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Honors Program Thesis

Teaching Spirituals: A Digital Resource
Pedagogy(teaching-spirituals-a-digital-resource-honors-program/pedagogy)

Welcome! Sources(teaching-spirituals-a-digital-resource-honors-program/sources)

Welcome to "Teaching Spirituals: A Digital Resource"!

This website was created—primarily, and with practical uses in mind—for choral/vocal music educators at the advanced secondary and/or collegiate level(s) AND their students.

However—an open invitation to visit, to consider, and to learn from this resource's diverse material and wealth of information is hereby extended to any and all members of the general public who are interested in—or inspired by—spirituals...

historically • contemproarily • musically • artistically • pedagogically • practically

Nathaniel Dett Chorale (c. 2003)

Purposes for Creating This Digital Resource

The decision to generate this interactive, "open-access" ePortfolio was highly informed by the undergraduate degree I—its creator—am currently pursuing: music education. From the perspective of a future educator, I am fascinated and inspired not just by spirituals themselves (as unique and compelling musical entities), but by the sophisticated and nuanced pedagogical practices that go into teaching them effectively. Approaching spirituals in a way that values their musical components and also centrally emphasizes them as powerful educational tools gets to the heart of why this work is meaningful, to me.

The "content" of this work pulls, centrally, from scholarship regarding the performance of concert spirituals and art songs as they are approached and explored through the following three lenses:

(1) "history" of this music (definitions, important background information)
(2) "ownership" of and "permission" to perform this music (who does it belong to, and is that "belonging" exclusive?)
(3) "education" about and "pedagogical instruction" of this music (that is regular, informed, and conversationally-driven)

Finally, it is my sincere hope that this digital resource—itself an accessible and interactive learning tool—can be actively utilized by teachers in directed educational contexts, and explored by students on their own terms. Furthermore—as