

ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: Seasons in a Cycle, a Musical Theatre Song Cycle: An Analysis of the Compositional Process

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My Creative Project, partially fulfilling the requirements for a Master of Music degree in Composition, is *Seasons in a Cycle*, which is a musical theatre song cycle consisting of four songs about depression through the four seasons. I wrote the lyrics in addition to the music. The music is for one unnamed tenor and piano. In order, the titles are the following: “Spring in the Dark,” “Summer Contemplations,” “Moments in Fall,” and “Winter Introspection.” The subject material follows my experience with seasonal depression. In “Spring in the Dark,” the character reflects on memories while on a walk in the park that progresses into a dark mental spiral. “Summer Contemplations” is the aftermath of the Spring, and he sings about his negative reflection of his life leading into thoughts of suicide. After surviving the past two seasons, he reflects on the nature of life in “Moments in Fall” and realizes how there can be hope and life amid decay. He ends his revelations in “Winter Introspection” when he realizes he has a lot to be thankful for and can sit in peace. The music supports the lyrical matter through key changes, dissonant harmonies, and tonal clusters, musically suggesting ambiguity of the tenor’s thoughts. The piano sets the mood of the tenor and carries suggestive themes seen in each of the pieces as references to previous thoughts. The vocals are text-driven and have loose rhyming schemes.