DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE:

CREATING ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

FOR DEVELOPING SINGERS

by

ABIGAIL AMANDA HEAD

(Under the Direction of ELIZABETH J. KNIGHT)

ABSTRACT

Performance experience is crucially important for undergraduate singers. Gaining performance experience requires access to opportunities that are well-suited to developing voices. Current trends in university programs show a pattern of producing operas that are not well-suited to the pedagogical development of undergraduate singers. *Down the Rabbit Hole* was created to provide opportunities while fostering collaboration between the composers, vocalists, conductor, and collaborative pianist. Through the production of this work, musicians created a performance that was premiered for an audience spanning from pre-school-aged children through senior adults. Not only did this create performance opportunities for undergraduate music majors, but it fostered a relationship with a younger local audience.

INDEX WORDS: Undergraduate Opera Performance, Operatic Adaptation, Alice's

Adventures in Wonderland, Undergraduate Vocal Performance, Down the

Rabbit Hole

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE:

CREATING ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

FOR DEVELOPING SINGERS

by

ABIGAIL AMANDA HEAD

BM, Samford University, 2016

MM, The Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University, 2020

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2023

Abigail Amanda Head

All Rights Reserved

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE:

CREATING ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

FOR DEVELOPING SINGERS

by

ABIGAIL AMANDA HEAD

Major Professor: Committee: Elizabeth J. Knight

Emily Koh

Frederick Burchinal

Daniel Ellis

Electronic Version Approved:

Ron Walcott Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School The University of Georgia August 2023

DEDICATION

Down the Rabbit Hole would not exist without the idea from Brandon LaReau, who inspired this whole project one night over dinner. Someday you will sing the Caterpillar, Brandon. The opera also would not have happened without the composers Bryan Michael Wysocki and Julien Berger, our collaborative pianist Alyssa Soriano, our conductor Erika Tazawa, and all the singers:

Lauren LaBarre – Alice Spencer Kenyon – White Rabbit Bella Castaño – Queen of Hearts Tanner Dziedzic – King of Hearts Kalissa Hernandez – Knave of Hearts Brooks Todd – Mad Hatter Sadie Hammond – March Hare Houston VanLandingham – Caterpillar John Drake – Cheshire Cat Theo Schramm – Mouse/Card Soldier Presley Dale – Duck/Bill/Card Soldier Maddie Alexander – Dodo/Card Soldier

This project would also not have been possible without the help and support of my teachers and advisors, all of whom encouraged and helped me in innumerable ways. Thank you for your support and your help making this dream a reality.

I'd like to thank my family. Mom and Dad, you've been incredibly supportive and encouraging, helping me in ways I never thought to ask for and I would not be here without you. Tori, Kyle, Penelope, Michael, and Evelyn, thank you for the phone calls, silly memes, and for constantly asking if there will be live streaming you can watch. And thank you to my wonderful husband. Luis, you are a dream, and your encouragement means the world to me.

Lastly and most importantly, I want to thank God. He gave me my voice and has blessed me with so many opportunities to use it. For years, my musical motto has been that of Bach: Soli Deo Gloria. To God alone be the glory.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
LIST OF	TABLES	viii
LIST OF	FIGURES	ix
СНАРТЕ	R	
1	CREATING PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEVELOPING	
	VOICE	1
2	TRENDS IN UNIVERSITY PRODUCTIONS	4
	Analyzing the Pedagogical Suitability of Operatic Repertoire for Developing	
	Voices	7
3	CREATING DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE	21
	Adaptations of Wonderland	21
	Libretto Writing Process	24
	Compositional Process	26
	Casting and Directing	31
	Performances	43
4	PEDAGOGICAL BENEFITS OF DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE	47
	Accompaniment	47
	Characterization/Acting Demands	50
	Musical Considerations	53
	Vocal Phrasing	55

	Range/Tessitura	57
	Text Setting	61
	Cast Feedback	63
5	IMPLICATIONS OF DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE	65
	Outreach Implications	66
	Impact of Down the Rabbit Hole	68
REFERE	NCES	70
APPENI	DICES	
A	DETAILED OPERA RUBRICS	74
В	DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE RUBRICS	80
C	CATALOGUE OF COSTUMES	85
D	CATALOGUE OF PROPS AND SET PIECES	85
E	DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE PROPOSED REHEARSAL SCHEDULE	86
E	DOWN THE PARRIT HOLF DIANO/VOCAL SCORE WITH INTRODUCTION	87

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 2.1: Compilation of Operas Done by Various Institutes of Higher Learning	4
Table 2.2: Detailed Grading Scale from Arneson's Rubric	9
Table 2.3: Final Scores for Operas Analyzed with Rubric	13
Table 2.4: Character Classifications in <i>Le dernier sorcier</i>	19
Table 3.1: Character Breakdown from Initial Creative Meeting for <i>Down the Rabbit Hole</i> .	28
Table 3.2: Sample of Student Evaluation in Graded Juries at the University of Georgia	32
Table 4.1: Accompaniment Results for <i>Down the Rabbit Hole</i>	50
Table 4.2: Characterization/Acting Demands Results for <i>Down the Rabbit Hole</i>	53
Table 4.3: Musical Considerations Results for <i>Down the Rabbit Hole</i>	55
Table 4.4: Vocal Phrasing Results for <i>Down the Rabbit Hole</i>	57
Table 4.5: Vocal Ranges from "Voice Classifications An Examination of Methodology"	57
Table 4.6: Range/Tessitura Results for <i>Down the Rabbit Hole</i>	61
Table 4.7: Text Setting Results for <i>Down the Rabbit Hole</i>	63

LIST OF FIGURES

Page
Figure 2.1: Rubric 4 from Arneson's Literature for Teaching
Figure 2.2: List of Characters and Voice Types in <i>Hansel and Gretel</i> 14
Figure 2.3: Mother's Vocal Line Excerpt from Amahl and the Night Visitors
Figure 2.4: Excerpt of the Narrator's Lines in <i>The Hiding Tree</i>
Figure 2.5: List of Characters and Voice Types in <i>Albert Herring</i>
Figure 3.1: Alice's Shrinking Music
Figure 3.2: Alice's Growing Music
Figure 3.3: White Rabbit's Running Music
Figure 3.4: Queen of Hearts' Beheading Music
Figure 3.5: Graphic Depiction for Directing
Figure 3.6: Directing Graph for Scene 2 of <i>Down the Rabbit Hole</i>
Figure 3.7: Directing Graph for Scene 7 of <i>Down the Rabbit Hole</i>
Figure 3.8: Image of Alice in Premier Performance
Figure 3.9: Image of Flamingo Croquet Mallets
Figure 3.10: Mad Tea Party
Figure 3.11: Cheshire Cat Backstage
Figure 3.12: Caterpillar Wisdom
Figure 3.13: Image of Lyndon House Arts Center Performance Space
Figure 3.14: Image of Ramsey Recital Hall from <i>Down the Rabbit Hole</i> Performance

Figure 4.1: Alice's Falling Music	48
Figure 4.2: Helpful Accompaniment for Caterpillar Wisdom	49
Figure 4.3: Croquet Chorus Meter Changes	50
Figure 4.4: Meter Change Pattern in Caterpillar Wisdom Aria	54
Figure 4.5: Optional Low Note for Caterpillar	59
Figure 4.6: Ascending Scale to High Final Notes	60
Figure 4.7: Sustained Monosyllables Sung by Caterpillar	62

CHAPTER 1

Creating Performance Opportunities for the Developing Voice

Teaching music from the standard repertoire is commonplace and expected as part of the undergraduate experience in most university music programs. However, much of the standard repertoire music is composed for professional musicians or musicians with virtuosic talent. In vocal and operatic programs, this results in a number of productions that are not well-suited to the vocal development of an undergraduate singer. One way university programs can counteract this conundrum is by utilizing works that incorporate elements from the standard repertoire, such as tonality, characterization, and text setting, but are explicitly written for developing voices. Not only do works such as this provide opportunities for undergraduate singers, but they create new outreach opportunities for university programs.

Many university-level opera seasons include canonical works that will appeal to donors and audiences familiar with opera. These operas often feature demanding music with wide vocal ranges, challenging articulation and dynamic markings, detailed character development, and heavy orchestration. Given these musical challenges, universities with significant graduate student populations rely on the further developed voices of graduate students to take on these roles. Many such productions exclude undergraduate singers whose voices do not have the technical foundation to take on full roles from canonical works. However, works are available that feature lighter orchestrations, reasonably challenging music, and shorter performance times that could provide opportunities for undergraduate performers and engage current donors and new community members.

Some such productions include Giancarlo Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, and Pauline Viardot's *Le dernier sorcier*. These works feature lighter accompaniments or commonly used piano reductions and a variety of role sizes for various levels of vocal ability. New works, such as *The Hiding Tree* by Edward Barnes, also fulfill these criteria, featuring piano-only instrumentation and varying levels of challenge among the available roles.

To provide a work that fits all the criteria mentioned above, I collaborated with two composers to create *Down the Rabbit Hole*, a one-act opera in English that tells the tale of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. This work features nine scenes and sixteen characters, each written for an undergraduate vocalist. Performance and non-performance majors at the University of Georgia were cast in the original production, which took place in 2022. *Down the Rabbit Hole* was designed to appeal to new opera audiences, especially grade-schoolaged children. This production fostered communication between performers and their audience members while creating opportunities for undergraduate singers.

I was able to experience all facets of opera production, working in the following capacities: librettist, director, producer, stage manager, music director, costume designer, props master, and community liaison for facilitating performances. The premiere of this opera provided a preprofessional experience for the musicians involved, including working with a professional conductor and collaborative pianist. The project allowed the singers to create full roles and explore what their voices could bring to the story within the safety of a university setting where their vocal development is prioritized. The performances drew local audience members from preschool-aged children to senior adults. This document details the creation of *Down the Rabbit*

Hole and how other universities and young artist programs could use this opera to create opportunities for new audiences and pre-professional singers.

CHAPTER 2

Trends in University Productions

This project was born out of a desire to make operatic performance more accessible for undergraduate students. A brief examination of the works performed in university programs over the last five years demonstrates a repetitive nature in production selections, many of which feature roles that are not ideal for developing voices. This study considered three types of schools: 1. Conservatories and elite schools with large graduate student populations, 2. Large schools with significant graduate student populations, and 3. Smaller schools and state schools catering primarily to undergraduate students. Though not a comprehensive list, the following table shows nine schools within these three categories.

Table 2.1 Compilation of operas done by various institutes of higher learning. Information regarding opera performances at varying levels of institutions from 2018 through 2023 was gathered from the websites of these institutions.¹

Category 1	University of Cincinnati-	2018 – The Turn of the Screw
	College Conservatory of Music	2019 – The Bartered Bride
		2021 – The Marriage of Figaro
		2022 – Orpheus in the Underworld
		2022 – Dialogues of the Carmelites
		2023 - Agrippina
Category 1	The Juilliard School	2018 – The Turn of the Screw
		2019 - Dido and Aeneas, Don Giovanni, Così
		fan tutte
		2020 – Rinaldo, La bohème, There's Blood
		Between Us*, Orfeo
		2021 – The Rake's Progress, Die lustigen
		Weiber von Windsor
		2022 – Atalanta
		2023 – King Arthur
		*Specifically denoted as Undergraduate Opera
		Production

¹ University of Cincinnati, The Juilliard School, et al.

-

Category 1	New England Conservatory	2018 – Little Red Riding Hood, Candide
		2019 – Postcard from Morocco, Suor
		Angelica, Gianni Schicchi, The Marriage of
		Figaro
		2020 – La Calisto, La bohème
		2021 – Dialogues of the Carmelites, Il re
		pastore, La voix humaine
		2022 – The Turn of the Screw, L'enfant et les
		sortilèges, Dido and Aeneas, Die Fledermaus,
		Don Pasquale
		2023 – Così fan tutte*, L'arbore di Diana,
		The Magic Flute, Hansel and Gretel
		*Specifically denotes One Act Performance
		by undergraduate singers
Category 2	University of Miami Frost	2019 – The Light in the Piazza, Black Lives,
	School of Music	Excerpts from Orfeo ed Euridice, L'enfant et
		les sortilèges
		2020 – L'amico Fritz, Der Schauspieldirektor
		2021 – A series of seven short operas
		including: Les malheurs d'Orphée, Hin und
		Zurück, A Hand of Bridge, Excerpts from The
		Four Note Opera, Opera 101, Fox Fables,
		Scrapbookers; In a Grove
		2023 – The Marriage of Figaro
Category 2	James Madison University	2022 – The Rake's Progress,
		2023 – L'incoronazione di Poppea
		Previous productions also include the
		following:
		The Merry Widow, Così fan tutte, Suor
		Angelica, The Medium, Elixir of Love, Pirates
		of Penzance, and The Magic Flute
Category 2	The University of Texas	2018 – La clemenza di Tito
	-	2019 – The Women, The Telephone, Trouble
		in Tahiti, Eugene Onegin, Don Giovanni,
		Mansfield Park
		2020 – The Turn of the Screw
		2021 – Audition Fever (World Premier)*,
		L'elisir d'amore
		2022 – Der Kaiser von Atlantis, Carmen
		2023 – Proving Up
		*Denotes an entirely undergraduate cast

Category 3	Mercer University	2021 – Le dernier sorcier		
	,	2022 – Gilbert and Sullivan Gala		
		2023 – Nunsense!		
		Past performances include the following:		
		L'Egisto, Gondoliers, Pirates of Penzance,		
		The Magic Flute, Iolanthe, Alcina, The Merry		
		Widow, and Così fan tutte		
Category 3	Christopher Newport	2018 – Gianni Schicchi		
	University	2019 – Pirates of Penzance		
	-	2020 – The Tender Land		
		2021 – Mostly Mozart Aria Night		
		2022 – The Magic Flute		
Category 3	The University of Mississippi	2022 – Scenes from Carmen, Die Zauberflöte,		
		L'elisir d'amore, Hamlet, Cendrillon,		
		Sweeney Todd, Into the Woods, and A		
		Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder		
		2023 – Alcina		
		Past performances include the following:		
		The Light in the Piazza, Albert Herring,		
		L'enfant et les sortilèges, La finta giardiniera,		
		and L'elisir d'amore		

Operas such as *The Turn of the Screw, L'enfant et les sortilèges*, and *Così fan tutte* were all performed by at least three schools in this overview. Selecting well-known operas such as these could result from a partnership with a local opera company, donor requests, or current trends in the national and international opera world. However, even a cursory examination of some of this repertoire demonstrates the vocal demands that make these works less suitable for undergraduate singers. For example, *Così fan tutte* was performed in its entirety by three of the schools in this study. This opera features incredible vocal demands for most characters, including wide ranges, high tessituras, physical stamina, and specific characterization challenges. The soprano aria "Come scoglio" provides a succinct example of these challenges. In this aria, the soprano must be capable of navigating a wide range while maintaining flexibility throughout the range due to Mozart's use of melismatic passages. In a few measures, the soprano moves from B3 to C6 through a series of leaps and scales, utilizing long sustained pitches, coloratura, and both chest

and head registers. These challenges make many such roles ill-suited for undergraduate singers still establishing foundational vocal techniques.

Alternatively, some of the operas found in this study are particularly pedagogically beneficial for developing voices. For example, such works as Pauline Viardot's *Le dernier sorcier* and Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* feature a small cast, a relatable story, an approachable text, and accessible music well suited to the developing voice. A categorical study demonstrating a particular piece's musical challenges and benefits would help establish a list of repertoire that better serve undergraduate singers.

Analyzing the Pedagogical Suitability of Operatic Repertoire for Developing Voices

To assess the difficulty of operatic repertoire, I employed the framework developed by Christopher Arneson in *Literature for Teaching*. Arneson provides several rubrics that help to evaluate the relative accessibility or suitability of a piece for singers of varying skill levels. Though Arneson's rubrics are intended for individual songs, the content on each rubric can be applied to a full-length opera. Arneson's chart, shown in Figure 2.1, provided a foundation to evaluate the following operas: *Hansel and Gretel, Amahl and the Night Visitors, The Hiding Tree*, and *Albert Herring*. Though not included as a production done by one of the sampled universities, *The Hiding Tree* was included as an example because it allows for an analysis of a contemporary composition featuring piano accompaniment.

Rubric 4 Rubric for Grading Repertoire

Scale of 1-5

Total score: 12-28 points easy, 28-44 points moderate, 44-60 points difficult

Technical Issue	Problem Solving Questions	Scale
Addressed		1-5
Accompaniment	Is the accompaniment utilitarian, supportive, independent, etc.?	
	Is the accompaniment part of the story line?	
	Is the accompaniment descriptive (e.g. water figures, spinning wheel)?	
Characterization/acting	Is the character appropriate to the student's dramatic capacity or life experiences?	
	Will the student benefit from portraying this type of character?	
Diction/articulation	Consideration of challenging consonant clusters.	
Section 2015 in the Burk of the Section ■ Performance of the Section Country of the Self-defined Section Country	Closed position or difficult consonants on challenging pitches?	
	Student's knowledge of French, Italian, Russian, German, etc. language	
	or diction?	
Dynamics	Is the singer expected to sing a pianissimo high note?	
	Are the markings pedagogically helpful (e.g. crescendo on held notes to assist in	
	breath energy and/or vibrancy)?	
Melismatic phrases	Beginning or advanced melismas/melismatic phrases present?	
Manage and the second s	Appoggiatura? Dotted rhythms?	
Musical considerations	Through composed? Strophic? Accessible harmonic language?	
Set 10 to the deposit of the About Court of the Court of	Tonal? An enjoyable melody?	
Range/tessitura	How are high notes approached (e.g. dramatically)? Is the range too vast?	
0,	Is the tessitura too low or high? Can a young singer sit in that particular part of the	
	voice for that long without fatiguing?	
Registration	Does the piece assist in working through passaggio issues?	
•	Will the student carry weight up? Helpful vowels in an underdeveloped part of the	
	student's voice? Etc.	
Respiration	Are phrase lengths accessible?	
	Will the breaths allow for renewal of positioning?	
Text setting	Syllabic, Patter Song, Lyric?	
	Does the text setting assist in memorization?	
Vowels &	Observation of vowels in passaggio.	
vowel sequences	Will vowel patterns assist in correcting vocal faults?	
vower sequences	Front to back, tongue position, etc.?	
Words:	Is this accessible poetry?	
Poetry/lyrics/libretto	Is the story age appropriate?	
r detry/tyrics/libretto	Will the text make the memorization process difficult?	
Total score:		

Figure 2.1 Rubric 4 from Arneson's Literature for Teaching.²

Table 2.2 provides guidelines for assigning numeric values within each category scale in the modified rubric. The score given to each opera is shown in Table 2.3. A detailed rubric for each opera can be found in Appendix A.

_

² Christopher Arneson and Lauren Athey-Janka, *Literature for Teaching: A Guide for Choosing Solo Vocal Repertoire from a Developmental Perspective* (Delaware, OH: Inside View Press, 2014), 15.

Table 2.2 Detailed grading scale from Arneson's rubric.

Accompaniment	1 − Light,	2 – Light to	3 – Moderate	4 – Moderate	5 – Heavy
	tonal	moderate	accompani-	to heavy	accompani-
	accompani-	tonal	ment that	accompani-	ment using
	ment that	accompani-	supports the	ment using a	a full
	bolsters the	ment	melodic line	full orchestra.	orchestra
	melodic line.	featuring	but features a	Melodic	with little
	No heavy	some	significant	support from	melodic
	accompani-	chromaticism	amount of	one	support.
	ment during	or extra-	chromaticism	instrument	Sometimes
	sung moments	melodic	and	and significant	atonal or
	and no	figures. No	occasional	amounts of	featuring
	significant	heavy	heavy	chromaticism	primarily
	chromatic or	accompani-	accompani-	or ornament-	chromatic
	harmonic	ment during	ment during	ation within	movement.
	jumps.	sung	ensemble	the	Heavy
	Primarily	moments.	singing. Large	orchestration.	accompani-
	piano or small	Primarily	chamber	Some heavy	ment during
	chamber	chamber	ensemble or	orchestration	multiple
	ensemble.	accompani-	full orchestra.	during sung	solo
		ment.		moments.	moments.
Characterization/	1 – Little to no	2 – One to	3 – Roughly	4 - More than	5 – Almost
Acting Demands –	physical or	two characters	half of the	half of the	all
Extremes in this	emotional	that feature	characters	characters	characters
case are considered	demands that	emotional or	require	require	require
different age,	are outside of	physical	emotional or	emotional or	emotional
different social	the life	extremes for a	physical	physical	or physical
class, different	experience of	typical under-	extremes for a	extremes for a	extremes for
species, different	a typical	graduate	typical under-	typical under-	a typical
gender, etc	undergraduate	singer.	graduate	graduate	under-
	singer.		singer.	singer.	graduate
					singer.

Diction/	1 – Few to no	2 – Some	3 –	4 –	5 –
Articulation	challenging	challenging	Challenging	Challenging	Challenging
	words, vowels,	words,	words, vowel	words, vowel	words, vowel
	or consonant	vowels, or	placement, or	placement, or	placement, or
	clusters within	consonant	consonant	consonant	consonant
	the libretto.	clusters	clusters in	clusters in	clusters in
	Libretto is	within the	most numbers	most numbers	most numbers
	written in a	libretto.	within the	within the	within the
	language	Libretto is	libretto.	libretto.	libretto. The
	native to most	written in a	Libretto is in a	Libretto is not	libretto is in a
	or all singers	language that	non-native	written in the	non-romance
	within a	is native to	language for	native	or non-
	program.	most singers	most singers in	language of	traditional
		within a	a program, but	most singers	language that
		program or is	is written in a	in a program	is not a native
		written in a	romance	and features	language for
		romance language.	language	non-traditional or non-	most singers within a
		language.		romance	
				language	program.
				elements.	
Dynamics	1 – No	2 – Few	3 – Some	4 – Several	5 – Dynamic
	dynamic	dynamic	dynamic	dynamic	extremes are
	extremes are	extremes are	extremes are	extremes are	required for
	required of the	required of	required for	required for	most
	singers.	the singers	two to three	most	characters
		during	characters	characters.	including
		extremes	including		rapid changes
		within the	piano high		in dynamics
		vocal range.	notes and <i>forte</i>		in extreme
Vocal Phrasing	1 N	2	low notes	4	vocal ranges. 5 –
v ocai Phrasing	1 – No major	2-	3 –	4 -	_
	melismatic or	Melismatic	Melismatic,	Melismatic,	Melismatic,
	staccato	or staccato	staccato, or	staccato, or	staccato, or
	movement,	vocal	marcato	marcato	marcato
	focusing on	phrases for	singing for	singing for	singing for
	legato	one to two	three to four	many	most
	singing	characters.	characters	characters.	characters.
	throughout.	Some	with	Many	Challenging
	Straight-	challenging	challenging	challenging	rhythms and
	forward	rhythms,	rhythms.	rhythms or	meters.
	rhythms	including	Some	metric shifts.	Significant
	throughout.	hemiola.	moments of	Several	moments of
			singing	moments of	singing
			against the	singing	against the
			accompany-	against the	accompany-
			ing rhythm.	accompany-	ing rhythm.
				ing rhythm.	

Musical Considerations	1 – Completely tonal with no chromaticism. Singable melodies and strophic sections.	2 – Clear tonal center with singable melodies and some chromati- cism.	3 – Tonal or tonally adjacent with significant amounts of chromaticism. Clearly recognizable melody at times, but not always.	4 – Vaguely tonal with significant amounts of chromaticism or moments of atonality. No clear singable melody with several leaps and few steps.	5 – Atonal or intensely chromatic and no easily memorable melody. May feature electronic music.
Range/Tessitura	1 – No vocal extremes for any voice type within the show. Tessitura is easily attainable and maintainable for each voice type.	2 – Vocal extremes for one to two characters with difficult tessituras for some, but only in short sections.	3 – Vocal extremes for roughly half of the characters with challenging tessituras for extended periods of time for two to three characters.	4 – Vocal extremes for several characters with challenging tessituras for extended periods of time for several characters.	5 – Vocal extremes, including leaps from one extreme to another, as well as extended periods of challenging tessituras for most characters.
Registration	1 – Passaggio of each voice type is avoided or easily navigable due to the use of helpful vowel placement.	2 – Most singing through the passaggio is navigable due to helpful vowels with two to three challenging moments.	3 – Some challenging moments for some characters when heaviness could be brought into the passaggio due to either vowel placement or heavy accompaniment.	4 - Several challenging moments for most characters when heaviness could be brought into the passaggio due to either vowel placement or heavy accompaniment.	5 – Many challenging moments for most characters when heaviness could be brought into the passaggio due to either vowel placement or heavy accompaniment.

Respiration	1 – Short, attainable phrases for all singers with ample opportunity for breath in longer phrases in ensemble singing.	2 – Longer phrases for one to two characters, but ample opportunity to add breaths as needed. Written in breaths are	3 – Long phrases for some characters with some opportunities for easy full breaths and other moments that require	4 – Long phrases and quick breaths for several characters in several songs. Some moments of relaxed intake for most	5 – Long phrases and/or quick breaths in most songs for most singers. Few opportunities within sung moments for a slow intake of
		well-timed to allow for full breaths.	quick, relaxed intake.	singers.	breath.
Text Setting	1 – Text is easy to memorize and is set in such a way that the text is prioritized and easily understood within the music without being syllabic. Lots of obvious rhymes.	2 – Text is relatively easy to memorize with a few moments of syllabic settings. Mostly lyrical lines. Some obvious rhymes.	3 – Several moments of syllabic or patter singing with text that is more challenging to memorize. A few rhymes.	4 – Text is mostly prose and features significant moments of patter or syllabic singing. Memorization could be challenging.	5 – Text is entirely prose with little to no rhyming. Memorization is challenging.
Vowels and Vowel Sequencing	1 – Vowels in passaggio areas will be helpful in navigation between registrations.	2 – Vowels in passaggio areas will mostly be helpful with some challenging passages for two to three primary characters.	3 – Some challenging vowels in most passaggio areas for principal characters, but no significant challenges in ensemble moments.	4 – Challenging vowels in most passaggio passages for all characters including some in ensemble moments.	5 – Vowels will not help in the navigation of passaggio passages. Singers should be capable of navigating passaggio through modification.

Words/Story	1 – Well	2 – Fairly	3 – Fairly well-	4 – Little-	5 – Unknown
	known story	well-known	known story set	known story	story featuring
	with easily	story with text	with text that is	with	unfamiliar text.
	under-	that is easy to	unfamiliar or	challenging	Most characters
	standable	memorize.	using old	text. A few	are much older
	words. The	Some words or	vernacular	characters are	or younger or
	story is easy	phrases may	words. Some	age-	have
	to memorize.	be unfamiliar.	sections will be	appropriate for	significantly
	Characters are	Most	challenging to	a typical	different life
	age-	characters are	memorize.	under-graduate	experiences
	appropriate	age-	Some	cast with most	than a typical
	for a typical	appropriate for	characters are	being either	under-graduate
	under-	a typical	age-appropriate	much younger	cast.
	graduate cast.	under-graduate	for a typical	or much older.	
		cast.	under-graduate		
			cast.		

Table 2.3 Final scores for operas analyzed with the rubric.

Category	Hansel and Gretel	Amahl and the Night Visitors	The Hiding Tree	Albert Herring
Accompaniment	3	2	3	3
Characterization/Acting Demands	3	2	2	3.5
Diction/Articulation	3	2	1	3
Dynamics	3	2	3.5	4
Vocal Phrasing	2	2	1	4
Musical Considerations	3	3	3	3
Range/Tessitura	3	3	3	3.5
Registration	3	3	3	3
Respiration	2	2	3	3
Text Setting	3	2	2.5	2.5
Vowels and Vowel Sequencing	2.5	2	2.5	3
Words/Story	2	2	3	2
Total Score	32.5	27	30.5	37.5

Opera companies and universities worldwide perform Engelbert Humperdinck's fairytale opera *Hansel and Gretel*. This opera is well-suited to young audiences because of the familiar story and the tunes reminiscent of nursery songs. However, the music presents several challenges for singers and is not suitable for many beginning students. Using Arneson's rubric, this opera received a 32.5 rating, placing it in the moderate category for suitability.

The vocal lines in *Hansel and Gretel* are tonal, and the accompaniment, especially when using a piano reduction, provides a steady foundation for the singers without being heavy. The arias and duets in *Hansel and Gretel* feature repetitive melodies with some dotted rhythms.

There are seven characters and a chorus of children, most of which are treble voices. Figure 2.2 provides the character breakdown shown at the beginning of the *Hansel and Gretel* score.

Peter, a broom-maker	Baritone
Gertrude, his wife	Mezzo-Soprano
Hansel	Mezzo-Soprano
Gretel	Soprano
The Witch	Mezzo-Soprano
Sandman	Soprano
Dew Fairy	Soprano

Figure 2.2 List of characters and voice types in *Hansel and Gretel* taken from the score.³

A work like *Hansel and Gretel* provides roles for five to six treble singers, beneficial for a program with many soprano and mezzo-soprano voices. The characters all require skillful actors to portray the larger-than-life fairytale tropes, especially for the singer cast as The Witch. The demands that this opera places on singers make it suitable only for some undergraduate or developing voices. However, it is a work that provides excellent performance opportunities in a familiar setting.

Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* also presents a familiar story telling the tale of the three Kings traveling with gifts to give the baby Jesus. In this opera, the characters are relatable for young singers, featuring a mother and son alongside three kings, a page, and a chorus of shepherds. The vocal lines are well-supported by the music, and there are few extreme or demanding dynamic markings. The three kings have some challenging harmonic moments;

³ Humperdinck, Engelbert, Adelheid Wette, Hans-Josef Irmen, Tom Hammond, and Richard Kleinmichel. *Hänsel Und Gretel*. Rev. ed. Schott, 1992.

however, those moments are always duet or trio singing with supportive accompaniment lines. The Mother has several moments of loud, emotional outbursts in which she alternates between *piano* and *forte* singing, as seen in Figure 2.3. However, the text used in those moments helps the singer navigate the vocal lines with short, repeated phrases featuring an eighth rest that allows for a brief vocal reset. Based on this information, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* is rated at a 27, falling just below the moderate evaluation marking on Arneson's rubric.



Figure 2.3 Mother's vocal line excerpt from *Amahl and the Night Visitors* demonstrating the quick shifts from forte to piano singing.⁴

The Hiding Tree, by Edward Barnes, provides a more contemporary opera for comparison. This piece, published in 2000, is a 30-minute children's opera for two solo singers, a spoken role, and a small ensemble. A rhythmic piano line accompanies *The Hiding Tree*, creating backdrops for the Narrator while supporting the singers. The two main characters, two sisters, are relatable

15

_

⁴ Gian Carlo Menotti, *Amahl and The Night Visitors: Opera in One Act, Libretto* (New York: G. Schirmer, 2010), 51.

and memorable because of their loving sisterly bond, and the music does not test the singers' vocal ranges. The Narrator in *The Hiding Tree* provides an ideal opportunity for a developing singer to get some stage experience through the performance of metered spoken lines, as seen in Figure 2.4. The spoken text setting allows for a focus on breath support, diction, and vocal placement without the added demands of range and vocal agility. These factors result in a score of 30.5 for *The Hiding Tree*, making it pedagogically moderate for undergraduate and developing singers.



Figure 2.4 Excerpt of the Narrator's lines in *The Hiding Tree.*⁵

_

⁵ Edward Barnes, *The Hiding Tree*, (2000), 6.

Finally, Benjamin Britten's *Albert Herring* is worth mentioning because of the story, the number of roles available, and the helpful underscoring. Although *Albert Herring* is over two hours long, the story is relatable, comical, and engaging. There are thirteen characters: four sopranos, two mezzo-sopranos, a contralto, two tenors, two baritones, one bass, and an ambiguous treble voice.

Lady Billows	Soprano
Florence Pike	Contralto
Miss Wordsworth	Soprano
Mr. Gedge	Baritone
Mr. Upfold	Tenor
Superintendent Budd	Bass
Sid	Baritone
Albert Herring	Tenor
Nancy	Mezzo-Soprano
Mrs. Herring	Mezzo-Soprano
Emmie	Soprano
Cis	Soprano
Harry	Treble

Figure 2.5 List of characters and voice types in Albert Herring.⁶

This large, diverse cast features a variety of vocal skill levels. There are lighter roles, such as the village children, and vocally demanding roles, such as Albert Herring and Lady Billows, which have wide vocal ranges and challenging lines. The music in *Albert Herring* is highly chromatic, typical of Britten's style; however, the underscoring is supportive and not overpowering. Particularly in moments when there is a significant amount of text, the orchestration is light.

There are some extreme dynamic demands and several challenging melismatic sections the singers must be able to navigate. Also, the story requires a significant amount of acting skill from all the singers to communicate the small-town social dynamics. Using Arneson's rubric, *Albert Herring* falls under the difficult category.

-

⁶ Benjamin Britten, Henry Boys, and Eric Crozier, *Albert Herring: A Comic Opera in 3 Acts. Libretto Freely Adapted from a Short Story of Guy De Maupassant. Klavierausz. MIT Text* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1948).

Arneson's rubrics help to concisely evaluate individual works and full-length operas when considering what is pedagogically suitable for developing voices. The works listed here are a minuscule sampling of what is available and potentially useful for vocal training programs.

Creating more works aimed explicitly at undergraduate voices provides further opportunities for singers developing their vocal technique to learn about performing and experience working on a newly or recently composed work.

A similar analysis was done by Lydia Beasley Kneer in her paper *An Introduction to An Operetta: Pauline Viardot's Le Dernier Sorcier for the Young Opera Studio.* Viardot's compositions for voice are known for their pedagogical benefits, and several of her works have been performed lately at schools such as Mercer University (Table 2.1). In her paper, Kneer provides a detailed chart, shown in Table 2.4, with the character voice types and challenges or pitfalls that each role might present to a singer to demonstrate the pedagogical benefits of this production.

Table 2.4 Character classifications in *Le dernier sorcier*. A chart reproduced from Lydia Beasley Kneer's dissertation denoting the vocal ranges and classifications of each character in *Le dernier sorcier*.⁷

Characters and Corresponding Voice Types

Character	Original Voice Type Classification	Modern Equivalent	Range	Character Description
Krakamiche	Baritone	Tenor or Baritone	G2-E4	Elderly sorcerer
Stella	Soprano	Coloratura Soprano	C4-D6 (optional C4-B5)	Daughter of Krakamiche
Perlimpinpin	Not specified	Tenor or Baritone	C3-F#4	Servant to Krakamiche
Lelio	Contralto	Mezzo-Soprano pants role or Tenor	B3-F#5 or B2- F#4	Prince of nearby Kingdom
Queen of the Elves	Soprano	Mezzo-Soprano	C#4-F5	Enemy of Krakamiche

Viardot's operetta *Le dernier sorcier* tells the story of an old sorcerer, his daughter, an elf queen, and a prince. At just over an hour long with no intermission, this work is an ideal length for both new audiences and developing voices. Viardot's operetta features a cast of five with a chorus, almost all of whom sing with a limited and attainable vocal range. Kneer discusses the use of familiar fairytale tropes, comparing Viardot's story to Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. These recognizable story elements are a valuable component in performing accessible works for new audiences. Kneer also discusses Viardot's use of motifs and themes for various characters and emotions throughout the operetta. For example, Kneer states: "The occurrence of falling octaves

⁷ Kneer, Beasley Lydia. "An Introduction to an Operetta: Pauline Viardot's Le Dernier Sorcier for the Young Opera Studio." Dissertation, The University of Alabama, 2018., 49.

⁸ https://thewallis.org/le-dernier-sorcier-the-last-

sorcerer#:~:text=Running%20Time%3A%2070%20minutes%2C%20no%20intermission.

⁹ Kneer, Beasley Lydia. "An Introduction to an Operetta: Pauline Viardot's Le Dernier Sorcier for the Young Opera Studio." Dissertation, The University of Alabama, 2018., 49.
¹⁰ IBID, 20.

preceded by grace notes tends to signal the elves, and often the mischief they will cause . . ."¹¹ Kneer continues: "The music of *Le dernier sorcier* combines elements of the easy-going melodic style of operetta with pianistic, and occasionally vocal, virtuosity; the effect is a charming, lighthearted aural experience with added musical depth."¹²

The classifications of the above operas using Kneer's chart and Arneson's rubric help clarify pedagogical challenges and benefits. Though only a small sampling of operas was analyzed here, other works, including new works such as *Down the Rabbit Hole*, could be analyzed for pedagogical suitability. Such works are particularly beneficial for programs like the category three schools listed in Table 2.1. The details about *Down the Rabbit Hole's* creation in this document provide a model for creating works that serve undergraduate and developing singers.

-

¹¹ Kneer, Beasley Lydia. "An Introduction to an Operetta: Pauline Viardot's Le Dernier Sorcier for the Young Opera Studio." Dissertation, The University of Alabama, 2018., 27.

¹² IBID, 29. a

CHAPTER 3

Creating Down the Rabbit Hole

Given the criteria provided in Arneson's rubric (Figure 2.1), many details need consideration when creating an opera that will serve the needs of undergraduate singers. As previously mentioned, the musical aspects must be manageable but suitably challenging for singers developing their technical skills, and the characters ideally have qualities to which the singers can relate. Additionally, the story will have greater audience appeal if the public knows it well. Considering these factors, Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* quickly became an obvious choice for this project. Since its publication, numerous adaptations of Lewis Carroll's story give credence to its relatability. Not only does this story feature themes relatable to a wide variety of people, but it is well known and available in the public domain, avoiding legal limitations on creativity in crafting an operatic adaptation of the work.

Adaptations of Wonderland

Originally published in 1865, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* has been an endearing and enduring tale. The story of a young girl discovering who she is and learning to deal with the moving pieces of life within the context of a fantastical land has pulled at readers' heartstrings for generations. Whether remembering youthful fantasies for older readers or offering a new perspective on everyday experiences for younger readers, Alice's tale offers something for every age group.

Carroll's story has been adapted for the stage, film, and television, the first of which was a musical entitled *Alice in Wonderland* that premiered in 1886.¹³ Some of the recent adaptations of Carroll's story include three operatic versions composed in 2007, 2013, and 2021. These three productions will be the focus of this brief review, each providing a unique experience of Alice appropriate for different age levels within the audience. Notably, these productions were all written for mature, professional voices, making them less suitable as performance opportunities for developing singers.

South Korean composer Unsuk Chin wrote the first operatic adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland*, which premiered in 2007 at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, Germany. ¹⁴ This two-hour work features eight scenes, eleven soloists, a children's chorus, and a full orchestra. Chin's opera is dark and displays the scarier side of Carroll's Wonderland, elevating the story for a more mature audience and providing a uniquely adult perspective to this children's tale. Though not designed to appeal to young children, it is suitable for younger audience members. The premier production used larger-than-life costuming, creating a doll-like quality for the characters reminiscent of films by Tim Burton. Though the complex staging could be simplified, the music is challenging and not ideal for developing singers.

In 2013 London-based opera company Opera Holland Park commissioned an opera based on *Alice in Wonderland* from composer Will Todd. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is a seventy-minute work described as a family opera that received positive reviews at performances. ¹⁵ Todd's variation on Carroll's story, which includes some of Alice's extended family members,

¹³ Prescia Gladwin, "The 8 Best Alice in Wonderland Musical and Other Adaptations," Icy Tales, July 19, 2022, https://icytales.com/8-alice-in-wonderland-musical-and-other-adaptations/.

¹⁴ "Chin, Unsuk Alice in Wonderland," Boosey & Hawkes, accessed September 22, 2022, https://www.boosey.com/opera/moreDetails?musicID=57667.

¹⁵ "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland Will Todd," WNO, September 22, 2022, https://wno.org.uk/archive/2020-2021/alices-adventures-in-wonderland-will-todd.

provides a more family-friendly look at the story while maintaining an operatic sound. Though accessible to young audience members, the songs are not well-suited to developing singers.

Amy Scurria composed the most recent operatic adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland, Alice:*An Operatic Wonderland, which was workshopped in January 2022. Scurria's production has a two-hour run time and features a slightly more eclectic collection of musical genres, including Mozartian waltz, folk music, and chant. Due to the newness of this production, a fully orchestrated version has yet to be available, making it difficult to assess the relative appropriateness of the vocal roles for younger singers. Despite this lack of information, the roles were all written for mature adult singers, not developing voices, indicating that these roles may not be ideal for voices still being trained.

Considering these three productions alone, it is evident that *Alice in Wonderland* is a story well-suited to operatic adaptation. However, there is no operatic version written explicitly for developing voices. Creating a new version of this story that meets the criteria given by Arneson required condensing the story, pulling out the vital story elements, and eliminating any excess. Condensing the story necessitated detailed reading and note-taking, drawing out essential themes such as identity, manners, and parent-child relationships, and determining which lines conveyed these themes most clearly. These themes are each helpful in a project of this nature because they involve questions affecting many young adults today. Finding oneself and discovering identity outside of a parent's household are journeys many students navigate. Performing in a work that specifically discusses these issues opens the opportunity for self-discovery and discussion helpful for artistic development and personal growth.

1

¹⁶ "Amy Scurria, Alice, an Operatic Wonderland," Amy Scurria, accessed September 22, 2022, https://www.amyscurria.com/alice?fbclid=IwAR3KvflPu0H7S5_lsDHKJ2xLxyFZ3EC1IvSQ_jk5zCweWzD Ri4HTpmwEd64.

Libretto Writing Process

Wording and rhyme scheme became essential in conveying Wonderland as I began writing the libretto, especially considering the target audience: grade-school-aged children. Carroll's original text contains witty remarks and nursery rhyme rhythms, but not everything was immediately suited to music. For example, some text narrates Alice's emotional reaction to the events around her. This information is helpful for the performers and director to have later as stage directions, but it is not useful as sung text. Thus, I reduced twelve chapters to nine scenes through a combination of original writing and Lewis Carroll's text.

Identity is a central theme found in several parts of Carroll's story. Alice wanders through an unknown land, constantly changing and struggling to return to who she was at the beginning of the story. The Caterpillar poses a question in Chapter Five that provides a place of realization for readers as Alice confronts this central theme: "Who are you?" ¹⁷ The idea of finding oneself through the turmoil of youth is essential to the story of Alice and humanity. Whether they are young adults determining who they will be as they journey into adulthood, children facing the physical changes that make growing up so challenging, or adults questioning their core beliefs, discovering identity is a constant quest faced by everyone. This core question in *Alice's* Adventures in Wonderland is one of the reasons this story is well-suited for appealing to new audiences and working with developing performers. The performers can create roles in which they ask questions about their character and their own lives. Audience members, similarly, watch characters exploring these questions and truths in a way that connects with the personal experiences many people face.

¹⁷ Lewis Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There: An Illustrated Classic (San Diego: Canterbury Classics, 2017), 47.

Manners and social constructs are also important when considering which themes were crucial for *Down the Rabbit Hole*. Alice meets many characters with a skewed sense of the logic of manners, setting her world on its head. The White Rabbit, the Mad Hatter and March Hare, and the entire court of the Queen of Hearts all use different manners that are heightened versions of what Alice expects. These interactions serve as a tool to allow Alice to explore what she understands are good manners and to come to terms with the childish desire to create her own rules. In Chapter Seven, when Alice joins the Mad Hatter and March Hare for tea, she comments on how rudely they are treating her by offering food and tea when neither is available. In Instead of apologizing for this faux pas, the Hatter moves the conversation in a wildly different direction. This non-acknowledgment of Alice's social discomfort recurs when Alice plays croquet with the courtiers in Chapter Eight. Alice, while playing the game, becomes frustrated with the cheating she witnesses from the Queen of Hearts, but when she attempts to discuss the matter, the King approaches, and Alice must quickly redirect the conversation to avoid being chastised. In the crucial series of the logic contents are also conversation.

These moments of childish willfulness and ignorance from the cast of characters surrounding Alice culminate in a courtroom scene when the Knave of Hearts is on trial, accused of stealing tarts from the Queen of Hearts. Alice is called to the stand to testify. A brief tête-à-tête between Alice and the King and Queen of Hearts ensues before the King commands Alice to leave the court for being "more than a mile high." Alice finally voices her sense of injustice and accuses the King of making up rules. The White Rabbit retorts that the cited rule is the oldest in the book, leaving Alice on the verge of a tantrum. She listens as the White Rabbit presents the remaining evidence before finally calling the court out on their absurd proceedings.

_

¹⁸ Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, 66.

¹⁹ IBID, 81

²⁰ IBID, 111.

This last interaction between Alice and the Queen and King of Hearts demonstrates this story's manners and parent-child relationship themes. Alice attempts to voice her opinions and ask questions throughout the story, but everyone ignores or overlooks her as the characters around Alice continue pursuing their desires. The Queen of Hearts, representative of a female authority figure in Alice's life, demonstrates this in her self-centeredness on the croquet court in Chapter Seven and the courtroom in Chapter Eleven. Alice is awakened from her dream of Wonderland by a voice calling out to her, presumably her mother, nurse, or some authority figure calling her to come home. Throughout her adventure, Alice constantly tries to make her own decisions but does not receive the help she thinks she needs from authority figures. Alice's stubbornness demonstrates her growing into young adulthood and seeking truth in the rules of her youth.

Other themes in Carroll's story, such as a satirical commentary on society and status, were intentionally left out of the libretto for *Down the Rabbit Hole*. This omission stems from the introductory nature of the opera and the age of the target audience, young children. These themes were also omitted to make the work accessible without alienating any audience or cast member through the inclusion of political commentary.

Compositional Process

Finding a composer well-suited to the challenges of Wonderland was another essential step in the creative process for *Down the Rabbit Hole*. I approached composition students at the University of Georgia about potential interest before completing the libretto. Interested composers provided details about their compositional experiences and areas of expertise. Two composers collaborated on this project to minimize the demand placed on one person while

creating an opportunity for collaboration between an undergraduate and doctoral-level composer.

Bryan Michael Wysocki brought a valuable level of experience writing for the voice and provided a sense of musical whimsy and openness to collaboration and creativity that suited the project well.²¹ He had composed several different choral pieces previously and expressed an interest in writing more for the voice in a larger scale setting. Additionally, Wysocki's use of nostalgia and non-traditional elements in his compositions made his musical perspective ideal for setting Wonderland.²²

As an undergraduate composer, Julien Berger brought a fresh, open perspective to the project and a willingness to try new things. Berger's compositional experience included one vocal piece written for a choir before he began studying at the University of Georgia.²³ His experiences working with vocalists and singing in choirs sparked an interest in continuing to write for the voice. Berger's compositional style is influenced primarily by 20th and 21st-century composers. This element of modernity in his writing allowed for a juxtaposition with Wysocki's writing, settling the compositional style of *Down the Rabbit Hole* into a balance between traditional classical and modern music.

The composers and I met in August 2021 to establish expectations and create a production timeline. The team discussed each character's vocal range and general musical characterizations in the initial meeting. Ambiguous vocal ranges were set for most characters, allowing for flexibility in the vocal writing to tailor each role to the singers cast in the original production.

²¹ Bryan Michael Wysocki, "Biography," Bryan Michael Wysocki, accessed September 22, 2022, https://bryanwysocki.com/biography-1?fbclid=IwAR0VP28H9rooXSCkD4FsA7rdv7D43ai4kxVGDKG2fjKc_2p9shxpSg0WGA.

²³ "Alice In Wonderland Opera Composition Project," Alice In Wonderland Opera Composition Project, June 12, 2021.

Table 3.1 shows the character breakdown determined at one of the initial creative meetings and the final voice types after casting.

Table 3.1 Character breakdown from the initial creative meeting for *Down the Rabbit Hole*. This table is taken from notes from a meeting of the creative team determining the general vocal ranges desired for each role in *Down the Rabbit Hole*.²⁴

Character	Proposed Voice Type	Final Voice Type
Alice	Lyric Soprano	Lyric Soprano
White Rabbit	Mezzo Soprano or Tenor	Tenor
Mouse/Duck/Dodo/Card	Ensemble	Tenor/Mezzo-
Soldiers		Soprano/ Soprano
Bill	Medium Voice	Mezzo-Soprano
Caterpillar	Baritone	Bass
Cheshire Cat	Bass	Baritone
Mad Hatter	Soprano or Tenor	Tenor
March Hare	Mezzo-Soprano or Baritone	Mezzo-Soprano
Queen of Hearts	Coloratura Soprano	Coloratura Soprano
King of Hearts	Baritone	Baritone
Knave of Hearts	Mezzo-Soprano (Pants Role)	Mezzo-Soprano

The most crucial element of these initial discussions was establishing the vocal ranges of each character before the casting process took place. To make the work accessible to a wider range of singers, the composers worked with generalized vocal ranges, including some ambiguous middle-voice ranges, until finalizing the casting process. This ambiguity of voice types allows a broader range of universities and other voice programs to find this work accessible, as it does not require a set number of singers within each voice type. Creating a work with flexible voice part casting allows for a school with an abundance of tenors and few sopranos, for example, to find this production as accessible as a group with an abundance of sopranos and few tenors. Additionally, the ambiguous vocal ranges allow for the best available singers to be cast regardless of gender. Ensuring that performers will be comfortable portraying

²⁴ Abigail A Head, Julien F Berger, and Bryan Michael Wysocki, "A Compilation of Thoughts and Ideas Formulated While Creating the Opera Down the Rabbit Hole." (Athens, 2021), 2.

their characters without compromising identity and values increases the accessibility of this production. After casting the opera, the composers re-examined the music considering the needs of individual singers while completing the composition.

The tonality of the piece was another critical discussion among the creative team.

Considering the target audience, children in grade-school, the music needed to be tonal while allowing for some flexibility to create Wonderland's whimsical and otherworldly feeling.

Additionally, the team considered the musical experience of the singers. Taking on a new work with no recordings is difficult for most singers, regardless of tonality. A sense of tonal grounding in the piece would help make the learning process more manageable for developing singers. The composers proposed using whole-tone scales to create a sense of tonal ambiguity while providing some tonal grounding for the singers.

The creative team then established several key motifs for the full work. The team determined motifs for Alice's shrinking and growing, shown in Figures 3.1 and 3.2, the White Rabbit's frenzied running, shown in Figure 3.3, and the Queen of Hearts' call for beheading, shown in Figure 3.4, providing some touchstones for the composers as they worked together to create the score. After creating this foundational music, casting became the focus of the project.



Figure 3.1 Alice's shrinking music in *Down the Rabbit Hole* from scene 2, measure 105.²⁵



Figure 3.2 Alice's growing music in *Down the Rabbit Hole* from scene 2, measures 123-124.²⁶



Figure 3.3 The White Rabbit's running music in Down the Rabbit Hole from scene 2, measures $1-3.^{27}$

 $^{^{25}}$ Head et al., Down the Rabbit Hole, 2022, 26. 26 IBID, 28. 27 IBID, 19.



Figure 3.4 The Queen of Hearts beheading music, from scene 7, measure 60.²⁸

Casting and Directing

The casting process occurred during the graded juries at the University of Georgia's Hugh Hodgson School of Music in December 2021. Using the juries allowed for a broader range of students to be considered without needing to reserve a room and without needing students to make extra time in their schedules for an audition. Only two characters had firm voice types:

Alice and the Queen of Hearts. Other characters were initially written for either high, medium, or low voice, allowing for flexible casting based on the singers and voice types available. I exclusively considered undergraduate singers to maintain the focus on developing voices. The predetermined vocal ranges of each character provided a baseline for the set of criteria used to evaluate each singer. Students' vocal qualities, diction, and storytelling capabilities were then considered in their juries, a sample of which is shown in Table 3.2.

²⁸ Head et al., *Down the Rabbit Hole*, 2022, 100.

Table 3.2: Sample of student evaluation in graded juries at the University of Georgia.²⁹

Name	Voice Type	Teacher	Year	Vocal Qualities	Potential Character	Other Notes
	<u> </u>				Placement	
John Doe	Baritone	Dr. Smith	Junior	Warm, grounded sound with easy breath	Caterpillar or Cheshire Cat	Engaging performer with good physical freedom. Diction is clear and clearly demonstrates understanding of the text.
				support.		

After considering the potential performers, each student's voice teacher provided consultation on whether a project of this scope was appropriate and attainable before the student was asked about interest and availability to accept a role. Some singers had already been approached for lengthier roles, such as Alice, and knew they were under consideration. Most of the roles, however, required a significantly smaller commitment regarding time and preparation and were, thus, open to any singer and voice type.

The selected singers received their music shortly after the composers completed the work in March 2022. A date was set for an initial sing-through, giving the singers two months to begin working on the music with their teachers and the musical director. The singers received a schedule with times to meet individually and in groups to learn and review parts. These meetings provided helpful insights into necessary changes in the music, such as strengthening the support of the vocal line in the accompaniment.

After the initial sing-through in May 2022, the singers had opportunities to meet with the musical director over the summer months. To provide a semi-professional experience to the students, I asked them to come to the next sing-through, scheduled for late August of 2022, with

32

²⁹ Abigail A Head, "Alice Auditions List," n.d.

their music learned and ready for specific musical direction. The creative team finalized the score and libretto between May and August 2022. Conductor Erika Tazawa, a doctoral student in choral conducting, and collaborative pianist Alyssa Soriano, a doctoral student in piano performance, were secured for the production scheduled for October 2022.

The staging process provided collaboration between the singers and myself as the director, as singers were encouraged to try new things and improvise movements within the foundational directions set in rehearsals. I asked the performers to continue trying different inflections or using different ways of interacting in their scenes, aiming at finding authentic and genuine interactions instead of exchanging lines memorized by rote. For example, the soprano singing Alice voiced several ideas and thoughts on her characterization of Alice throughout staging rehearsals, allowing more connection to the character. Additionally, the tenor singing the Mad Hatter and the mezzo-soprano singing the March Hare brought a unique energy to their characters, inspiring slight changes in the staging plan. In an early-stage rehearsal of Scene 6, Brooks Todd, the tenor singing the Mad Hatter, asked if he could improvise some movements. This improvisation resulted in removing an unnecessary set piece from the show, saving time and energy in creating a tracking list for props and set pieces. Sadie Hammond, the mezzosoprano singing the March Hare, brought quirky energy to the character through improvised nonverbal interactions between the March Hare and several other characters, demonstrating a high level of engagement with the character by the end of the rehearsal process.

Professor Daniel Ellis and the following texts guided the directing process: *Stage Director's Handbook* by Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation and *Directing Plays* by Stuart Vaughan. Ellis's understanding of the directorial process was used as a guide while planning for the production, and his knowledge of resources and ability to help find creative solutions

provided valuable insights. Ellis was particularly helpful in solving staging challenges unique to Wonderland, such as Alice growing larger than a house on stage. Additionally, Ellis helped with securing resources, including funding opportunities and supplies.

Though *Stage Director's Handbook* is about directing plays, the information found in the book is valid for any directorial setting. Helpful guidelines for making choices as a director provide a path for active planning. Such guidelines include having clear values, setting specific goals, asking for advice while developing strategies, taking action, and seeking help when needed.³⁰ These insights clarified stages of the directing process while working through stage direction plans. For example, having a clear intention driving each scene allowed for smoother rehearsals. Additionally, setting specific goals and asking mentors and colleagues for advice and input while working through directing challenges, such as the croquet scene and other challenges unique to *Alice in Wonderland*, provided space for creativity within rehearsals.

Stuart Vaughan's *Directing Plays* contained similar information while providing more concrete methods of approaching directing for the stage. In this book, Vaughan offers guidance on selecting a work, finding the core meaning within a work, and insights into the rehearsal process. Vaughan approaches directing similarly to how singers approach a piece of music, breaking down each moment to clarify objectives. Vaughan also provides helpful graphics for preparing to stage a play, which are equally valuable for breaking down an operatic score. These graphics, one of which is shown in Figure 3.5, demonstrate the importance of understanding where each performer is on stage to more effectively communicate each moment to the audience. I used similar sketches of the stage to prepare for rehearsals, shown in Figures 3.6 and 3.7.

30

³⁰ Sarah Hart, *Stage Directors Handbook: Opportunities for Directors and Choreographers*, 2nd ed. (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2006), 27.

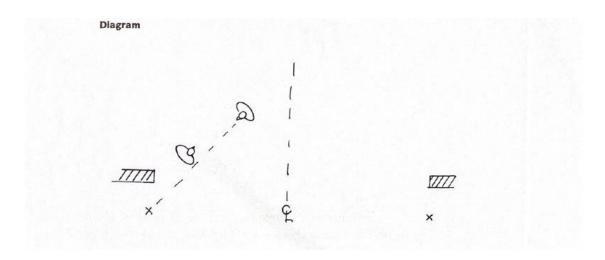


Figure 3.5 Graphic depiction for directing. Diagram depicting stage movement for actors in a scene from Stuart Vaughan's *Directing Plays*. This diagram demonstrates the significance of staging key lines downstage toward the audience.³¹

_

³¹ Stuart Vaughan, *Directing Plays: A Working Professional's Method* (New York: Longman, 1993), 141.

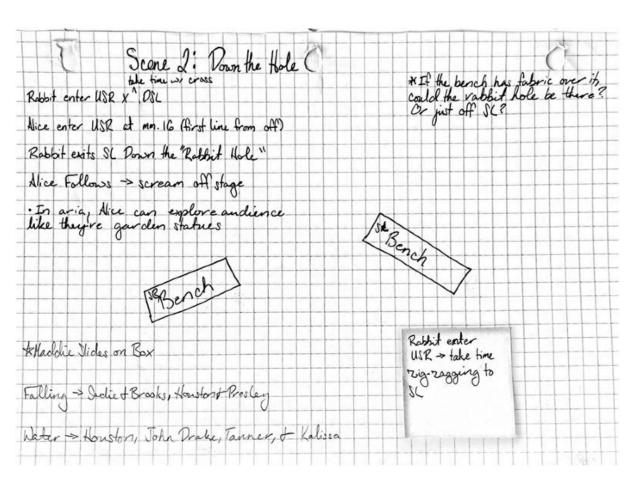


Figure 3.6 Directing Graph for Scene 2 of *Down the Rabbit Hole*³²

_

³² Abigail A Head, "Down the Rabbit Hole Directing Score" (Athens, GA, 2022).

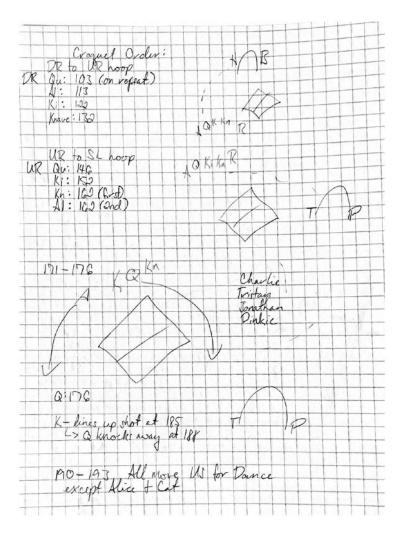


Figure 3.7 Directing Graph for Scene 7 of *Down the Rabbit Hole*.³³

These sketches helped track entrances and exits, prioritizing focal points on stage and navigating ensemble moments. Additionally, they provided a place to jot down notes and thoughts about each scene during rehearsals, informing the directing process moving forward. Through these sketches, I communicated stage directions to the cast, helping them see each larger scene's design from early in the staging process.

Rehearsal organization for this production required careful consideration of the full schedules maintained by the undergraduate singers cast in each role. The initial schedule, found in

³³ Abigail A Head, "Down the Rabbit Hole Directing Score" (Athens, GA, 2022).

Appendix E, planned for rehearsals five nights a week for two to three hours a night and included five hours of music coaching time available each week. However, this schedule was not possible, given the spaces available for rehearsals and the singers' full academic and extracurricular schedules. Despite these challenges, the singers rose to the occasion and worked to make themselves available for as much rehearsal time as possible. The final schedule consisted of roughly six weeks of rehearsals with two hours of coaching time and eleven to twelve hours of staging and music rehearsals each week.

In preparing the rehearsal schedule, I considered the grand scheme of the production and worked to have a basic outline of everything early in the process. This planning required problem-solving for some of the unique issues in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, such as growing and shrinking on stage, an onstage flood, and a game of croquet with flamingo mallets. Addressing the issue of growing and shrinking involved the soprano singing Alice, as having her input allowed for more ownership of the role. Samples of the shrinking and growing music are provided in Figures 3.1 and 3.2.

Giving Alice a physical movement for growing and shrinking provided a visible connection to the associated musical motifs. Thus, I decided Alice should twirl quickly whenever the character grows or shrinks. I also gave the singer an apron that could unroll into a longer length whenever the character shrank or roll up when the character grew tall. Among the various props Alice needed, I created a small paper cutout house that Alice stood behind and looked out of to represent being too big for the White Rabbit's house in Scene 4, as seen in Figure 3.8. This simple prop resembles a doll house, recalling that Alice is a child. The size and weight of the small paper house allow for easy storage and transportation, as well as giving the cast the ability to hide this prop in plain sight on stage before Alice uses it.



Figure 3.8 Image of Alice in premiere performance. Lauren LaBarre, as Alice, standing behind the cut-out house at the premier performance of *Down the Rabbit Hole* at the Lyndon Art House in Athens, Georgia.³⁴

I faced a challenge in the transition between Scenes 2 and 3, during which Alice cries and creates an ocean. The flood, created by Alice's tears, is necessary for storytelling, as the characters are sopping wet at the beginning of Scene 3. The stage needed to be reset, but I did not want to break the audience out of the magic by having cast members move props and set pieces on stage. Thus, I created a flood using two lengths of tulle fabric in varying shades of blue. Four cast members undulated the fabric in wave-like motions across the stage, leaving a path between the fabrics to allow other characters to mime swimming through an ocean while moving set pieces and props for the next scene.

The flamingo croquet mallets needed for Scene 7 required yet more creativity. After some reflection, I gave the cast actual croquet mallets that were painted pink (see Figure 3.9). The four characters that play croquet moved the mallets as though the flamingos were watching the crowd

³⁴ Shaun Baer, *Lauren LaBarre as Alice Standing Behind the White Rabbit's House*, photograph (Lyndon Art House Athens, GA, October 6, 2022).

39

_

around them. The use of painted croquet mallets in this scene allowed the cast to engage with their creativity and added a bright pop of color on the stage that engaged the audience.



Figure 3.9 Image of Flamingo Croquet Mallets³⁵

In addition to these costumes and props, several other pieces helped create the whimsy needed for Wonderland, assisting the singers and audience members in engaging with the story. The project's limited budget and resources necessitated a minimalistic approach to costume and prop pieces. The cast wore primarily black clothes with one to two colorful elements to help identify each character. For example, the Mad Hatter used an orange top hat decorated with a card and some feathers, and the March Hare wore a pair of brown rabbit ears and a tail (Figure 3.10). The Cheshire Cat wore a pair of cat ears, cat gloves, and a tail (Figure 3.11), and the Caterpillar was given a pair of bright green antennae and a pipe that blew bubbles (Figure 3.12).

40

³⁵ Abigail A. Head, *Two Flamingo Croquet Mallets*, photograph (Athens, Georgia, n.d.).



Figure 3.10 Mad Tea Party. Brooks Todd (Left) and Sadie Hammond (Right) as the Mad Hatter and the March Hare in the October 14^{th} performance of *Down the Rabbit Hole*. ³⁶

³⁶ Elizabeth F. Head, *Down the Rabbit Hole Mad Tea Party*, photograph (Ramsey Recital Hall Athens, GA, October 14, 2022), Ramsey Recital Hall Athens, GA.



Figure 3.11 Cheshire Cat Backstage. John Drake in costume as the Cheshire Cat at the Lyndon House performance of *Down the Rabbit Hole* on October 6th, 2022. ³⁷

³⁷ Elizabeth F. Head, *Cheshire Cat Backstage*, photograph (Lyndon House Arts Center Athens, GA, October 6, 2022), Lyndon House Arts Center Athens, GA.



Figure 3.12 Caterpillar Wisdom. Houston VanLandingham as the Caterpillar at the October 14th performance of *Down the Rabbit Hole*. ³⁸

Bella Castaño, the soprano singing the Queen of Hearts, provided face-painting for each cast member to further develop the simplistic whimsy in these costumes. Not only did these minimalistic props and costume pieces allow for clear communication of each character, but they were easily transported between the various rehearsal and performance spaces used throughout the production process. Catalogs of the costumes and props used are in Appendices C and D.

Performances

A local art museum, The Lyndon Art House, hosted the premier performance. I sought out this space after giving a concert there in June of 2022 and experiencing the staging potential of the main gallery. The museum hosted an exhibit of art made by local school children in October and welcomed a public performance of *Down the Rabbit Hole*, offering some free local advertising to bring in audience members. This space, shown in Figure 3.13, featured two

43

_

³⁸ Elizabeth F. Head, *Caterpillar Wisdom*, photograph (Ramsey Recital Hall Athens, GA, October 14, 2022), Ramsey Recital Hall Athens, GA.

staircases leading to a large open area where audience members sat. The playing space was shallow, allowing for close interaction with the audience. The singers were able to experience an outreach setting with a casual audience for the premiere performance before singing the final performance in Ramsey Recital Hall on the campus of the University of Georgia, shown in Figure 3.14.



Figure 3.13 Image of Lyndon House Arts Center Performance Space featuring the main hall, including set pieces for *Down the Rabbit Hole*.³⁹

_

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sx948Reu4K4&list=PL3NsTpX7UwfjllBE5HKWdcN7SU7V3drc1&index=1.

³⁹ Bryan Michael Wysocki, *Screenshot from Premier Performance Recording of Down the Rabbit Hole at Lyndon House Arts Center*, October 6, 2022, *YouTube*, October 6, 2022,



Figure 3.14 Image of Ramsey Recital Hall from *Down the Rabbit Hole* Performance. This image is from the second performance with the piano and benches used in *Down the Rabbit Hole*. ⁴⁰

Both performance venues provided different challenges for the performers, including but not limited to different stage sizes, lighting, and varying levels of sound saturation. I encouraged the cast to use exaggerated diction and movements to combat these challenges and to ensure that both performances would be engaging and understandable. The first performance at Lyndon House featured natural lighting through large windows, a very reverberant acoustic, and an audience inches from the playing space. In the second performance, conversely, the playing space was a stage on which most of the singers had performed, with proper stage lighting and an audience seated in theater chairs. During this performance, however, the singer cast as Alice could not perform due to illness. I stepped in and sang the role of Alice with the cast so that everyone could have their final performance.

Creating *Down the Rabbit Hole*, from initial writing to final performance, provided meaningful collaboration across a wide range of experience levels. The community members,

45

41

⁴⁰ Bryan Michael Wysocki, *Screenshot from Second Performance Recording of Down the Rabbit Hole at Ramsey Recital Hall*, October 14, 2022, *YouTube*, October 14, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OhLIMxpIUWs.

students, and faculty who helped facilitate the creation of this work each provided unique insights into how things went well and potential improvements. The feedback received from each collaborator provided a foundation for evaluating the suitability of *Down the Rabbit Hole* for undergraduate and developing singers. The following evaluation examines the benefits and challenges found in such works.

CHAPTER 4

Pedagogical Benefits of Down the Rabbit Hole

Down the Rabbit Hole was a multi-faceted production that provided opportunities for growth for all involved; however, the question of pedagogical suitability has yet to be addressed measurably. Additionally, the usefulness of this opera for a university program necessitates further discussion. Using Arneson's rubric for measuring pedagogical suitability, four selections from Down the Rabbit Hole have been analyzed and graded: Alice's aria in Scene 2: Down the Rabbit-Hole, Scene 4: Alice Gets the Gloves, Scene 5: Caterpillar Wisdom, and the Croquet Chorus from Scene 7: Queen's Croquet Court. Per the variation on Arneson's rubric (Table 2.2), accompaniment, acting skill, musical considerations, vocal phrasing, range, and text are considered. This study also highlights the potential benefits of using this production for outreach performances.

Accompaniment

The composers intentionally underscored *Down the Rabbit Hole* to support the singers through various challenging moments. Scenes 2, 4, 5, and 7 exemplify different elements of this supportive writing. For example, in Scene 2, Alice falls down the rabbit hole and begins questioning what she is experiencing. The piano accompaniment, shown in Figure 4.1, provides a steady driving rhythm throughout the aria, featuring descending eighth notes representing Alice's descent into Wonderland. This excerpt also shows vocal support in the accompaniment. Though the leaps in the soprano's line are challenging, the piano often plays with the singer

when the vocal line leaps to a new note. This support diminishes as the scene continues, but the vocal leaps at the end of the aria are familiar and become more tonal.



Figure 4.1 Alice's Falling Music. Scene 2 measures 49-51 of *Down the Rabbit Hole* featuring Alice's falling music. The piano also plays the vocal line in the right hand, providing some support in this tonally ambiguous moment. ⁴¹

The accompaniment in Scene 4 also provides a steady foundation for the singers despite the frequently offset rhythms heard in the piano line. The repetition of offset dance-like rhythms in the underscoring of Scene 4 aided in memorization as the singers learned what offset beats to expect. Several familiar motifs are found in this scene's piano line, such as the White Rabbit's running music (Figure 3.3) and Alice's shrinking and growing music (Figures 3.1 and 3.2).

Scene 5, Caterpillar Wisdom, also shows vocal support in the accompaniment line through chords that feature the melodic line in the accompaniment. The supportive underscoring was a calculated choice in each scene, but it was even more helpful in this scene. The chromatic nature of the music in this scene is challenging, and the singer cast as the Caterpillar was not a music major and had less vocal training than some of the other performers. Providing foundational

⁴¹ Head et al., *Down the Rabbit Hole*, 2022, 22.

support in the piano accompaniment helped this performer to successfully learn and perform the challenging chromatic lines for the Caterpillar. Additionally, some of the accompaniment interludes in this scene aided in introducing cues and finding entrance notes, demonstrated in Figure 4.2 through the Eb2 in the bass line just before the Caterpillar's entrance in measure 29.

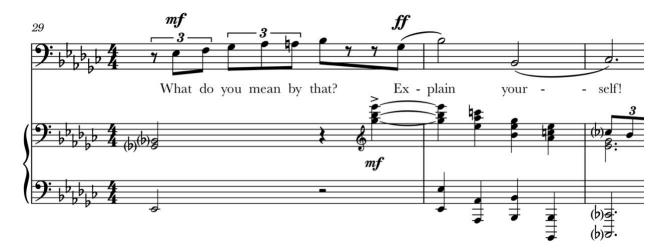


Figure 4.2 Helpful Accompaniment for Caterpillar Wisdom, Scene 5, mm 29-31.⁴²

Finally, Scene 7 demonstrates thoughtful underscoring that aided the singers in the learning process. The chorus of Scene 7 features complex metric changes, alternating between 2/4, 3/4, 6/8, 7/8, and 5/8 in roughly every measure, shown in Figure 4.3.

⁴² Head et al., *Down the Rabbit Hole*, 2022, 69.



Figure 4.3 Croquet Chorus Meter Changes. Scene 7 measures 127-131, featuring the metric and rhythmic challenges in the Croquet Chorus.⁴³

Though these metric changes may seem unnecessarily challenging, the piano accompaniment provides support. Not only is the melody easily heard in the piano line, but the driving eighth notes in the accompaniment provide a metronomic consistency when navigating the meter changes. Based on these analyses, these four scenes receive the following scores for accompaniment.

Table 4.1 Accompaniment Results for *Down the Rabbit Hole*.

	Scene 2	Scene 4	Scene 5	Scene 7
Accompaniment	2.5	2.5	2	2.5

Characterization/Acting Demands

The relatability of the characters and themes in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was one of the primary reasons for choosing this story for this project. The characters in this story are familiar and face familiar challenges, though these challenges are sometimes unexpected. For

⁴³ Head et al., *Down the Rabbit Hole*, 2022, 106.

example, in Scene 2, Alice falls down the rabbit hole and discovers a new world. The singer can explore the playing space, expressing Alice's curiosity through movement and showing the audience what she sees without needing significant props or set pieces. This scene is one of the first moments the audience sees Alice's personality. Her trepidation and curiosity, heard in the text and music, can be shown through hesitation and exploration of the space. This scene is an excellent opportunity for a singer who is developing foundational vocal techniques to explore what body movement can add to a performance.

Scene 4 provides some similar opportunities for acting regarding physicality. In this scene, Alice grows inside the White Rabbit's house, creating a panic and causing the White Rabbit and Bill to begin throwing coals to burn down the house. Alice must use whatever prop or set piece signifies the house, in this production a paper cutout house (Figure 3.8), to show that she is stuck in the house, too big to go through the doors or windows. The soprano singing Alice in this production used the paper house and stood on top of a bench, allowing her to be significantly taller than the other performers on stage. The White Rabbit and Bill also needed to react visibly, continuing the illusion that Alice is larger than the house. Eliciting reactions big enough to translate to the audience took some specific instruction. However, with time the performers embraced the physicality the characters demanded.

Scene 5 offers a contrasting acting challenge featuring a more serious tone than previous scenes. In this scene, the Caterpillar and Alice discuss identity as Alice bemoans the changes she has experienced since entering Wonderland. The physicality of this scene is more languid, a change of pace from the frenetic energy of Scenes 3 and 4. The slower tempo offers the singer performing Alice a brief break from running while allowing the Caterpillar to focus primarily on vocal work. The Caterpillar faces an acting challenge in portraying this scene without appearing

angry or frightening. The blunt, loud questions the Caterpillar poses to Alice are reminiscent of a teacher seeking critical thinking from a student. Though Alice can react in surprise to direct questions, making sure the Caterpillar avoids broadcasting anger keeps this character relatable and engaging for young audiences.

Scene 7 offers significant characterization challenges for everyone in the opera as every character is on stage. The croquet chorus in this scene provides the clearest example of this challenge. In ensemble numbers, every performer must stay engaged in the action, reacting to whatever occurs on stage without stealing focus from the primary characters. The croquet chorus featured important props, such as the flamingo mallets (Figure 3.9), that required specific attention from both the performers handling them and those watching the game. The performers handling the flamingo mallets gave life to the inanimate mallets, and the observers followed the action, helping to focus the audience's attention on the pertinent actions while other performers surreptitiously moved to their next marks.

These four scenes demonstrate the opportunities for exploration of character development in *Down the Rabbit Hole*. Each performer can develop a better understanding of the action and reaction needed in a scene, giving life to their characters and creating meaningful interactions onstage. Notably, none of the characters in this opera demand particular experiences or skills, such as dancing or stage combat. Additionally, there are no intimate moments, which allows for a wider range of accessibility without pushing any performers outside of their comfort zone.

Table 4.2 shows each scene's scores for Characterization and Acting Demands.

Table 4.2 Characterization/Acting Demands Results for *Down the Rabbit Hole*.

	Scene 2	Scene 4	Scene 5	Scene 7
Characterization/Acting Demands	2	2	2	2

Musical Considerations

The musical elements of *Down the Rabbit Hole* clarify some of the pedagogically beneficial aspects of this work. The goal of the opera was to provide suitably challenging music for students not yet prepared to take on the demands of other full-length operas. Some of the challenges in *Down the Rabbit Hole* are tonality, complex rhythms, and metric changes. Notably, this work is filled with short, repeated figures, both in tonality, rhythm, and meter. Additionally, there is rarely more than one challenge faced at a time in a particular scene or segment of this work. For example, a tonally difficult scene features straightforward rhythms and meters. Using short, repeated figures helps the singers learning this piece to overcome the challenges in the full work.

The tonality of Alice's aria in Scene 2 exemplifies a challenging musical segment, shown in Figure 4.1. This music is not suitable for a beginning student; the role of Alice was not written for a beginner as this role is the most demanding in the opera. In this scene, the vocal line features large chromatic leaps that are not typical of standard classical repertoire music. However, these leaps are also played in the accompaniment, aiding the navigation of the vocal line. This aria provides an excellent opportunity to explore some more contemporary tonally-adjacent music without experiencing the challenges of truly atonal works or facing the musical challenges of a work with little accompanimental support of the vocal line.

Scene 4 provides little musical challenge aside from the dance rhythms used throughout. These rhythms and the hummable melody engaged the singers and helped with quick memorization. Scene 5, conversely, features intense chromaticism and a few challenging meter changes, specifically at entrances for Alice and the Caterpillar. Figure 4.5 shows a meter change pattern that required specific attention from the Caterpillar, which was a challenge for the non-music major who originated the role.

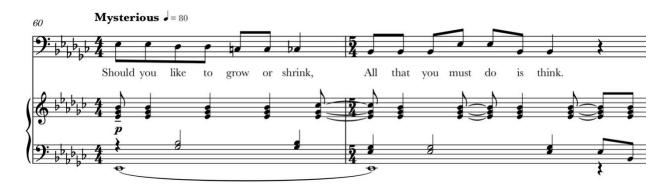


Figure 4.4 Meter Change Pattern in Caterpillar Wisdom Aria, Scene 5 mm. 60-61.⁴⁴

Though the meter changed consistently between 4/4 and 5/4 in this segment, the offset accompaniment presented a challenge for the Caterpillar. However, this challenge was surmountable because of the repetitive nature of the Caterpillar's melodic lines. Similar to the aria in Scene 2, the accompanimental support for the vocal line also assisted the Caterpillar and Alice in singing through the chromatic lines.

The croquet chorus of Scene 7 perhaps best exemplifies the challenges and benefits of *Down* the Rabbit Hole. This scene features the most complex meter changes (Figure 4.3), and the quick tempo demands strict attention during the learning process. Notably, the meter changes allow for a consistent eighth note, making the shifts easier to process. Additionally, the hummable melody allows for easier memorization, and the unison singing provides a firm foundation for anyone

⁴⁴ Head et al., *Down the Rabbit Hole*, 2022, 73.

struggling with the meter changes. Alice and the Queen of Hearts are the only two people with solo lines in this chorus, but these solos are melodically like the rest of the chorus and feature the same metric shifts. This chorus presented a challenge for every singer; however, it offered a space for growth as singers balanced watching the conductor and engaging in the scene.

The dynamic markings of each of these scenes play an important role in the musicality mentioned here. In each scene, there are no extreme dynamic demands, with most dynamic markings following the dramatic ebb and flow of the scenes. This allows singers to inform their characterization through dynamic markings. The musical considerations score of each scene is shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Musical Considerations Results for *Down the Rabbit Hole*.

	Scene 2	Scene 4	Scene 5	Scene 7
Musical Considerations	3	2	2	3

Vocal Phrasing

The vocal phrasing in *Down the Rabbit Hole* consistently features legato lines without having many melismatic or staccato markings. Additionally, there are rarely any vocal lines extending beyond a comfortable length, allowing ample time to breathe. Compared to the operas analyzed in Chapter 2, these elements make *Down the Rabbit Hole* ideal for furthering the skills of developing singers. All four scenes discussed thus far demonstrate manageable and approachable vocal phrases, allowing singers to develop better breath support and legato lines.

Scene 2 and Scene 5 both feature similar vocal phrases. There are brief moments of dialogue or interjections from the singers alongside ariettas. In both scenes, the singers have ample time to breathe and can focus on legato singing and communication of the story instead of focusing on

vocal agility or articulation. These scenes feature vocal lines like those in *The Hiding Tree*, discussed in Chapter 2.

Scene 4 features more complex vocal phrasing, especially considering phrase length and tempo markings. This fast-paced scene requires Alice to have well-established breath support in a few places; however, as the scene progresses, each character takes turns with a vocal line, allowing for recovery time. Despite the fast pace, with the quarter note marked at 120 beats per minute for most of the scene, the vocal phrases are logical and approachable. The scene is tonal with a "Latin flair" that makes the music memorable and exciting for both the singers and the audience. ⁴⁵

The vocal phrasing in Scene 7 is more challenging than the previously mentioned excerpts. In this scene, the Queen of Hearts, listed as a coloratura soprano, has several glissando passages, a few sixteenth-note scales, and more strictly accented notes than other characters in the opera, shown in Figure 3.4. These marks demonstrate the emotional state of the Queen in this scene and are rarely featured for longer than a few measures at a time. These brief moments of vocal agility and the use of primarily step-wise motion or repeated notes allow the soprano singing the Queen of Hearts to experience some of the demands a coloratura soprano faces in operatic repertoire. The Queen of Hearts role also features benefits regarding the range and tessitura of the role.

The vocal phrasing of each of these scenes presents the singers with short, easily manageable content that focuses on basic vocal techniques such as breath support and legato singing.

Allowing singers to take on a role with fewer challenges creates opportunities for technical development that will better prepare them for future roles or works. The phrasing results for each of these scenes based on the Arneson rubric are provided in Table 4.4.

⁴⁵ Head et al., *Down the Rabbit Hole*, 2022, 56.

Table 4.4 Vocal Phrasing Results for *Down the Rabbit Hole*.

	Scene 2	Scene 4	Scene 5	Scene 7
Vocal Phrasing	2	2.5	2	1

Range/Tessitura

Further support for the pedagogical benefits of *Down the Rabbit Hole* is found in the ranges and tessituras of each role. As mentioned in Chapter 3, most roles began with ambiguous middle-voice ranges and were then tailored to the performers cast to premiere the work. Before writing anything extreme, the composers received specific vocal ranges from each singer and composed vocal lines to avoid extremes of each vocal range. As such, none of the singers is asked to sing anything beyond the generally accepted standard vocal range for each voice type. The standard vocal ranges used are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Vocal Ranges from "Voice Classification an Examination of Methodology."46

Soprano	C4-C6
Mezzo-soprano	A3-A5
Contralto	F3-F5
Countertenor	E3-E5
Tenor	C3-C5
Baritone	A2-A4
Bass	E2-E4

⁴⁶ Robert Shewan, "Voice Classification an Examination of Methodology," *The NATS Bulletin* 35 (January 1979): 17.

Some examples of the thoughtful composition of *Down the Rabbit Hole* can be found in Alice's first aria in Scene 2. In this aria, Alice's vocal line stays on the staff for most of the song, occasionally moving below the staff to a D4, allowing the singer to exercise the chest register. Additionally, this piece stays mainly in the middle-voice for the soprano. Creating an opportunity to exercise the middle voice for a lead soprano role encourages better development of the chest register, a necessary component in developing a well-rounded voice. The light accompaniment and short vocal lines allow this exploration more than many of the soprano arias in any operas analyzed in Chapter 2.

Further examples of the beneficial writing in this opera are in Scenes 5 and 7. Scene 5, "Caterpillar Wisdom," is notable for the optional low note given to the Caterpillar in the opening vocalise. During the composition phase of this project, the composers decided to try lowering the voice parts of the characters Alice meets as she descends further into Wonderland, with the major exception of the Queen, a high soprano role. The Caterpillar, who voices the quintessential question of this story in Scene 5, was written as a bass role, and the singer cast had access to some extremely low notes. Thus, an optional low note was written into the opening vocalise, allowing this singer to utilize his low notes without limiting the accessibility of this role. This low note can be seen in Figure 4.5.

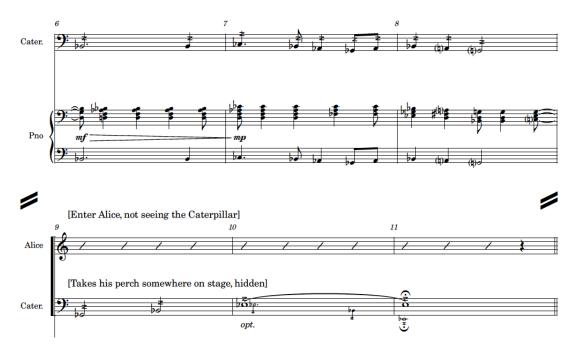


Figure 4.5 Optional Low Note for Caterpillar. Scene 5 measures 6-11, featuring the optional low E2 written for the Caterpillar and the alternative notes for accessibility.⁴⁷

The idea of singing through a pipe or straw inspired some of the music for this vocalise. The Caterpillar was asked to blow bubbles through a pipe and sing into the pipe or hum the initial vocal line, opening to an [a] vowel as he reached the lowest notes. These efforts intentionally set this singer up for success, allowing him to maintain his foundational vocal techniques while singing into the low extreme of his range. After this point, the vocal line moves to a standard middle placement for the Caterpillar, allowing the singer to exercise low notes without sustaining or repeating them.

The Queen of Hearts in Scene 7 further demonstrates the beneficial writing of *Down the*Rabbit Hole. This character, written for a high or coloratura soprano, allows a developing singer to experience singing some high notes without reaching into the extremes demanded of many

⁴⁷ Head et al., *Down the Rabbit Hole*, 2022, 66.

such roles in standard operatic repertoire. For example, in Scene 7, the Queen of Hearts sings primarily at the top of the staff, occasionally extending above the staff through a glissando gesture that creates a vocalise, shown in Figure 3.4. The highest extreme that this character sings comes at the very end of Scene 8, though, as the Queen of Hearts sings through a passage of repeated scales ascending to an A#5 that is sustained, shown in Figure 4.6. Though these high notes are sustained, they are the final notes the Queen sings before she has a musical break. Using repeated scales to approach the high notes on an [a], the approach to these notes allowed the soprano singing the Queen to prepare for the sustained high notes while exercising some vocal agility typical of coloratura soprano repertoire.

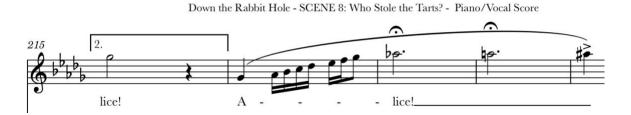


Figure 4.6 Ascending Scale to High Final Notes, Scene 8, mm 215-219.⁴⁸

In *Down the Rabbit Hole*, each role offers some brief challenges, but they never extend beyond the vocal norms of each voice type without having an alternate option. These challenges are short and repeated, offering the singers an opportunity to prepare and recover while learning how to work through each challenge. This differs from the operas discussed in Chapter 2, such as *Così fan tutte* or *Albert Herring*. In these operas, each character bounces from one extreme to another, singing through wide ranges with vocal acrobatics. In *Down the Rabbit Hole*, conversely, the characters may face short moments of vocal agility or extremes in range, but never for extended periods and never without suitable preparation and recovery time in the

60

_

⁴⁸ Head et al., *Down the Rabbit Hole*, 2022, 142.

music. Based on these considerations, Scenes 2, 4, 5, and 7 receive the following scores for range and tessitura.

Table 4.6 Range/Tessitura Results for *Down the Rabbit Hole*.

	Scene 2	Scene 4	Scene 5	Scene 7
Range/Tessitura	2	2	2.5	2

Text Setting

Finally, the setting of the text in this opera is worth noting when considering its pedagogical benefits. In each scene, the music was written to serve the text bringing an element of natural speech to the work. In recitative moments, like those at the beginning of Scene 4, the music features appropriately placed stresses, emphasizing important words and phrases. These recitative sections allow singers to practice the speech-like rhythms found in many standard-repertoire operas on a smaller scale while developing their legato technique.

Speech-like rhythms are also featured in arias and ensemble sections of the opera, such as Alice's aria in Scene 2. Alice's weaving melody creates a sense of stream-of-consciousness thinking in this aria. Alice considers the things around her and everything she experienced in the fall into Wonderland, pondering what she will do now. During this, the vocal line takes chromatic leaps in every direction, never maintaining sustained notes until the very end of the aria when Alice decides to pursue the adventure.

In Scene 7, the Queen's music shows the Queen's quick temper as much as the text does. The Queen's constant interjections of "Off with her head," always sung at the top of the staff on staccato dotted eighth notes, provide insight into the Queen's commanding and petulant behavior. Later in this scene, speech-like writing returns in the croquet chorus. Though this

chorus features constantly changing meters and a quick tempo, the vocal line's thoughtful direction helps the text come through clearly and be more easily memorable for the singers.

Finally, Scene 5 offers some exciting text setting different from the previously discussed scenes. In this scene, the Caterpillar has several drawn-out interjections with Alice, featuring sustained monosyllabic words sung at a *fortissimo*. This occurs as the Caterpillar asks Alice who she is, a principal theme in the work, shown in Figure 4.8. This setting allows the theme to emerge clearly, drawing attention to the central question.

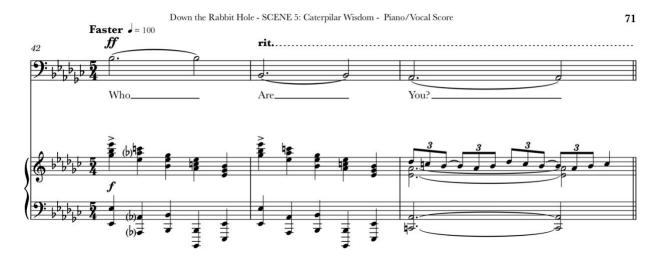


Figure 4.7 Sustained Monosyllables Sung by Caterpillar, Scene 5 mm. 42-44.⁴⁹

Each line's speech-like patterns and memorable settings allowed the singers to learn and memorize the entirety of this opera quickly. Singers memorized the sung selections much more quickly than the spoken dialogue; however, that dialogue provided opportunities for the performers to practice engaging their vocal technique when speaking and singing. Based on Arneson's rubric, these scenes receive the following scores for text setting. Detailed rubrics for each scene analyzed can be found in Appendix B.

-

⁴⁹ Head et al., *Down the Rabbit Hole*, 2022, 71.

Table 4.7 Text Setting Results for *Down the Rabbit Hole*.

	Scene 2	Scene 4	Scene 5	Scene 7
Text Setting	2	2	2	2

Cast Feedback

Further justification for using *Down the Rabbit Hole* for developing voices comes in considering the success of the students singing the premiere production. As previously mentioned, the bass cast as the Caterpillar was not a music major. Though he took voice lessons and sang, this singer was a theatre major and primarily sang in a musical theatre style. This singer needed more assistance learning his role, but he persevered and took advantage of the available weekly coaching times. Performing in *Down the Rabbit Hole* introduced this singer to opera, allowing him to exercise a more classical technique. Additionally, this experience strengthened his musicianship as he learned how to sing with a conductor and navigate extreme chromaticism.

The singer who premiered the role of Alice is also an excellent example of this opera's suitability for developing voices. A singer was under consideration for this role before the music was composed because this role would require the most singing and stage time. However, just before the sing-through in August 2022, the original singer withdrew from the production.

Another singer was approached and agreed to take on the role, learning the entire role two days before the sing-through occurred. This singer grew through the production, improving her memorization skills as well as her performance skills. Her confidence in herself showed in the premier performance, demonstrating growth as a singer and a performer.

Finally, just before the final performance, the singer cast as Alice became ill and could not sing the role. I was able to learn and memorize the entire production in just over twenty-four hours, giving credence to the accessibility of this opera. A graduate, doctoral, or professional-level singer would have little to no challenges in this work, indicating its suitability as a work for undergraduate and developing voices.

In addition to evaluating the work using rubrics, an anonymous survey was sent to the singers from the premier performance to evaluate their experiences. A sophomore vocal performance major commented that the work helped improve sight reading and discipline due to the "advanced rhythms and harmonies." A junior vocal performance major commented that this project helped with learning efficient memorization strategies, developing a better understanding of how to project the speaking voice, and developing an awareness of the scale of movement necessary for stage performance. 51

The feedback from everyone involved in this opera, both during and after the rehearsals and performances, indicates that the entire team experienced growth and learning opportunities because of *Down the Rabbit Hole*. Utilizing analytical tools such as Arneson's rubrics during the compositional process could help create further works like *Down the Rabbit Hole* that are explicitly written for developing singers.

⁻⁰

⁵⁰ Abigail A Head, "Down the Rabbit Hole Singer Feedback Survey" (Athens, March 18, 2023).

⁵¹ IBID

CHAPTER 5

Implications of *Down the Rabbit Hole*

The creation and production of *Down the Rabbit Hole* provided unique opportunities for collaboration between twelve undergraduate singers, two composers, a pianist, a conductor, and myself. The singers learned and performed melodically and rhythmically challenging music, working under the expectation that they would take the time needed to prepare themselves before rehearsals began. They also had the opportunity to take on the challenge of learning a new work from inception through performance.

The composers and I worked closely with the conductor and the singers while finalizing the score, allowing for significant collaboration between singers and composers. Each composer had some experience writing vocal works but had never taken on the challenge of a full opera before this project. The final product was an exceptional blending of two distinct musical styles creating one storyline.

I had the opportunity to act as librettist, music director, stage director, costume and prop master, stage manager, and producer of the production. Through this process, I experienced the challenges of each element of an opera production, including troubleshooting issues particular to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Some of these issues stemmed from my role as the librettist and director of the work. In writing the libretto, I added narrative information in italics as stage directions. However, these directions were not always easily navigable. For example, the transition between Scenes 2 and 3, discussed in Chapter 3, involves creating a flood onstage. Also, Alice falls down a rabbit hole, shrinks, and grows several times on stage. I navigated these

challenges with a strict, small budget and only myself making or purchasing all the necessary props and costume pieces. Considering this, more time for this project would have helped create a more polished finished product. Additionally, having a dedicated space for rehearsal would have been helpful in this process instead of rehearsing in a different room each day of the week. Despite these challenges, this project helped me develop a deeper understanding of how to appeal to an audience through the words, music, and staging of a production.

Outreach Implications

This project aimed to foster an appreciation for opera in local audiences through a familiar story. During production, though, there were several challenges faced including a limited budget, limited personnel, access to rehearsal and performance spaces, limited rehearsal time, and orchestra availability. These challenges are common to performance groups such as universities and young artist programs.

Down the Rabbit Hole had a final budget of \$1000 after receiving the Idea Lab Mini Grant. Ideas for Creative Exploration, a research initiative supported by the University of Georgia, sponsors this fund.⁵² This small budget allowed for the purchase of a handful of props and costume pieces for each character, shown in Appendices C and D. When working with an outreach production that will potentially travel to multiple locations, portability of props, costumes, and set pieces are crucially important. Thus, limiting the pieces given to each character was an asset to both the budget and the transferability of the production. With a slightly larger budget, some funding could have been used to supplement the free radio and social media advertising provided by the performance venues, reaching a wider audience base.

⁻⁻

⁵² "Idea Lab Mini Grants: Ideas for Creative Exploration," Idea Lab Mini Grants | Ideas for Creative Exploration | LAMAR DODD SCHOOL OF ART, accessed June 5, 2023, https://art.uga.edu/student-opportunities/idea-lab-minigrants-ideas-creative-exploration.

Additionally, managing schedules during a busy semester presented many challenges.

Finding rehearsal spaces that were available when the singers were also available was one of the first hurdles as the rehearsal process began. The initially proposed rehearsal schedule was not viable due to insufficient rehearsal spaces. Furthermore, the students could not attend rehearsals regularly due to school ensemble responsibilities and extra-curricular demands. Earlier communication about the need for spaces and a written agreement with students and professors could have alleviated some of these challenges.

Like the singers involved, instrumentalists volunteered for the orchestra of this production. Ultimately, however, the orchestral performance was reverted to a piano-only performance due to a lack of time and space to rehearse the orchestra. Several instrumentalists involved in this endeavor had too many other school ensembles that demanded rehearsal time, resulting in a lack of time for such extra-curricular performances. Setting a rehearsal schedule for the orchestra with more advanced notice could have helped avoid this issue. Many of the challenges faced in this production resulted from the ad hoc nature of this project. Though some students received course credit for participating, most were volunteers. These scheduling and rehearsal space challenges would be less prevalent in a university opera scenes program or a young artist program.

Finally, evaluating the community engagement achieved through the performances helped establish the piece's potential as an outreach production. The two performances of *Down the Rabbit Hole*, held in October of 2022, were open to the public and advertised on local radio and through posters placed around Athens, Georgia. Both performances were well-attended, with nearly full houses, and several children and young audience members were present. Though there was no official survey, several young audience members talked about never having been to an opera before. There was active audience engagement at both performances, and an

introductory script has been developed for future performances to better introduce opera to audience members who are less familiar with the art form. This script can be found in Appendix F.

Impact of *Down the Rabbit Hole*

Undergraduate singers can learn a lot from studying a full role and having the opportunity to perform that role in front of an audience. This kind of experience benefits performance majors by continuing to allow for performance opportunities. It also allows future music educators to speak to what they know when working with pre-professional or amateur singers. Additionally, performances such as these benefit the companies and universities producing them as they can foster communication and interest with new audiences when used as outreach productions.

Works like *Down the Rabbit Hole* are specifically designed to provide myriad opportunities for learning and development, as previously delineated. The music is accessible to preprofessional voices, making it ideal for undergraduate or developing singers. The well-known story provides a familiar but fun setting for all involved. Additionally, the minimal production budget allows a wider array of universities and young artist programs to consider such a project.

Operas like *Down the Rabbit Hole* and other pieces explicitly written for developing voices, such as works by composers Pauline Viardot and Jacques Offenbach, provide pedagogically beneficial opportunities for undergraduate and pre-professional singers. Works like these are performed in some university programs (see Table 2.1), but creating more operas written for developing voices would create better opportunities for developing undergraduate singers.

Further research is needed regarding which operas are best suited to young singers and which are currently being performed by university music programs nationally and internationally. Studying these programs and productions could provide insights into more developmentally beneficial

performance opportunities and create new outreach opportunities to expand community engagement. Through creating and producing works like *Down the Rabbit Hole*, universities and young artist programs would foster opportunities for collaboration and creation in developing voices, impacting both current and future artists in the operatic field.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- "2022~23 Music Events ~ List View." JMU, March 24, 2023. https://www.jmu.edu/music/calendar.shtml#2022.
- "About UM Opera Theatre." Opera Theatre | University of Mississippi. Accessed March 26, 2023. https://opera.olemiss.edu/.
- "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (Vocal Score)." Will Todd Composer. Accessed September 22, 2022. https://willtodd.co.uk/product/alices-adventues-in-wonderland-vocal-score/.
- "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland Will Todd." WNO, September 22, 2022. https://wno.org.uk/archive/2020-2021/alices-adventures-in-wonderland-will-todd.
- "Amy Scurria, Alice, an Operatic Wonderland." Amy Scurria. Accessed September 22, 2022. https://www.amyscurria.com/alice?fbclid=IwAR3KvflPu0H7S5_lsDHKJ2xLxyFZ3EC1IvSQ_ik5zCweWzDRi4HTpmwEd64.
- Arneson, Christopher, and Lauren Athey-Janka. *Literature for Teaching: A Guide for Choosing Solo Vocal Repertoire from a Developmental Perspective*. Delaware, OH: Inside View Press, 2014.
- Barnes, Edward. The Hiding Tree: a musical tale. (2000).
- Baer, Shaun. *Lauren LaBarre as Alice Standing Behind the White Rabbit's House*. Photograph. Lyndon Art House Athens, GA, October 6, 2022.
- Berger, Julien F. Alice In Wonderland Opera Composition Project, June 12, 2021.
- Britten, Benjamin, Henry Boys, and Eric Crozier. *Albert Herring: A Comic Opera in 3 Acts. Libretto Freely Adapted from a Short Story of Guy De Maupassant. Klavierausz. MIT Text.*London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1948.
- Carroll, Lewis. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking Glass*. San Diego, CA: Canterbury Classics, 2017.
- "Chin, Unsuk Alice in Wonderland." Boosey & Hawkes. Accessed September 22, 2022. https://www.boosey.com/opera/moreDetails?musicID=57667.

- "The College of Fine Arts." Sarah and Ernest Butler Opera Center The University of Texas at Austin. Accessed March 26, 2023. https://sites.utexas.edu/butleroperacenter/current-season/past-productions/2022-23/.
- "Events Calendar: Frost School of Music: University of Miami." Frost School of Music | University of Miami. Accessed March 26, 2023. https://frost-music-live.miami.edu/calendar/index.html.
- Gladwin, Prescia. "The 8 Best Alice in Wonderland Musical and Other Adaptations." Icy Tales, July 19, 2022. https://icytales.com/8-alice-in-wonderland-musical-and-other-adaptations/.
- Hart, Sarah. *Stage Directors Handbook: Opportunities for Directors and Choreographers*. 2nd ed. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2006.
- Head, Abigail A. "Alice Auditions List," n.d.
- Head, Abigail A. "Down the Rabbit Hole Directing Score." Athens, GA, 2022.
- Head, Abigail A. "Down the Rabbit Hole Singer Feedback Survey." Athens: Georgia, March 18, 2023.
- Head, Abigail A, Julien F Berger, and Bryan Michael Wysocki. "Down the Rabbit Hole Brainstorming." Athens: The University of Georgia, September 10, 2021.
- Head, Abigail A, Julien F Berger, and Bryan Michael Wysocki. Down the Rabbit Hole, 2022.
- Head, Abigail A. Two Flamingo Croquet Mallets. Photograph. Athens, Georgia, March 27, 2023.
- Head, Elizabeth F. *Caterpillar Wisdom*. Photograph. Ramsey Recital Hall Athens, GA, October 14, 2022. Ramsey Recital Hall Athens, GA.
- Head, Elizabeth F. *Cheshire Cat Backstage*. Photograph. Lyndon House Arts Center Athens, GA, October 6, 2022. Lyndon House Arts Center Athens, GA.
- Head, Elizabeth F. *Down the Rabbit Hole Mad Tea Party*. Photograph. Ramsey Recital Hall Athens, GA, October 14, 2022. Ramsey Recital Hall Athens, GA.
- Humperdinck, Engelbert, Adelheid Wette, Hans-Josef Irmen, Tom Hammond, and Richard Kleinmichel. *Hänsel Und Gretel*. Rev. ed. Schott, 1992.
- "Idea Lab Mini Grants: Ideas for Creative Exploration." Idea Lab Mini Grants | Ideas for Creative Exploration | LAMAR DODD SCHOOL OF ART. Accessed June 5, 2023. https://art.uga.edu/student-opportunities/idea-lab-mini-grants-ideas-creative-exploration.
- "JMU School of Music Ensembles: Opera Theatre." JMU, February 20, 2023. https://www.jmu.edu/music/areas/ensembles/opera-theatre.shtml.

- "Juilliard 2019-20: An Eye-Popping Performance Year." The Juilliard School, August 15, 2019. https://www.juilliard.edu/news/140821/juilliard-2019-20-eye-popping-performance-year.
- "Juilliard 2021-22: The Return of the Performance Season." at The Juilliard School, September 28, 2021. https://www.juilliard.edu/news/151716/juilliard-2021-22-return-performance-season.
- "Juilliard Announces 2018-19 Season of Operas and Vocal Arts Performances." The Juilliard School, July 12, 2018. https://www.juilliard.edu/news/132996/juilliard-announces-2018-19-season-operas-and-vocal-arts-performances.
- "Juilliard Announces 2022-23 Season of More than 700 Events Showcasing Its Students in Music, Dance, Drama, and Preparatory Divisions, with Companion Livestream and on-Demand Performances." at The Juilliard School, August 1, 2022. https://www.juilliard.edu/news/157436/juilliard-announces-2022-23-season-more-700-events-showcasing-its-students-music-dance.
- Kneer, Beasley Lydia. "An Introduction to an Operetta: Pauline Viardot's Le Dernier Sorcier for the Young Opera Studio." Dissertation, The University of Alabama, 2018.
- Malone, Martha L. Mercer University Opera Program Question, March 23, 2023.
- Menotti, Gian Carlo. *Amahl and The Night Visitors: Opera in One Act, Libretto*. New York: G. Schirmer, 2010.
- Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus. Cosi Fan Tutte/Women Are like That: An Opera in Two Acts. English Version by Ruth and Thomas Martin. Vocal Score. Italian/English Text. Schirmer, 1952.
- "Opera." Opera | New England Conservatory. Accessed March 26, 2023. https://necmusic.edu/departments/opera?page=0.
- "Opera/Voice." University of Cincinnati. Accessed March 26, 2023. https://ccm.uc.edu/areas-of-study/academic-units/opera-voice.html?page=13.
- Shewan, Robert. "Voice Classification an Examination of Methodology." *The NATS Bulletin* 35 (January 1979): 17–27.
- Suax Music About. Accessed September 22, 2022. https://www.suaxmusic.com/about?fbclid=IwAR1UxkB9_UxAnVfLdULKU8qNIcfFeRwWWTqtjdmR0weq5OSImaEVKaE6FaE.
- "Townsend School of Music I Calendar Mercer University." Accessed March 27, 2023. https://music.mercer.edu/calendar/.

- Vaughan, Stuart. *Directing Plays: A Working Professional's Method*. New York: Longman, 1993.
- Wysocki, Bryan Michael. "Biography." Bryan Michael Wysocki. Accessed September 22, 2022. https://bryanwysocki.com/biography-1?fbclid=IwAR0VP28H9rooXSCkD4FsA7rd-v7D43ai4kxVGDKG2fjKc_2p9shxpSg0WGA.
- Wysocki, Bryan Michael. Screenshot from premier performance recording of Down the Rabbit Hole at Lyndon House Arts Center. October 6, 2022. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sx948Reu4K4&list=PL3NsTpX7UwfjllBE5HKWdcN7SU7V3drc1&index=1.
- Wysocki, Bryan Michael. Screenshot from second performance recording of Down the Rabbit Hole at Ramsey Recital Hall. October 14, 2022. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OhLIMxpIUWs.
- YouTube. YouTube. Accessed March 26, 2023. https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=opera%2Bcnu.

APPENDIX A: DETAILED OPERA RUBRICS

Hansel and Gretel Rubric:

		Leggi
Accompaniment	3	The accompaniment is relatively dense, though it provides a firm foundation for the melodic line in aria and duet sections. There are moments of lighter accompaniment when the children are singing at the lower end of their registers and the accompaniment is denser when the singers are singing louder or at the top of their ranges, allowing the singers to cut through the accompaniment more easily in the dense moments.
Characterization/Acting Demands	3	The Witch in particular demands a lot of the performer, but Hansel and Gretel also need to have the ability to portray childlike emotions and reactions believably.
Diction/Articulation	3	Depending on whether the English or German text is used, the diction for this opera can pose some challenges for the singers. The fairytale language and quick, rhythmic settings can make some of the text difficult to navigate.
Dynamics	3	There are a few challenging dynamic requirements, such as soft sustained high notes for both Hansel and Gretel (e.g. Act 3 scene 2 mm. 72-75).
Vocal Phrasing	2	Some challenging phrases, including quick dotted rhythms and hemiolas.
Musical Considerations	3	The overture of the opera gives a good indication of the tonality of the work as a whole. There are some moments of chromatic movement, but there is a strong sense of tonality throughout the piece.
Range/Tessitura	3	There are a few arias and duets in which singers are required to sing in a tessitura that might be taxing. However, many of the ranges and tessituras used within this opera are not extreme or out of the ordinary. The only character that might face specific vocal challenges is the Witch because finding a character voice could help further define the Witch within the work.
Registration	3	When the accompaniment becomes heavy there are moments in this opera when it would be easy to bring heaviness into the voice as well, particularly for the parent characters who may be sung by someone younger in a college setting. Singers should avoid adding heaviness to the voice to add age to the character.

Respiration	2	The vocal lines are manageable in length with ample
		opportunities to take a breath that allows the singer to reset
		and be fully prepared for the next phrase.
Text Setting	3	The text is prioritized within the musical writing. When
		there is a lot of quick text, the accompanying instruments are
		generally lighter, allowing the text to come through more
		easily. However, there are some words that have been
		created for rhyming and story-telling purposes that might
		pose challenges.
Vowels and Vowel	2.5	Depending on the language being sung, there are areas in
Sequencing		which the vowels may not be helpful, particularly when
		moving to extreme highs or extreme lows of a range. In
		general, however, these areas are minimal in this work.
Words/Story	2	The story is very familiar and accessible. With the use of
		rhyming and fairytale themes, the story lends itself to
		memorization.
Total Score	32.5	

Amahl and the Night Visitors Rubric

Accompaniment	2	As a chamber opera, the music in <i>Amahl and the Night Visitors</i> is going to be less dense than other works with heavier orchestration. The music is frequently lightly underscoring the vocal lines with few exceptions for dramatic moments.
Characterization/Acting Demands	2	The Mother has some acting challenges as she is an older character in a specific walk of life that might not be familiar to a typical undergraduate performer. Additionally, the kings have quirks that might present a challenge. However, most of the characters have very relatable qualities.
Diction/Articulation	2	The diction of this piece demands attention to consonants, especially in such numbers as "This is my box." However, there are not many diction and articulation challenges within this work.
Dynamics	2	There are a few moments of dynamic extremes, particularly for the Mother in "All that gold." As this is the most dramatic point in the story for this character, though, these extremes are easier to prepare for.
Vocal Phrasing	2	There are few long vocal lines, and most of the singing is lyric and legato, allowing singers to focus on the text instead of needing to also navigate lines demanding vocal agility.

Musical Considerations	3	There are a few tonal challenges in this work, especially for the three kings in their ensemble singing. The chromaticism
		in their lines and the tight harmonies the kings must use
		require a good ear and attention to detail. Most of the other
		music has a well-established tonal center that is supported in
		the orchestration.
Range/Tessitura	3	The kings and the mother have some challenges in their
		music regarding tessitura. The Mother stays close to the top
		of the staff in recitative moments before having to make
		octave leaps in an aria (five measures after rehearsal 9).
Registration	3	The Mother must be able to easily navigate between and
		balance head voice and chest voice in several sections of this
		song. Amahl, as well, needs access to this depending on if
		Amahl is cast as a soprano or a boy-soprano.
Respiration	2	Though there are some long phrases, there is ample
		opportunity for slow, relaxed intakes of breath to prepare for
		future phrases.
Text Setting	2	The text is prioritized throughout this work and the use of
		relatively modern English allows for easier memorization for
	-	any native English speakers.
Vowels and Vowel	2	Many of the vowels through passaggio areas are helpful to
Sequencing		the singers with some areas where modification would be
		helpful. For example, in the duet that Amahl and his Mother
		sing together at the beginning of the opera, Amahl sings
		"sleep" on an A5. The [i] vowel here would be easier to
		manage on an [I]. Most notably, the consonants between
		vowels make some of the vowel navigation in this work
Wanda/Ctany	2	challenging.
Words/Story	4	The familiar story is short and memorable both for singers
		and audience members. This story is especially suited to
Total Score	27	younger audience members.
Total Score	41	

The Hiding Tree Rubric

A acomponing	3	This short words was written with minns accommonity
Accompaniment	3	This short work was written with piano accompaniment only. The biggest challenges in the accompaniment are
		occasionally being able to find entrance notes,
		particularly for the Monster (an SATB chorus) and
		sometimes for the sisters.
Clares Assistation / Assista	1	
Characterization/Acting	2	The characters in this story are larger than life, but they
Demands		are also relatable to most people. The narrator has to find
		ways of being engaging and fitting into different
		moments of the story without being distracting. The
		monster provides opportunities for singers to become
		more familiar with how to use their bodies while
		singing.
Diction/Articulation	1	The most challenging thing about the diction in this
		work is maintaining clarity when using familiar, current
		English. The narrator, an entirely spoken role, has more
		of this element than the sung roles.
Dynamics	3.5	There are several challenging dynamic markings for
		both the sisters and for the Monster in this piece. The
		Big Sister at the end of this work is required to maintain
		a <i>forte</i> at the bottom of the staff. Similarly, the soprano
		head of the Monster must use <i>forte</i> singing at the bottom
		of the staff before going up to the top of the staff.
		Avoiding heaviness from the dynamics should be
		prioritized.
Vocal Phrasing	1	The phrases throughout this work are easy to navigate.
		Though there are a couple of challenging rhythms, most
		of the singing is legato and there are no demands for
		agility.
Musical Considerations	3	There is always a clearly recognizable melody in this
		piece, though none of the sections are strophic. The
		music is tonal and approachable with some chromatic
		moments.
Range/Tessitura	3	The Monster has some challenging moments in terms of
		range/tessitura, especially if singers are accustomed to
		singing in a solo style and inexperienced with small
		ensemble singing. The treble voices have high moments
		but must have access to lower notes. Similarly, the bass
		voices also need access to some higher notes.
Registration	3	The Monster's sections could present challenges with
-		carrying heaviness from the lower end of the range into
		higher sections due to the vocal line. All characters need
		to be able to navigate the voice between chest and head
		registers.
		10810010.

Respiration	3	There are a few long phrases, especially for the sisters. Both sisters should be able to quickly take a breath that prepares them for the next phrases without allowing the vocal mechanism to unnecessarily engage.
Text Setting	2.5	The text lends itself to syllabification in several sections, but it is manageable. Prioritizing vowels will help to communicate the words best. Speech rhythms are used in several places, allowing the text to come through clearly.
Vowels and Vowel Sequencing	2.5	Vowels are used to good advantage in this piece, especially for helping voices to blend well. For example, the Monster sings "you" several times in a descending scale. In this moment, the voices cascade into each other, but having a pure [u] vowel allows for a crisp blend that creates a disconcerting power for the singers voicing the Monster.
Words/Story	3	This story is little known and has some slightly scary elements that may make it difficult to use as an outreach production. Additionally, there are some strange uses of words that may make them more challenging to memorize.
Total Score	30.5	

Albert Herring Rubric

Accompaniment	3	The orchestration of this piece is fairly dense, but the densest moments are either when there is no singing or when the singers are all singing together. In solo aria moments and duets, the orchestration is lighter and more supportive of the vocal lines. Additionally, there is some tonal ambiguity about the piece which features a significant amount of chromaticism.
Characterization/Acting Demands	3.5	The characters in this work are relatively relatable with a few older characters who may be more challenging for a younger performer. There is also the challenge of the title character being inebriated on stage.
Diction/Articulation	3	The diction in this piece demands attention to consonants, especially in ensemble sections. There are several moments when the entire cast is singing together, but there are multiple lines of dialogue happening. This demands more crispness in order for listeners to understand the text.

Dynamics	4	There are multiple moments of shallonging dynamic
Dynamics	4	There are multiple moments of challenging dynamic markings for many characters. Quiet sustained high
		notes and extended periods of singing <i>forte</i> both occur in
		this piece, making the dynamic requirements more
V1 Dl	4	challenging.
Vocal Phrasing	4	Several characters, such as Miss Wordsworth, have
		some challenges in terms of vocal agility. There is a
		significant amount of text painting within vocal lines,
		enriching the story, but also asking for a lot from the
Marrian I Committee and	2	singers.
Musical Considerations	3	The melodic line is often well-supported in the
		orchestra, especially when fewer voices are singing.
		Occasionally, the melody is clear, but there are also
		sections in which the vocal interjections mimic speech
		and are more challenging to accomplish with the
Dongo/Toggituwo	3.5	orchestration.
Range/Tessitura	3.5	Several characters in this piece have a wide tessitura,
		making the general makeup of the work more
Dogistantion	3	challenging for most singers.
Registration	3	There are a few sections of this piece in which singers
		could carry heaviness up through their passaggio to
		account for the dynamic demands or the weight of the
		orchestra. This is particularly likely in the ensemble sections.
Respiration	3	
Respiration	3	There are long phrases required of many main characters in this opera. There are also several patter-like sections
		that require quick intake of breath.
Text Setting	2.5	The text, especially in solo and duet moments, is fairly
Text betting	2.5	easy to understand. The music is written in speech-like
		rhythms to help the text come across more clearly. In the
		crowd scenes when multiple people are singing at the
		same time this allows for a crowded sense of sound,
		although the text can easily become obscured if diction
		is not precise.
Vowels and Vowel	3	There are some tricky passages with sustained vowels.
Sequencing		For example, everyone sings a melismatic "well done"
1····8		sustaining "done" through the melisma. This vowel, [^],
		can create tension when sustained, especially at the top
		of the staff. Some modification is necessary.
Words/Story	2	This comedic story has elements of drama, romance, and
- •		fun that make it entertaining if a bit long for some
		younger audience members. Set in England, the text is
		slightly old fashioned, but not terribly challenging to
		memorize for native English speakers.
Total Score	37.5	6 · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
	10,10	

APPENDIX B: DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE RUBRICS

Down the Rabbit Hole: Alice Aria

Accompaniment	2.5	Accompaniment is flavoing and provides a standy driving
Accompaniment	2.3	Accompaniment is flowing and provides a steady, driving rhythm throughout. There are moments when the
		accompaniment is in unison with the singer, but as the song
		progresses, the singer is less supported by the
		accompaniment line.
Characterization/Acting	2	Alice is a young girl who is falling through space,
Demands		experiencing something strange and new. This scene
		provides an opportunity to explore new movement while
		singing.
Diction/Articulation	2	This aria is set in such a way that the text can be made clear
		without great effort from the singer.
Dynamics	1	There are few dynamic markings provided for the singer in
		this aria, but there is nothing extreme required of the singer.
Vocal Phrasing	2	The rhythms and phrases within this piece are
		straightforward, not asking much. The piano line helps to
		keep things moving and provides a steady, metronomic
		foundation for the singer.
Musical Considerations	3	The tonality of this piece is challenging and not suitable for a
		true beginner. However, there is enough support that this
		piece is suited for a singer with a trained ear and good work
		ethic.
Range/Tessitura	2	D4-D5; The singer stays on the staff for the majority of the
		song.
Registration	2	This piece sits low on the staff for most sopranos, but the
9		light accompaniment and the few dynamic markings allow
		the singer to freely explore this lower registral area without
		adding weight to the voice.
Respiration	2	Short phrasing allows for easy breathing.
Text Setting	2	This song could easily become syllabic if the singer is not
		paying attention to the vocal line.
Vowels and Vowel	2	The vowels used in this aria are in places that are generally
Sequencing		helpful for singing. For example, Bb4 at the end of the song
~ - 1		is on an [^] vowel, allowing for an open and relaxed vocal
		mechanism. (mm.71)
		morname (mmi, 1)

Words/Story	2	The text of this aria is a monologue for Alice as she falls
		down the rabbit hole. She asks herself several questions
		throughout the fall, which provides a throughline for the
		song. The rhyme scheme should also help with
		memorization.
Total Score	24.5	

Down the Rabbit Hole: Alice Gets the Gloves

		·
Accompaniment	2.5	The accompaniment in this scene provides a steady foundation for the singers, though it is frequently offsetting the quarter and eighth note patterns in the vocal lines. There are several familiar figures heard in the accompaniment line such as the rabbit's running music (mm. 3-4 and 22-23) and Alice's growing music (mm33-34) and shrinking music (mm. 124-125).
Characterization/Acting	2	This scene is very playful and provides an opportunity for
Demands		singers to get out of their comfort zones with interactions that are fantastical and comical.
Diction/Articulation	2	The text in this scene does not have challenging consonant clusters.
Dynamics	2	This scene features a slow build from mezzo-piano and mezzo-forte singing to a fortissimo section at the end of the scene. At that point, the entire cast is singing on stage, and they are assisted by the accompaniment.
Vocal Phrasing	2.5	There are some challenging dotted rhythms, but the accompaniment helps to clarify the rhythmic structure of the scene through offset beats and strong accents.
Musical Considerations	2	This scene contains a memorable melody that, despite the challenging rhythmic places, is accessible and enjoyable for singers and listeners.
Range/Tessitura	2	Rabbit: D3-F4 Alice: Db4-F5 Bill: D#4-E5
Registration	2	In the chorus of this scene the text "Aim the coal and fill the house" has the word "coal" at the peak of the vocal line. The [ko] of "coal" sets singers up for success through the use of a velar consonant followed by an [o], a vowel which, when formed correctly, helps singers to lower the larynx and achieve a relaxed open throat position.
Respiration	2	The phrases within this scene are short, allowing for time to breathe.
Text Setting	2	This scene could become syllabic, but the offset rhythms in the accompaniment, as well as the whimsical rhymes within the text, help combat this tendency.

Vowels and Vowel	3	When composing this work, the composers and librettist	
Sequencing		carefully considered the vocal ranges of each singer, as well	
		as considering the average passaggio placements for each	
		voice type. With this information in mind, each scene was	
		composed to assist through challenging areas instead of	
		hindering or creating further difficulty.	
Words/Story	2	This scene is playful, both in text and melody, and allows for	
		easy memorization and connection with the text.	
Total Score	26		

Down the Rabbit Hole Caterpillar Wisdom

Accompaniment	2	The accompaniment for this scene frequently mirrors the vocal line. This supports singers as they navigate challenging
		chromaticism.
Characterization/Acting	2	This scene is fairly serious and not as playful as some of the
Demands		other scenes within the work, but that allows for a different acting challenge for both singers.
Diction/Articulation	1	There are no challenging consonant clusters or vowel sounds required in this scene.
Dynamics	1	There are no extreme dynamics nor challenging approaches to specific dynamics within this scene.
Vocal Phrasing	2	The vocal lines in this scene are not as tonal as some of the
		others and heavily feature chromaticism to add a mysterious sound for the caterpillar. The chromaticism is supported by
		the accompaniment.
Musical Considerations	2	The short aria at the end of this scene recalls some of the
		opening melody for the caterpillar. Alice sings more of her
		interjections in this scene (mm. 12-28), indicating her
		acceptance of the singing she has experienced in
D //E	2.5	Wonderland thus far.
Range/Tessitura	2.5	Alice: Db4 – Eb5
		Caterpillar: Gb2-Db4 (Optional Eb2 written for the singer
		cast in the role)
Registration	2	This scene was written with specific singers in mind and
		their particular vocal challenges were considered.
Respiration	3	The phrases in this scene are longer than in some previous
		scenes, but finding places to breathe is manageable.

Text Setting	2	Though Alice sings many words in this, her vocal line is written with the flow of the words in mind. The Caterpillar's vocal line features several measures of humming or singing on an open vowel. This allows for focus on developing legato singing during the entire opening of the scene. The Caterpillar's following lines are primarily short interjections that, though potentially prone to syllabification, are meant to be pointed questions.
Vowels and Vowel Sequencing	3	When composing this piece, the composers and librettist carefully considered the vocal ranges of each singer, as well as considering the average passaggio placements for each voice type. With this information in mind, each scene was composed to assist through challenging areas instead of hindering or creating further difficulty.
Words/Story	2.5	Although Alice says a lot in this scene, the text for both Alice and the Caterpillar is familiar from the original story.
Total Score	25	

Down the Rabbit Hole Queen's Croquet Court (Chorus)

Accompaniment	2.5	The accompaniment in this chorus is playing the vocal
•		melody, providing a necessary foundation for the difficult
		rhythmic and metric changes within this chorus.
Characterization/Acting	2	This scene features every character in the work and allows
Demands		for some playful interactions between each character.
Diction/Articulation	3	There are several challenging words in this scene that are sung quickly such as "squirrely hedgehog" (m. 138).
Dynamics	1	There are no dynamic extremes within this chorus.
Vocal Phrasing	1	The vocal lines in this chorus are straightforward melodically.
Musical Considerations	3	The metric changes within this chorus create a challenge, however the catchy melody that is constantly supplied by the accompaniment helps combat some of this challenge.
Range/Tessitura	2	Chorus: Unison Alice: G#4-F#5 Queen of Hearts: E4-E5
Registration	1	There are no specific registration challenges in this piece.
Respiration	2	There are some longer phrases in this chorus, but the rapid tempo helps alleviate some of the demand this places on singers.
Text Setting	2	This chorus is repetitive, allowing for easier memorization.

Vowels and Vowel	2	When composing this piece, the composers and librettist
Sequencing		carefully considered the vocal ranges of each singer, as well as considering the average passaggio placements for each voice type. With this information in mind, each scene was composed to assist through challenging areas instead of
		hindering or creating further difficulty.
Words/Story	2	The repetitive nature of this chorus helps with memorization and the comical nature of the text allows for a playfulness that the scene needs in order to be effectively communicated.
Total Score	23.5	

APPENDIX C: CATALOGUE OF COSTUMES

Character	Costume Piece
Alice	Blue Dress, Growing/Shrinking Apron
Queen of Hearts	Tiara, "Queen of Hearts" Sash
March Hare	Brown Rabbit Ears, Rabbit Tail
Knave of Hearts	Jester Hat
Duck/Bill/Card Soldier 5	Duck Bill/Gardener Hat/Card 5 Costume
Dodo/Card Soldier 7	Bird Wings/Card 7 Costume
Mouse/Card Soldier 2	Mouse Ears, Tail/Card 2 Costume
Mad Hatter	Orange Top Hat with Card
King of Hearts	Crown, "King of Hearts" Sash
White Rabbit	White Rabbit Ear Top Hat, Rabbit Tail
Cheshire Cat	Cat Ears, Cat Tail, Cat Paw Gloves
Caterpillar	Antenna Headband

APPENDIX D: CATALOGUE OF PROPS AND SET PIECES

SCENE	PROPS
SCENE 2: DOWN THE RABBIT	Pocket Watch, Fan, Rose, Crown, Drink Me Bottle, Eat
HOLE	Me Box, Gloves
INTERLUDE 1: FILLING THE	
WORLD WITH TEARS	Water (2 sheets of fabric)
SCENE 3: CAUCUS RACE	"SOAP BOX" sign and podium, candies
SCENE 4: ALICE GETS THE	White Rabbit's House Cutout, "Drink Me" Bottle, Bucket
GLOVES	and Coals
SCENE 5: CATERPILLAR	
WISDOM	Bubble Pipe, Pieces of Mushroom
SCENE 6: MAD TEA PARTY	Tea Set, Table Cloth
SCENE 7: QUEEN'S CROQUET	
COURT	Bucket, Roses, Paint Brushes, Flamingo Mallets
SCENE 8: WHO STOLE THE	
TARTS?	Tray of Tarts, Tea Cup, Evidence Scroll

APPENDIX E: DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE PROPOSED REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

First Meeting with Erika, Alyssa, and Abigail	Monday, August 22 nd - 1:50-2:40
Sing Through – ALL SINGERS CALLED	Monday, August 29 th - 4:30-6
Available Coaching Times Erika (MWF) and	MWF - 1:50-2:40
Abigail (MW)	
Music Rehearsal Times	MWF - 4:30-7
Staging Times	MWF – 4:30-7; T/Th – 5:30-8:15
Orchestra Rehearsal Dates	Sept 26, 28, 30; Oct 3, 5 – 4:30-7
First Performance- Piano Performance at	Thursday, October 6 th – 5:30
Lyndon House	
Orchestra Sing Through	Sunday, October 9 th – Time TBA
Orchestra Walk Through	Monday, October 10 th – 4:30-7
Orchestra Dress Rehearsal	Wednesday, October 12 th – 4:30-7
Final Performance – Ramsey Recital Hall	Friday, October 14 th – 5:30

APPENDIX F: DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE PIANO/VOCAL SCORE WITH INTRODUCTION Introduction:

Who here has seen an opera? Have you ever heard of an opera?

An opera is a story that is told almost entirely through singing. There are a lot of different kinds of singers in an opera. There are people who sing high; they are called sopranos and tenors. Could I have one of my sopranos or tenors sing something high for us? (Brief vocalise from soprano either excerpting an aria or just a vocal exercise).

There are also singers who sing low. They are called mezzo-sopranos and basses or baritones. Let's hear how low a bass or mezzo can sing. (Brief vocalise from bass either excerpting an aria or a vocalise).

The singers get to wear fun costumes to help show what characters they are playing. In this piece we have a cat, a caterpillar, a King and Queen, and the White Rabbit, to name just a few.

These singers train for hours to make sure that they know all of their notes and words.

Sometimes those words are in different languages like Italian, French, German, or Spanish. Do any of you speak Italian? Don't worry, today's performance is in English.

While they are learning the opera, the singers have to pay close attention to the parts they sing as well as the music that accompanies them. Sometimes there are cues in the music that indicate what is happening on stage. For example, a composer might write a little excerpt, called a motif, which is used for a particular character when they are talked about or when they come on stage. In this opera you'll hear specific music for moments like the White Rabbit running around the stage (cue music from piano), Alice growing tall (cue music), Alice shrinking small (cue music),

or the Queen of Hearts calling "Off with her head!" (Cue music). See if you can hear any other motifs in the performance!

We all rehearsed, practiced, and worked hard to bring this story to life for you and we hope you enjoy this production of *Down the Rabbit Hole*!

This is a perusal score and is only intended for personal use.

For performance materials, please contact:

Abigail Head Salmerón

abigailahead@gmail.com

Bryan Wysocki

bryan.m.wysocki@gmail.com

Julien Berger

suaxmusic@gmail.com

Version correct as of March 28, 2023

PIANO & VOCAL SCORE

an opera in one act story based on "Alice in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll Composed by Asian Roman & Roman & Roman & Day 11.

Composed by Glien Berger & Bryan Wysocki

Libretto by Abigail Head
Edite and Engraved by Bryan Wysocki

Cast List and Voice Types

Printed here in order from highest to lowest voicetype.

Alice - Lauren LaBarre, Soprano

Queen of Hearts - Isabella Castano, Sorrino [C4-Bb5]

March Hare - Sadie Hammond, Mezzo Soprano [B3-E5] Knave of Hearts - Kalissa Hernandez, Soprano [E4-E5]

Duck/Bill/Card Soldier 5 - Presley Dal Mezzo-Soprano [Bb3-F5]

Dodo/Card Soldier 7 - Madelynn Kexander, Soprano [G3-E5] Mouse/Card Soldier 2 - Theo Schramm, Tenor [E3-F#4] Mad Hatter - Brooks Todd, Tenor [E3 - F#4]

King of Hearts - Tanne Dziedzic, Baritone [C#3-F4]

Rabbit - Spence Kenyon, Tenor [A2-E4]

Cheshire Cat Schin Drake, Baritone [A2-E4]

Caterpillar - Housen Vanlandingham, Bass [Eb2-Db4]

nsemble SATB Chorus

Soprano - [Bb3-F#5]

Alto - [Bb3-D5]

Tenor - [C#3-G4]

Bass - [F2-D4]

Slashes that fill a bar - Spoken dialogue, out of time {...} - Dialogue continues as written in Libretto

Orchestra and Instrumentation

Chamber Version

single winds and brass, timpani plus percussion, single to triple strings

Flute (dbl. Piccolo)

Oboe
Clarinet in Bb (All Bass Clarinet)
Bassoon

Horn in K

Trumped in C

Trombone

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello
Contrabass

[NOTE - THIS IS THE PIANO & VOCAL SCORE]

Down the Rabbit Hole

Lewis Carroll & Abigail Head

Julien Berger & Bryan Wysocki









8

In This Scene: ALL SCENE 1: Prologue, Golden Afternoon



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 1: Prologue, Golden Afternoon - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 1: Prologue, Golden Afternoon - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 1: Prologue, Golden Afternoon - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 1: Prologue, Golden Afternoon - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL] 13 44 Knave off pil grim's with er'd of flow - wers__ pluck'd in far wreath King grim's with flow - wers__ pluck'd far off pil er'd wreath abbit across stage]₄₈ Alice Knave land King land [Running a Rab.

Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 1: Prologue, Golden Afternoon - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 1: Prologue, Golden Afternoon - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 1: Prologue, Golden Afternoon - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



ITS: Alice, Rabbit, Chorus

SCENE 2: Down the Rabbit-Hole



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE





PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 2: Down the Rabbit-Hole - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 2: Down the Rabbit-Hole - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE





PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE







INTERLUDE 1: Filling the World with Tears



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 3: Caucus Race - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 3: Caucus Race - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 3: Caucus Race - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]







Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 3: Caucus Race - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

38



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE





PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 3: Caucus Race - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]









Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 4: Alice gets the Gloves - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]

ITS: Alice, Rabbit, Bill, Chorus SCENE 4: Alice gets the Gloves

50





PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE





Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 4: Alice gets the Gloves - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]







Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 4: Alice gets the Gloves - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 4: Alice gets the Gloves - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]











Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 4: Alice gets the Gloves - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 4: Alice gets the Gloves - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



INTERLUDE 2: Into the Forest







PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE









PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 5: Caterpillar Wisdom - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]









PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 5: Caterpillar Wisdom - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

80 Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 5: Caterpillar Wisdom - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL] 128 129 Alice I've ne - ver seen a Hat - ter be - fore with the Hare so I think I'll take my chan - ces 8 131 130 im - ply mad Alice if he's rav - ing mad like the Che - shire Cat won - der [Exit Alice] 135 136 137 Alice

INTERLUDE 3: Through the Maddening Way



82 Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 6: Mad Tea Party - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL] SCENE 6: Mad Tea Party ITS: Alice, Hatter, Hare Waltz d = 72[Enter Alice] 9 Alice [Enter March Hare, sat at the table, talking and laughing] March Hare [Enter Mad Hatter, sat at the table, talking and laughing] Mad Hatter **Waltz** J. = 72 [Notices the table and tries to join] Alice Hare Mad



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE









PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE









PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 6: Mad Tea Party - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 7: Queen's Croquet Court - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]

ITS: ALL

94

SCENE 7: Queen's Croquet Court





PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE









PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE





PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE







Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 7: Queen's Croquet Court - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 7: Queen's Croquet Court - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 7: Queen's Croquet Court - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 7: Queen's Croquet Court - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 7: Queen's Croquet Court - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE





Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 7: Queen's Croquet Court - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

Down the Rabbit Hole - INTERLUDE 4: From the Court to the Courtroom - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]

116

INTERLUDE 4: From the Court to the Courtroom



117

ITS: ALL

SCENE 8: Who Stole the Tarts?



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 8: Who Stole the Tarts? - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]













PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE









PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 8: Who Stole the Tarts? - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 8: Who Stole the Tarts? - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL] 131 120 121 Rab. men - tioned me to him She good char - ac - ter but said I could not swim. me a Pno 123 Rab. they gave her one, they him two, you gave us three or more; Rab. re - turned from him to you, they were mine be - fore 130 Rab. af - fair or she should chance to in - volved in this trusts to you to set them free ex

Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 8: Who Stole the Tarts? - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 8: Who Stole the Tarts? - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL] 133 143 144 145 Knave Sad - ly, no "If it doesn't mean anything, {...} Knave, you cannot swim, can you? King E - vi - dence! 148 "But it goes on!" 147 146 Alice "Then later, the verses {...} tarts!" King Pno Slightly Slower than the Rabbit's Song J= 112 149 150 151 Alice la la la re - turned from him to you, la la la la la la la la la they all Slightly Slower than the Rabbit's Song J= 112 Pno

134 Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 8: Who Stole the Tarts? - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL] 153 154 Alice la la la la [Queen turns around to see the tarts, on stage the whole time.] Queen Pno "After all this nonsense!" 156 Alice Queen Let the Jury consider its verdict." Why there they are! King "I will not.' 159 160 Alice "Hold your tongue!" Queen



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 8: Who Stole the Tarts? - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 8: Who Stole the Tarts? - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

138







PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



143

ITS: ALL

SCENE 9: All in the Golden Afternoon



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 9: All in the Golden Afternoon - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]



145



Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 9: All in the Golden Afternoon - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL]





148 Down the Rabbit Hole - SCENE 9: All in the Golden Afternoon - Piano/Vocal Score [FINAL] 39 41 Queen quaint ham - mered out the tale done, And e - vents were now Pno Even less . molto rit. 43 Queen home mer crew sun **Even less** = 100 SERVISIAL SORKI