, "The Vocal Solo Works of Judith Lang Zaimont," *The NATS Journal*, May/June 1993, 5.

earned recognition for her compositional talent. Additional awards include: Honored Composer (Van Cliburn International Competition ‘American Composers International’); International Alliance for Women in Music (Recording Award); John Castellini Award; Aaron Copland Award; Commissioned Composer (International San Antonio Piano Competition and Music Teachers Association of California); and Featured Composers (National Federation of Music Clubs and National Conference on Women Composers).³

Zaimont has also held faculty positions at New York Community College, Adelphi University, Queens College, Peabody Conservatory of Music, and Hunter College. In 1992, she joined the School of Music at the University of Minnesota as professor of composition. She is the Editor-in Chief of the critically acclaimed book series, *The Musical Woman: An International Perspective* and the author of a textbook in composition, *Twentieth Century Music: An Analysis and Appreciation*. Zaimont also edited the directory, *Contemporary Concert Music by Women*.⁴

Zaimont’s musical output includes a diverse genre including chamber and solo instrumental works, solo piano works, solo instrument with orchestra, solo vocal works, and choral works. Her works have been performed in the United States as well as in France, England, Australia, and Germany. Commissioned compositions have been written since the early 1970s for prestigious institutions, symphonies, and foundations such as the Cleveland Institute of Music, Waldorf Singers, Gregg Smith Singer Florilegium Chamber Choir, Great Neck Choral Society, Western Wind, Cantica Hebraica, Primavera String Quartet, Huntington Trio, Hopkins Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, New York Music Teachers’ Association, National

³ Judith Lang Zaimont, “Awards and Prizes for Competition,” On-line Access <http://www.jzaimont.com>

⁴ Elizabeth Wood, “Judith Lang Zaimont,” *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, vol. iv (London & NY: Macmillan Press, 1986), 588.

Endowment for the Arts, Exxon Fund, and Connecticut Opera.⁵ In addition, individuals have commissioned works from Zaimont.

Upon receiving a commission, Zaimont usually works with the commissioner to discuss specific ideas so both the commissioner and the composer work to blend their ideas resulting in a well-constructed composition, inspired by the text. Zaimont believes that a commission which includes performance, publication, and recording is “a real bonanza.”⁶

Zaimont’s highly effective vocal music is notable in that she has brought fresh and free interpretation. Her innate dramatic sense is revealed in her choice of text and creative musical settings between the text and the music. Zaimont discusses the inspirations which contribute to her vocal compositions:

I’m a singer manquée from the time I was in college, when I sang in chorus. I have no gift for the voice, but I have a love of words, a love of their sound as well as sense. So I was naturally drawn to setting text, grabbing after that thing I wasn’t blessed with. I had many invitations to write for choral groups and solo artists, and by the early to mid-80s I realized my catalog was lopsided.⁷

Zaimont’s music is gleaned from compositional elements learned from earlier historical styles. Her music incorporates the difficult pianistic passages of the Romantic style, the mixed modes of Romanticism, the whole-tone scale of Impressionism, Twentieth-Century compositional methods based on the twelve-tone aggregate as well as atonal aspects.⁸ Some authorities have called her music Neo-Romantic, but she characterizes her style by saying that:

⁵ Carol Ann O’Conner, “A Comparative Stylistic Analysis of Selected Solo Vocal Works by Twentieth-Century American Women Composers: Barbara Kolb, Ruth Lomon and Judith Lang Zaimont,” (Ph.D.diss., University of Connecticut, 1996), 139.

⁶ LePage, 334.

⁷ James Reel, “A Conversation with Judith Lang Zaimont,” *Fanfare*, May/June 1996, 30.

⁸ O’Conner, 141.

The interpretation that best suits my music is the Romantic style; not exaggeration, but bringing things out, being involved in an expressive technique, highly developed technique for sure.⁹

Zaimont rarely uses twelve-tone techniques, tone row, or serial technique and tonal techniques are used to achieve a creative interpretation of a text. The harmony in most of the vocal music includes shifting tonalities. Zaimont makes the following comments regarding the use of shifting tonality:

The harmonies shift all around. The note sounds in tune or out of tune depending on which chord is being played at the time. I used this technique as a means of getting out of traditional tonality while still using tonal references.¹⁰

Setting the text is the most important matter and from which she receives her musical inspiration. Zaimont creates a musical environment that embodies certain specifics or portions of a poem. She will also use text cuts to accomplish her goal. Zaimont sets out to enhance the sense and sound of the language and considers the language itself very important.¹¹ The text of her vocal music includes a wide variety of poets such as: e.e.cummings, the French symbolists (Baudelaire, Verlaine, of Rimbeau), the ethnic-based texts of the Eskimos, and American Indians. When selecting a text, Zaimont will spend a lengthy amount of time studying and preparing the selected text before she sets the text to music. Zaimont works diligently on the composition so the dramatic and emotional content will be portrayed in the music. Zaimont states:

I am very particular about what texts I set: I'll go to the library and take out an entire shelf of poetry anthologies just to find poems suitable for use as lyrics. Very often on the first encounter with a text, I will hear in my head a linear contour, a rhythmic setting in short, the whole musical setting, complete, I try to develop vocal lines independent of the instrumental parts, and I pay particular attention to the rhythmic scansion.¹²

⁹ O'Conner, 295.

¹⁰ Linda Susan McNeil, "The Vocal Solo Works of Judith Lang Zaimont: An Annotated Bibliography," (Ph.D.diss, Arizona State University, 1988), 31.

¹¹ O'Conner, 288.

¹² LePage, 334.

Zaimont manipulates the text to broaden the dramatic meaning in the following ways: 1) pursues the combination of similar texts or passages from different translations of the same text; 2) mixes the texts of two poems on the same subject; 3) makes cuts in the text to construct and intensify the meaning, mystery, or drama of the poem.¹³ To Zaimont, the interpretation of what she hears is the most important element in setting a text, that both the accents and nuance of the language create variations and elaborations within the song. In addition, to provide a more effective meaning to certain words, Zaimont will use florid musical passages.

One impressive compositional characteristic of Zaimont's is the manner in which she sets text through intense and difficult rhythms. The rhythmic structure (rhythms and meters) is highly complex for both voice and instrument. This difficult rhythmic structure is Zaimont's attempt to set exact rhythms on the accent and flow of the words as well as providing the music appropriate to the character of the words or phrases.

The text will also have influence on the texture and density within the composition. For instance, homophony and polyphony will be used to enhance the drama and dynamic level of the text. Frequently, Zaimont sets the text syllabically, with exceptions allowing for her creative interpretation. The contour of the vocal phrase is, generally, within a narrow range reserving large musical intervals and leaps for expressive effect.¹⁴ Zaimont always considers the abilities of the human voice and expects the highest level of vocal technique from the singer. Often, she writes vocal parts which require the singers' expert abilities so she can create a more intense atmosphere naturally. The result is a well-constructed vocal phrase along with a supportive partner found in the instrumental part. Similar to the vocal line, the instrumental accompaniment

¹³ O'Conner, 292.

¹⁴ McNeil, 8.

is technically difficult using extended and complex piano passages. Zaimont avoids exact doubling of the vocal part, thus treating the voice and accompanying instrument heterophonically, contrapuntally, and in unison allowing each part to grow out of the other as an extension of the phrase.¹⁵

To provide assistance for the performers, Zaimont includes performance markings or directions in her musical scores thus assisting the performers in understanding the composer's wishes. Guidance for expression, dynamic levels, tempo changes and establishing the mood are all included in Zaimont's vocal works. Although these performance markings or directions are present, Zaimont clearly would like the performer be involved in the music and include his/her own artistic interpretation in each performance. Zaimont's solo vocal music represents a significant portion of her entire oeuvre having composed over fifty solo vocal works.¹⁶

¹⁵ McNeil, 8.

¹⁶ Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Style & Literature* (Seattle: Pst...Inc., 1996), 283.

CHAPTER TWO

DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD AND *MARKINGS*

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION AND INTRODUCTION TO *MARKINGS*

Dag Hammarskjöld,¹⁷ Secretary-General of the United Nations from April 10, 1953 through September 18, 1961, was born on July 29, 1905 in south-central Sweden, in the town of Uppsala. His father, Hjalmar Hammarskjöld, was a conservative politician, a judge, an ambassador to Denmark, the provincial governor of Uppsala, and Prime Minister of Sweden during World War I. Hammarskjöld was the youngest of four boys and seemed isolated among his brothers. As a child, Hammarskjöld did not make friends easily and seemed to be a loner, a trait which remained with him during his life time.¹⁸ After completing high school, Hammarskjöld studied French, Philosophy, the History of Literature, and National Economy at Uppsala University. He received the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1925, a Licentiate in Economics in 1928, and, in 1930, the degree of Bachelor of Law. Later, his family moved to Stockholm where, in 1934, received a Ph.D degree in Economics from the University of Stockholm.¹⁹

Like his father and brothers, Hammarskjöld became employed by the state as a Secretary to the Royal Commission on Unemployment. Later, he served as Secretary to the National Bank of Sweden and was appointed Chairman of the National Bank's Board, remaining in their employ for seven years.

¹⁷ The biographical information of Dag Hammarskjöld is based on the following:
James Lewis Henderson, *Hammarskjöld: Servant of a World Unborn* (London: Methuen Educational Limited, 1969)
Emery Kelen, *Dag Hammarskjöld: A Biography* (NY: Meredith Press, 1969)
Brian Urquhaart, *Hammarskjöld* (NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972)
On-line Access <http://www.un.org/Overview/SG/sg2bio.html>
On-line Access <http://www.nobel.se/peace/laureates/1961/Hammarskjöld-bio.html>

¹⁸ Kelen, 10.

¹⁹ On-line Access <http://www.nobel.se/peace/laureates/1961/Hammarskjöld-bio.html>

In 1945, Hammarskjöld was appointed Advisor to the Cabinet and, in this position, began the important role of designing Sweden's financial policy. He was a leader of trade and financial negotiation with other countries and, in 1949, was appointed Secretary-General of the Foreign Office late joining the Cabinet as Minister. After World War II, when the United States offered to Europe the Marshall Plan (the plan for reconstruction of Europe), Hammarskjöld was working in Paris. It was there, in Paris of 1957, where Hammarskjöld became well acquainted with the mission of world organization.

Hammarskjöld later became Secretary-General of the United Nations in 1953 and was reelected to that post in 1957. As Secretary-General, Hammarskjöld drew up regulations defining his secretariats' responsibility and duty to the international organization. The members of the United Nations regarded Hammarskjöld with admiration and awe.²⁰ During his term, the United Nations engaged in multiple missions of arbitration regarding political crisis in the world including the declaration of independence in Africa resulting in the establishment of new countries that later brought about political upheaval, social disorder and additional wars. Also, due to the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, the role of mediation for the United Nations became more difficult.

As Secretary-General of the United Nations, one of the most difficult missions for Hammarskjöld was, in 1955, the negotiation for the release of American soldiers captured by the Chinese during the Korea War. Negotiation was extremely difficult because communists had seized power in China. Hammarskjöld and his party flew to Peking where they had several meetings with the Communist leaders. Later, after six months and many negotiations, the Chinese released the American soldiers. The mission to China was considered Hammarskjöld's first great accomplishment and assisted in establishing his position as an excellent negotiator

²⁰ Kelen, 20.

with the ability to resolve delicate problems. Hammarskjöld's activity as the Secretary-General involved him in many crises around the world. Later missions included the Middle East to aid in the cease-fire between Israel and the Arab states. Hammarskjöld's contributions toward resolving the matter resolving the matter resulted in a cease-fire agreement.²¹ However, this agreement was broken when the French and British attacked Egypt in 1956 (the Suez Crisis). Hammarskjöld and other nations' representatives agreed that the United Nations should abrogate the use of force thus resulting in the commission of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF). Later, in 1958, when the crises in Lebanon and Jordan escalated, Hammarskjöld established the United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon and the United Nations Office in Jordan.²²

Additional crises erupted during Hammarskjöld's years as Secretary-General. When revolutionists overthrew the Hungarian government, Hammarskjöld displayed concern for the Hungarian refugees and proposed that the United Nations Refugee Organization and the United National Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, which provided funds for the reconstruction of schools and education of refugee children), assist with relief.

In 1960, when the newly liberated government of the Congo faced mutiny from within their own army, Hammarskjöld directed the United Nations to resolve the issue by sending a peace force. Shortly after, in September of 1961, Hammarskjöld was traveling to the Congo for a personal conference with President Tshombe of Katanga when his plane crashed resulting in Hammarskjöld's death at the age of 56. In 1961, he was posthumously awarded the Nobel Prize of peace.

²¹ Kelen, 26.

²² On-line Access <http://www.nobel.se/peace/laureates/1961/Hammarskjöld-bio.html>

As Secretary-General, Hammarskjöld encountered many political crises and wars so he was diligent in promoting the idea of disarmament when there was crisis in the world. He knew disarmament was a complicated issue because, in general, people believed the military should be relied upon for national security. Hammarskjöld suggested a possible solution for disarmament in which some controls were organized and each party involved would then sign a disarmament treaty. In addition to Hammarskjöld's suggestion, President Eisenhower proposed establishing an international inspection zone in the Arctic. Hammarskjöld supported Eisenhower's proposal, but the Russians criticized it. Regarding the disarmament, Hammarskjöld said:

The statement in the field of disarmament has been permitted to last for too long. Attempts to break it through negotiations have so far proved of no avail. I think there are reasons of different kinds behind this deeply worrying failure. One is that in a sense governments have been too ambitious, not being satisfied with just making a dent in this intricate and vital problem form which a rift could develop, opening up the possibilities of a true exchange of views. Another reason has been to take the first step. Still another reason, and, of course, the basic one, is the crisis of trust from which all mankind is moving in a positive direction at their face value and a tendency to hold back a positive response of a fear of being misled... I hope that each one of government will wish to try out the line of trust as a way out of the disintegration and decline under which we now all suffer.²³

Besides the idea of disarmament, Hammarskjöld contributed to the development of ideas and plans regarding technical assistance, help for children, eradication of disease, and others. Hammarskjöld believed assistance should be provided by the United Nations and newly emerging nations to poor countries destroyed by crisis and war. Hammarskjöld lived with his belief that all men were equal as children of God. He explained his personal philosophy on a radio program:

From generation of soldiers and government officials on my father's side I inherited a belief that no life was more satisfactory than one of selfless service to your country or humanity. This service required a sacrifice of all personal interests, but likewise the courage to stand up unflinchingly for your convictions. From scholars and clergymen on my mother's side I inherited a belief that, in the very radical sense of the Gospels, all men

²³ Kelen, 47-48.

were equal as children of God, and should be met and treated by us as our masters on God.²⁴

Markings, Hammarskjöld's diary which contain notes from 1925 to 1961, was found after his death at his residence in New York along with a letter to his friend. The diary was written in the form of short essays and poetry. In 1964, it was translated into English and published by W. H. Auden and L. Sjöberg with the title *Markings*. Hammarskjöld's beliefs in neutrality and equilibrium, in helping the poor and weak countries, and solving problems between countries are clearly articulated in this diary. The recordings found in the diary also suggest pacification of his loneliness and sheer exhaustion.

Hammarskjöld described his diary as “a sort of *white book* concerning my *negotiations* with myself and with God.” The words, *white book* and *negotiations*, come from the latter part of his life, which was filled with political affairs; however, the book does not deal with political situations. The diary contains only reflections regarding his spiritual life.²⁵

Regarding the development of his spiritual life, Hammarskjöld offered two retrospections; 1) the contributions made by his parents and 2) the statements, “yes” and Jesus as “the hero of the Gospels.” A “yes” appears often in *Markings* translated as a “yes” to God, to himself, and to destiny.²⁶ Also, a “yes” reveals his struggles as a human being with his spiritual life.

Although Hammarskjöld received much praise and gratitude for his work as the Secretary-General of the United Nations, he strongly felt that for himself, his true focus was on his spirituality and belief in God, not worldly success. *Markings* contains written prose which

²⁴ Henderson, 8.

²⁵ Gustav Aulén, *Dag Hammarskjöld's White Book: An Analysis of "Markings,"* (Philadelphia Fortress Press, 1969), vii.

²⁶ Aulén, 5-8.

articulates his the sincere and authentic reflection on his spiritual life as well as his firm belief in God.

CHAPTER THREE

INTERPRETATION OF TEXT

Zaimont sets the difficult text by using the musical form of coherent scene by 1) repeating the one phrase “Night is drawing nigh”, and 2) introducing the alternation between atonal flux and tonal clarity. In Zaimont’s setting, there are haunting moments of darkness and turmoil, and beautiful moments of hope and clarity.

Hammarskjöld provides an opportunity to reconceptualize the meaning of “Night.” In the text of this music, the general concept of “Night” as affliction can be driven to despair and a frustration in one’s life. However, the author indicates that such a common view is not the true meaning of “Night.” Rather, the implication is made that “Night” is ever-changing.

Zaimont states her main focus to set the text as the following:

Throughout *Markings*, Hammarskjöld kept recurring notes about how night-time is fraught with menace or uncertainty, and how his faith sustained him, and strengthened in the day. Therefore, I crafted a single ‘journey’ through his “night-terror uncertainties,” conflating his continuing experience into ONE emblematic trip: Afternoon-Evening-Night-Next Morning.²⁷

In addition to using the word “Night” as a metaphor, Zaimont entitles “Night Soliloquy.” Used here, “soliloquy” is the convention by which characters speak their thoughts aloud when alone, thus communication to the audience their mental state, intentions, and motives. Hammarskjöld also uses this style of conversation throughout the script as a means of delivering his innermost thoughts to the audience because he knows that one speaks the absolute to ones. In addition, “soliloquy” is independent, free from other’s evaluation of oneself. Thus, “soliloquy” is the vehicle by which the author’s authentic thoughts are expressed.

²⁷ Judith Lang Zaimont, e-mail interview by author, 23 March 2005.

NIGHT AS DARKNESS

“Night is drawing nigh,”

“Night is drawing nigh.” How long the road is....

The road stretches ahead. Behind me it winds up in curves towards the house, a gleam in the darkness under the dense trees of the park. I know that, shrouded in the dark out there, people are moving, that all around me, hidden by the night, life is a-quiver.

“Night is drawing nigh.”

The pulley of time drags us inexorably forward towards
this last day.

Tomorrow we shall meet, Death and I –

And he shall thrust his sword

Into one who is wide awake.

(The pulley of time drags us forward.....)

I am driven forward

Into an unknown land.

A relief to think of this, to consider that there
is a moment without a beyond.

How seldom growth and blossom

How seldom fruit

Life

In dust

In shadow

“Night is drawing nigh.”

Day slowly bleeds to death.....

Into its now empty veins

Seeps the darkness.

Over.....are lit

Some silent stars.²⁸

In general, Hammarskjöld indicates that when experiences of the past stray into one's memory, tribulation, adverse circumstances, and life in the future might be viewed as hopeless

²⁸ The text is quoted from the following:

Judith Lang Zaimont, *Nattens Monolog (Night Soliloquy): Scena for Soprano Voice and Piano* (Amityville, NY: Brazinmusikanta Publications, 1984)

Dag Hammarskjöld, *Markings* (NY: Ballantine Books, 1993), 1, 2, 40, 50, 63, 68, 147.

and without vision. Specifically, he states that our worldview is rooted in pessimism. Including the memory of a difficult life in the past, is hopeless when thinking of tomorrow, and eventually, leads to death in the future. Therefore, in this case “Night” refers to the absence of a path ahead and is a negative connotation which is driving us into tomorrow’s death.

“Night,” when regarded as a negative ideal, suggests a pessimistic view of life in general and of tomorrow. Furthermore, “Night” indicates that it is not easy for people to escape from such a past because the past is unavoidably interwoven with the present as well as the future. The author describes this relationship (between the past, the present, and the future), as “the pulley of time.” “The pulley of time” implies two metaphors: 1) a convenient vehicle used to find a better tomorrow; and 2) a routine and measured life.

These metaphors signify that an effort to overcome an inconvenient life of the past intensively struggles with the present, which remains under the influence of the gloomy past even when we strive to achieve a peaceful life in the future. Due to the principle of the pulley, human beings try to over achieve and become greedy resulting in certain death. This selfishness and greediness stem from the fact that people seldom work together or cooperate in order to tow heavy things, but is interdependent on a rope. This attitude encourages the independence of individuals, and suggests working alone, not together.

The pulley represents time as routine and life as monotonous in that the pulley must move up and down only according to a predetermined regulation and pathway. These routine and monotonous days create a life of no motivation or self-satisfaction resulting in the non-existence of dreams. Likewise, one can compare an up and down pulley with “restless” and “rest.” As “restless” reaches to one end of the pulley rope, “rest” will rise to God. In addition, the idea of tomorrow existing as an unknown place, where death is waiting, is the place where no one

wishes to go. When considering the moment when there is no tomorrow but only death, human beings are filled with the sense of freedom, contentment, and acceptance. “Night” then becomes the instrument toward death. For this reason, a negative interpretation of “Night” and “tomorrow” prevents moments of enjoying the numerous benefits of life.

On the contrary, “Day”, as compared to “Night”, should be active and lively, showing great interest in life. However, “Day” is also heading toward death, albeit slowly, “...into its now empty veins.” At this point, the author attempts to change the concept of time as stemming from a negative meaning, but, rather, analyzes the integrative solution to negotiate the meaning between “Night” and “Day” as a spatial-temporal concept. In other words, human beings do not change their pessimistic view of “Day” leading to the “Night of death.” Instead, “Day” provides the light or motivation, the main thrust to the future.

NIGHT AS A TIME SEARCHING FOR THE SELF

Sleepless questions
In the small hours.....sleepless
-- when shall I confront my
Images, images –
 in life, in dream,
In art?

In a dream I walked with God through the deep
places of creation; past walls that receded
And gates that opened, through hall after hall
of silence, and refreshment -- the dwelling place
of souls -- until, around me, was an infinity
into which we all flowed together and lived anew.

One star --
The morning star.²⁹

²⁹Zaimont, *Nattens Monolog (Night Soliloquy): Scena for Soprano Voice and Piano*
Hammar skjöld, 60, 97, 100, 184.

Hammarskjöld now searches for the meaning of the “Night” by struggling to discover his own identity. The author searches for an answer through his belief in creation by God and believes that death for human beings is not the end, but the beginning. As a terminus of the principle of God’s creation, the author focuses on the idea that “Night” exists for “Day”, not “Day” for “Night”. This idea suggests that all aspects of life should be examined first through the past (“past walls that receded and gated that opened.”). Closed walls might suggest that reality is dark resulting in a future which may be regarded as the “Night,” bringing despair and oppression to all humanity. In contrast, the open gate offers nothing but the hopeful bright light of the future. Hammarskjöld stresses, at this point, that the door to heaven is open to everyone whose heart is open to God.

Zaimont considers that self-doubt also arises through night’s “dreams.” She states in her interview the following:

“Night” is certainly “darkness” and “the time for searching for the self.” But Self-Doubt also arises via night’s dreams. Equally in Dreams, however, is the promise of revelation, hope, sustenance, etc. that abiding Faith brings along with it.³⁰

The author then speaks of the morning star, suggesting it plays an important role in the changing of time from “Night” to “Day.” In the “Night”, the stars are silent, inactive or passive, and accepting the silence of “Night” (representing death). However, in contrast, the morning star is the star that urges the disappearance of the dark “Night.” The morning star acknowledges the reality that it will disappear and fade away into the morning yielding its seat to the morning light.

NIGHT AS HOPE

I awoke
To a new day.....
To.....Light without a visible source,
A new day.....
The seasons have changed

³⁰ Zaimont, e-mail interview.

And the light
And the weather
And the hour

Each day the first day: each day a life.
Each morning we must hold out the chalice of our
being to receive, to carry and give back.
Each day the first day: each day a life.

And if this day should be the last:
If “Night is drawing nigh”--

For all that has been -- thanks
To all that shall be -- Yes!
To all that shall be.³¹

Here, the author focuses on the idea that the only light seen through human eyes is not the representation of a new day, but, instead, a spiritual realization regarding the existence of God. Thus, the author awakes to a new day; the new day is the light, it is hope. A light such as this is to be seen through one’s mind’s eye when the principle of God’s creation has become clear. Likewise, each morning is not distorted and coloured in quality but is a fresh, new day. This is the life of humanity, to split infinitive fully each day even when the days may be heavy and painful. For this reason, humanity must be thankful to all that has been, regardless of the pain. Furthermore, the fate of all humanity is that we will walk the same path.

SUMMARY

In the statement, “Night is drawing nigh,” the author implies the meaning of “Night” as negative. Namely, “Night” is a pessimistic notion that may provide a difficult path to follow rather than a path filled with thankfulness and meaning. Furthermore, such a road ahead is nothing but a glimpse of “Night” in a dark “Night.”

³¹Zaimont, *Nattens Monolog (Night Soliloquy): Scena for Soprano Voice and Piano* Hammarskjöld, 50, 74, 126, 195.

Hammarskjöld contends that life is routine and tedious as if mechanical procedure, a “pulley in time.” Tomorrow is the “unknown land,” but it brings with it an absolute, the realization of God in life and that his absolute control over life is the most important belief.

Negative and passive understanding of “Night” can be transformed by a full awareness of the principle of God’s creation through reflection and questions about human ego. Namely, “Night” is not driven to death, but it is driven to the light, that is a new day. “Night” is not the path to death, but the invaluable time to recharge while preparing for rest and to welcome the new day God will grant. Thus, each day is not the last day, but the first day. This should be the pattern of life. This is what is meant by, “Night.” It is a period of time generously granted by God as the inner resource of humanity. “Night” is not waiting for the end but preparing for the start of a new tomorrow. It is not oppressed by fright and despair, instead, it emancipates human beings through reassurance and rest. As a result, “Night” does not suggest fear from living, but encourages endurance until the moment when God is seen. This confidence helps one to see each morning as the first day and a new day.

CHAPTER FOUR

NATTENS MONOLOG (NIGHT SOLILOQUY)

Commissioned by Arleen Auger, soprano, and Dalton Baldwin, pianist, *Nattens Monolog* was composed in 1984. Prior to Zaimont selecting a text or composing the music, she collected important information from the commissioners:

It was interesting for me to get to know her [Auger's] biography, to learn that religious feelings were important to her and very central to her life. Therefore, she wanted a text that would have spiritual meaning. She wanted a text that had twentieth-century relevance. [Also, Auger stated that] there should be no trills in a certain register, could be florid passages that ascended but descending passages would have to be [contained] within an interval of a certain sixth. She [Auger] would prefer no pitch speaking and the tessitura of the recitative-type portions should be within an interval of certain fourth. [In addition] the break area should be avoided and the high notes must be approached in a certain manner. The last requirement... was that the soprano preferred to have the piece developmental in form, fluid, flexible and not necessarily sectionally defined. The accompanist was also very definite about what sort of techniques I should use for the piano part. They wanted as much dramatic contrast as possible. The piece should come close to an operatic form yet still be a solo presentation without staging and costume. We ended up with a *scena*, *Nattens Monolog*.³²

Scena, from the Latin 'scaena', is a musical form found in nineteenth-century opera.

Scena is used as an episode in Italian opera and includes diverse elements such as recitative and aria. The scena, as a musical form, is a suitable genre for *Nattens Monolog* because it contains both recitative and aria to help create its dramatic effect. *Nattens Monolog* shows diverse moods through dynamic contrast, numerous tempo changes, rhythmic complexity, and wide-ranging variation of expression. Zaimont's setting of Hammarskjöld's text is coloristic, multileveled, emotion-filled, and well-constructed.³³ In addition, the musical setting reveals Zaimont's compositional style that includes musical characteristics of both the late nineteenth and

³² Linda McNeil, "The Vocal Solo Works of Judith Lang Zaimont: An Annotated Bibliography," (Ph.D.diss., Arizona State University, 1988), 98-99.

³³ McNeil, 105.

twentieth-centuries. The difficult vocal and piano lines create a complicated ensemble. The continually changing meters and tempos create fast and regular changes to the musical environment. This chapter will focus on several significant musical characteristics which are a part of Zaimont’s compositional style: 1) form, 2) total chromaticism (nearly twelve-tone), 3) shifting tonality, and 4) rhythmic features and meter changes.

FORM

Zaimont selects and reforms the text from Hammarskjöld’s *Markings*. The text of each section creates different moods within the music. The recurring statement, “Night is drawing nigh,” appears. By placing between each musical section and thus creates a rondo form which assists in the unification of the music. The musical form is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Formal Outline of *Nattens Monolog*: Rondo Form

SECTION	TEXT	MEASURE
INTRODUCTION	piano introduction & voice cadenza	1-9
A	Night is drawing nigh	10-15
B	How long the road is	16-51
A	Night is drawing nigh	52-55
C	The pulley of time	56-112
TANSITION	A relief to think of this	113-117
A	Night is drawing nigh	118-129
D	Questions, sleepless questions	130-173
TRANSITION	Until around me	174
A	One star the morning star	175-192
B	Each day the first day	193-201
A	And if this day should be the last	202-208
CODA	For all that has been, Thanks	209-215

Adding to the drama of the text, the vocal line creates an arch form in which the climax of each section of created through high tessitura and fortissimo dynamic. Example 1 demonstrates the arch form containing a high tessitura and fortissimo dynamics.

Example 1. mm. 72-82: Arch form, high tessitura, fortissimo dynamics as found in section C

In addition, contrary motion between the voice and piano provides even greater drama. Example 2 demonstrates the combination of the arch form and contrary motion found in mm. 129 and 162.

Example 2. mm. 129, 162: Arch form and contrary motion

TOTAL CHROMATICISM

Zaimont's use of total chromaticism in *Nattens Monolog*, using all twelve semitones, closely resembles the compositional techniques of twelve-tone row. Although highly chromatic, the tonality remains centered in B major. In addition, the octatonic and whole tone scales are present; however, Zaimont notes that if a passage seems to be octatonic, that is by accident. In her music, a constant resource is the twelve semitones of the total chromatic. Zaimont further explains that she does not start with scalar forms of any kind, nor does she go to any particular

lengths to keep them [the scale] intact, but “having the total chromatic at the ready, for usage, always is necessary.”³⁴

After the arpeggiated piano introduction, the voice enters on Db in a cadenza-like phase. The freely moving vocal line, uses all but one tone of the twelve semitones. For some reasons, the note ‘G’ is not included in the scheme of pitches and therefore, is not dodecaphonic, although greatly resembling the characteristics of dodecaphonic.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for voice and piano. The voice part is written on a single staff at the top, with the word "Voice" written to its left. The vocal line begins with a long note labeled "Ah" and is annotated with "enter freely - alla cadenza", "rhapsodic", and "loud". Below the voice staff, there are two piano staves. The upper piano staff contains arpeggiated figures and is marked with "mf" and "gradually dim.". The lower piano staff features a trill and is annotated with "trill sempre fast (dim.)" and "(Ped.)". There are also some numerical annotations like "9", "5", and "7" near the piano staves.

Example 3. m. 9: Opening cadenza-like vocal line

The melodic line first heard in mm. 10-15, on the words “Night is drawing nigh,” is a passage which will be heard later in the return of section A. The chromatic passage, centering

³⁴ Judith Lang Zaimont, e-mail interview by author, 23 March 2005.

around B major/minor as a tonal center, will be used throughout *Nettens Monolog* (Example 4a).

A modified version of the same melodic material is seen in mm 52-55 (Example 4b).

(a)

Slow, freely ($\text{♩} = 60-88$)
more intense, never loud

(v) Night is drawing

(p) trill fast trill slower (dim. al niente) never loud cascade loco

(Ped.) una corda

nigh. Night is draw - - ing

(b)

espressivo

molto f

molto

faster ($\text{♩} = 157-176$)

Night is drawing nigh.

sf

Example 4a. mm. 10-13 and 4b. mm. 52-56: Opening and return of chromatic vocal line outlining B major/minor as a tonal center

Similar passages are seen and heard in mm. 118-119 as well as mm. 207-208 where, again, a tonal center of B is emphasized through chromaticism. In addition, these passages contain common elements of voice leading and rhythmic notation.

(c)

(d)

Example 4c. mm. 116-119 and 4d. mm. 207-208: Additional vocal passages showing chromaticism, tonal center, and similarities in voice leading and rhythmic notation

SHIFTING TONALITY

The concept of a tonal center through total chromaticism is, at first glance, difficult to hear. The ambiguity in the chromatic harmony sonority is a major compositional characteristic in Zaimont's musical setting.

The tonal centers arise and move quickly through atonal flux and chromaticism. Beginnings and endings of each section have the tonal centers listed in Table 2, but in between is flux.

Table 2. Tonal Centers

MEASURE	TONAL CENTER & CADENCE
1-15	B minor-G# minor
16-55	G# minor-D# minor
56-113	G minor-G major
114-118	B major
119-130	F major
131-174	F minor-Ab major-A major-B major-F minor-F major
175-188	E minor
189-215	E major-B major

In contrast to the chromaticism, Zaimont creates a diatonic approach in the recitative sections of the music (Example 5). She purposefully uses diatonic music for the assertions of faith and the comfort that faith can provide. This is to contrast to the more psychologically anguished chromatic music found in the "Night is drawing nigh" motif.³⁵ Occasionally, the diatonic seems to suggest church modes.

³⁵ Zaimont, e-mail interview by author, 6 April 2005.

Example 5. mm. 113-114: Diatonic, recitative section

RHYTHMIC FEATURES AND METER CHANGES

Another distinguishing characteristics of Zaimont's compositional style is the use of complicated rhythms combined with fast meter changes. The established norm of regularly recurring pulses is subdivided into groupings of two or three. The most common of these is that of asymmetric meter such as 4/5, 7/8, or composite meter such as 3+3+2/8.³⁶ In this music, in addition to the use of regular meters such as 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 2/2, and 2/6; asymmetric meters 5/7 and 7/8 are used, all occurring frequently. In addition, polymeter, the notation of two or more

³⁶ Stefan Kostka & Dorothy Payne, *Tonal Harmony: With an Introduction to Twentieth-Century Music* (NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), 477.

meters simultaneously, found in which the effect of the passage implies lack of barlines as well as describes the gloomy mood of the text.

Handwritten musical score for Example 6, mm. 120-127. The score is in 3/4 time and features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line includes lyrics: "Day slowly bleeds to death. Into its now empty veins Seeps the dark-ness." The piano part is marked "Più Mosso (♩ = 84-92)" and "mf molto legato". The score shows complex rhythmic patterns, including grace notes, trills, and groupings. The piano part is marked with "lh. uneasy", "ben P", "lh. en dehors", "cresc.", "poco f", "sopra", "dim.", and "ben P". The vocal line is marked with "sopra" and "ben P".

Example 6. mm. 120-127: Polymeter

Complicated rhythms predominate, especially in the piano part. Several recurring rhythmic figures are seen in both the voice and piano parts: grace notes, trills, groupings notes, arpeggiated figurations, and extended half note passages. Zaimont is motivated to use these rhythms for two reasons: 1) conflict is conveyed through complexity of rhythm, and 2) assertions of truth, comfort, and positive statements are conveyed through simple, declarative music.³⁷

The fast tempo and precise rhythmic articulation required in sections B and C highlight

³⁷ Zaimont, e-mail interview.

the meaning of the text which speaks of struggle and darkness. The extended half note passages develop into quickly moving musical statements when the text expresses hope.

(a)

road is. The road stretches a-head. Be-hind-me it winds
up in curves towards the house, a gleam in the dark - - ness

pointed worried
poco f
sub.
poco ff
fine

Example 7a. mm. 29-40: Passage illustrating change in rhythmic pulse, paired with a fast tempo, to highlight text. Example found in section B

(b)

Handwritten musical score for Example 7b, mm. 57-70, section C. The score consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows a vocal line with lyrics "The pulley, the pulley of time ——— drags us in--" and a piano accompaniment. The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics "ex-orably for--- ward towards this last day. To morrow—" and piano accompaniment. The third system shows the piano accompaniment continuing. The score includes various performance markings such as "rhythmic", "molto f", "well accented", "sfffz", "ff", "poco f", "ben", and "ff". There are also handwritten annotations like "Lh." and "5-5".

Example 7b. mm. 57-70: section C (same explanation as 7a)

(c)

Come Maestoso

209 For all that has been: Thanks!, To' all that

shall be: Yes!, To all

that shall be.

Example 7c. mm. 209-215: Music highlighting text as “hope”

Zaimont's use of these rhythmic features assists in creating a musical texture of material exists simultaneously, resulting in the effect of hovering and uncertainty.³⁸ The ultimate goal is to portray the text through exaggerated means by which a concise portrayed is created through the musical setting.

³⁸ Kostka & Payne, 480.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Judith Lang Zaimont's *Nattens Monolog (Night Soliloquy)* is a well-crafted composition. The music is filled with the composer's source of inspiration, rich chromatic harmonic language based on tonality, and diverse rhythmic features. Zaimont's total chromatic language seems appropriate for the subject, "Night" enhancing the ambiguity of the text. Her clever use of instrumental color frequently appears in the piano accompaniment.

Hammar skjöld's text is drawn in the *scena* through Zaimont's profound knowledge and poetic inspiration. The progression of the meaning of "Night," from "darkness" to "hope," is portrayed by the wide range of emotional and dramatic expression. The graceful and elegant piano accompaniment supports the exuberant and dramatic vocal line. Both lines frequently shift tonality and use frequent, fast meter changes creating a wide variety of moods. The use of rich chromaticism describes in a musical sense, the struggle with uncertainty in the lives of human beings. As Zaimont mentioned in her interview, "the rhythmic figure is carried away according to the meaning and nuance of the text; conflict via complexity, and positive aspect via simple and declarative music."³⁹

A musical analysis seems to suggest that *Nattens Monolog (Night Soliloquy)* is atonal music, however, Zaimont states that she does not use any scalar forms in this music, that she has never been, and will never be, a serial composer.⁴⁰ She is always a tonal composer, using the twelve possible semitones in the service of the proportion of a tonal center.

³⁹ Judith Lang Zaimont, e-mail interview by author, 6 April 2005.

⁴⁰ Zaimont, e-mail interview.

Nattens Monolog (Night Soliloquy) is difficult to perform. It requires the highest level of technical skills from the singer and pianist, a thorough knowledge of musical interpretation, and a wide range of expression. Zaimont offers interpretive ideas in the musical score by providing the performance indicators, specifying the quality of expression (i.e. “somewhat stern,” “pointed,” “worried,” etc.) which she would like from the performers.⁴¹

Critics have called Zaimont’s vocal music: dramatic, theatrical, effective; a fascinating variation of expressions, powerful, an inspired chromatic language, bright, imaginative, and a unique contribution to contemporary song.⁴² *Nattens Monolog (Night Soliloquy)* is the work in which these characteristics are well expressed.

⁴¹ Linda McNeil, “The Vocal Solo Works of Judith Lang Zaimont: An Annotated Bibliography.” (Ph.D.diss., Arizona State University, 1988), 110.

⁴² On-line Access <http://www.jzaimont.com>

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF VOCAL WORKS OF JUDITH LANG ZAIMONT⁴³

<i>Four Songs for Mezzo-Soprano and Piano</i> -anyone lived in a pretty how town -three wealthy sisters -the sky -most people	e.e.cummings	1965
<i>Coronach</i> for Soprano and Piano	Doris Kosloff, Adelaide Crapsey, Stephen Crane Judith Lang Zaimont, William Smith	1970
<i>The Age of Love</i> for Baritone and Piano -Chaste Love (Byron) -Love's White Heat (Millay) -Disdainful, Fickle Love (Millay) -An Older Love (Millay) -Love's Echo (Rossetti)		1971
<i>Chansons Nobles et Sentimentales</i> for High Voice and Piano -Harmonie du Soir (Baudelaire) -Chanson d'Automne (Verlaine) -Clair de Lune (Verlaine) -Dans l'Interminable ennui de la plaine (Verlaine) -Depart (Rimbaud)		1974
<i>Songs of Innocence</i> for Soprano, Tenor, Flute, Cello, Harp -Piping Down the Valley Wild -Elegy: The Garden of Love -I Asked a Thief -How Sweet I Roam'd	William Blake	1974
<i>Grayed Sonnets: Five Serious Songs</i> for Soprano and Piano -Soliloquy (Millay) -Let It Be Forgotten (Teasdale) -A Season's Song (Millay) -Love's Autumn (Millay) -Entreaty (Rossetti)		1975
<i>A Woman of Valor</i> for Mezzo-Soprano and String Quartet	Proverbs 31	1977
<i>Psalms 23</i> for Baritone (Mezzo-Soprano), Flute, Violin, Cello, Piano		1978

⁴³ This list was compiled in Zaimont's online catalogue: <http://www.jzaimont.com>

<i>Two Songs for Soprano and Harp</i>		1978
-At Dusk in Summer (Rich)		
-The Ruined Maid (Hardy)		
<i>The Magic World: Ritual Music for Three</i>	American Indian Texts	1979, 1980
-First Flower Song		
-Firefly Song		
-Storm Song		
-A Spell to Destroy Life		
-Second Flower Song		
-Elegy Dream Song		
<i>High Flight for High Voice and Piano</i>	John Gillespie Magee, Jr.	1980
<i>From the Great Land: Woman's Songs</i>	Frank Buske	1982
for Mezzo-Soprano, Clarinet, Piano		
-She is Left on the Ice		
-Passion: The First Dream		
-Lullaby: he Second Dream		
-Counting Song: The Third Dream		
-Lament-Interlude-Lullaby		
-Vision		
-She Dies		
<i>Deep Down-A Spiritual for Medium Voice and Piano</i>	Judith Lang Zaimont	1982
<i>Aria: Ashes are the bread I eat for Mezzo-Soprano and Piano</i>	from "Lamentation"	1983
<i>New-Fashioned Songs for Low Voice and Piano</i>		1983
-Fair Daffodils (Herrick)		
-When, Dearest (Sucking)		
-The Eagle (Tennyson)		
-It is a Beauteous Evening (Wordsworth)		
-The Host of the Air (Yeats)		
<i>In the Theatre of Night for High Voice and Piano</i>	Karl Shapiro	1983
<i>Scena: Nattens Monolog for Soprano and Piano</i>	Dag Hammarskjöld	1984
<i>Scena: Will's Words</i>	Shakespeare Texts	1990
<i>Vessels: Rhapsody for Mezzo-Soprano and Piano</i>	Rosalyn Roffman	1991

APPENDIX B
LETTER OF PERMISSION

April 20, 2005

To: Judith Lang Zaimont
Attn: Jeffrey W. James
316 Pacific Street
Massapequa Park, NY, 11762

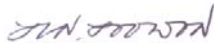
Dear Ms. Zaimont

I am a candidate for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Louisiana State University. Having completed work on my written document, "The Compositional Style of Judith Lang Zaimont as Found in Nattens Monolog (Night Soliloquy), Scena for Soprano Voice and Piano with Text by Dag Hammarskjöld," I am requesting your permission to reproduce and use the following measures from your score.

mm. 1-8, 9, 10-15, 16-42, 52-55, 56-89, 90-112, 113-114, 116-119, 120-128, 129, 162-163, 174, 193-201. 207-215.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

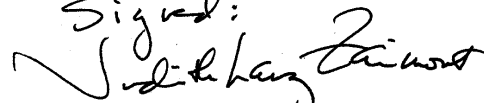


Joo Won Jun
12730 Roan Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA, 70810

→ April 29, 2005

Permission is granted to reproduce
excerpts cited above from my
composition NATTENS MONOLOG.

Signed:



JUDITH LANG ZAIMONT

VITA

Joo Won Jun was born in 1972 in Suwon, Korea, adjacent to Seoul, the capital of Korea. She grew up in Christian family and graduated NamChang Elementary School in Suwon, followed by MaeHyang Middle School and ChangHyun High School in the same city. She continued her study in voice and earned Bachelor of Music degree from Ewha Womans University in Seoul in 1995. In addition, she studied voice at Ewha Womans University Graduate School where she earned Master of Music degree in 1995 and 1996, during which time she worked as a teaching assistance. She was awarded a prize in the Joong-Ang Competition which is the best music competition in Korea.

Since she completed all courses for Master of Music degree, she was admitted to the School of Music at Louisiana State University, located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and started her doctoral study with Dr. Lori Bade. While she was studying her doctoral study, she received the scholarship from Baton Rouge Opera Guild and Richness Fund Scholarship. After completing the all courses for doctoral degree at Louisiana State University, she returned to Korea to write her doctoral dissertation. While writing the dissertation, she has taught voice major students at Ewha Womans University and KayWon High School of Arts. Furthermore, she had her own solo recital at Seoul and had many ensembles and operas (*La Bohème, Così fan tutte, Hansel and Gretel, Carmen, L'Elisir d'Amore*, etc.) in Korea. Joo Won Jun will receive the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts at the Summer Commencement, 2005.