

OUT.

(An Original Song Cycle Composition in 7 Movements)

by

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ABSTRACT

“OUT.” is a song cycle for bass and piano that follows the coming out process of a young homosexual who has been raised in a politically and religiously conservative corner of American culture. This character was taught from a very young age that anything or anyone of a queer nature was inherently wrong and should be avoided and scorned. The story arc captured in this seven-movement work is only a small portion of what the character ultimately goes through as they mature. This portion of their narrative has been isolated with the hope of embodying a queer character of strength, and this piece begins with the character knowing, understanding, and having already come to terms with their own sexuality. The story outlined in this song cycle is one of hardship that ultimately leads to triumph, as a demonstration that overcoming queer suppression is an achievable goal.

DEDICATION

This piece is dedicated to three groups of people:

1) My strong, wonderful mother and my dearest friends: Tristin, Nym, Chase, and Chris for their love and support throughout my life, 2) my Arizona family in DBR Labspace for their inspiring dedication and spirits as my fellow ASU artists, 3) and of course, Lady Gaga and Katy Perry for teaching me at the ripe age of 15 that I was born to be the fabulous and radiant firework that I am today.

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PREFACE

Finding comfort in regularity and routine is a very common human trait. Many of us strive for the security of knowing what to expect as we mature and pursue our own goals and dreams. We can find comfort in what we understand and can even feel validation when our thoughts and feelings are aligned with others. When I encounter homophobia, I think of this natural tendency toward routine, comfort. Sexuality is an essential part of human existence, and it is understandable that one may feel uncomfortable when confronting an individual with a sexual identity different from their own.

This homophobia creates an array of severe cultural problems for those of us who identify as members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual Community (LGBTQIA+). This community has faced severe persecution and suppression throughout history. Here in the United States, the community has successfully campaigned for change and received equal rights and fair treatment, but there are still many struggles the community faces every day.

“OUT.” is a song cycle for bass-baritone voice and piano that follows the coming out process of a young queer individual who has been raised in a politically and religiously conservative corner of American culture. The title of the piece is in all caps with a period, signifying the final and strong declarative nature of this process. The character in “OUT.” was taught from a very young age that anything or anyone of a queer nature was inherently wrong and should be avoided and scorned. The story arc captured in this seven-movement work is only a small portion of what the character ultimately goes through as they mature. This portion of their narrative has been isolated with the

hope of embodying a queer character of strength. This piece begins with the character knowing, understanding, and having already come to terms with their own sexuality. It is important to acknowledge that the journey the character has undergone leading up to the beginning of the song cycle is a long and difficult one. The story outlined in this song cycle is of hardship that ultimately leads to triumph: a demonstration that overcoming queer suppression is possible and necessary in order to properly advocate for social change to craft a safer culture for LGBTQIA+ youth.

Throughout the song cycle, two short melodies are presented through both the character and the accompaniment. The first melody; a traditional folk-based tune in four-four time, represents the truth in the character's identity. The second melody is a moderately chromatic idea in five, designed to fill registral space and garner attention. This melody is representative of the array of lies that an individual who is 'in the closet' feels they need to tell in order to keep their queer identity a secret from those around them.

At the beginning of the song cycle, the character is resolved to keep their true sexual identity a secret. As the cycle progresses, it becomes apparent that this tactic is not a recipe for happiness, and the character strives to find beauty and peace in living their life according to their natural selves. This revelation fills them with the resolve to share their sexuality with those around them. This process is rather uncomfortable for the character and those the character is sharing their secret with. This anxiety is presented most clearly in movement four with disjunct phrases, large registral changes, and motifs based loosely on the [014] trichord. The character adapts to this discomfort by intentionally embracing the stereotype of their demographic to provide those around them

with some sense of familiarity they can grasp. The character eventually realizes that this deception is also not true to themselves, and eventually finds the strength to strip away all of the lies and share themselves wholeheartedly with others.

My hope is that audiences listen to this work with an open mind, and perhaps gain more perspective on how it truly feels to be a queer individual in modern America. This cycle is one piece of one story, and everyone has their own to share. The more we listen to each other, the closer we will be to embracing a world of universal love, acceptance, and happiness.

LYRICS (WRITTEN BY JEDD GREENHALGH)

1

I am not here, I am an actor

I am an affectation of your assumption of me

As an agent of your culture.

I have a gift of persuasively

Epitomizing lies in the interest of preserving

The promise of my place with you.

I am not here, I am a lie

Should you inspect me in detail you will see the lie

So do not look too close.

I am not here, but I know all of you

And for the sake of me

I dare not know me...

2

I can do this

I can do this

I must do this to survive.

My silver tongue shall

Be my saving grace

For their heaven I shall strive

Their eternal bliss shall be mine

For them I live, I have no one else

I can do this!

My soul aches, and my mind will break

I can't do this

I need me....

3

I am the spring, I am a king

I am beautiful.

The manner I prayed, locked it away

It is beautiful.

Oh how it gleams in my mirror!

I am the spring, I am a queen

It is beautiful.

The depths of my soul

I've just come to know

It is beautiful!

Oh how it gleams in the daylight!

Will you? Won't you?

Understand me?

4

I am not like you

I don't play the same games

No!

Can't you see I'm,

I am a...

I can't find the words

You see...

Your God is my devil,

And so I fly with your devil.

I am not like you.

Let me show you

Who I am....

5

Look, won't you look!

Look at me, I'm so proud of

what I've become!

look I am what you know, see,

I am what you know!

You see, look at me I have no fear, oh!

See, can't you see?

Are you proud of what I've become?

6

I feel ill... this is not me.

I've gone from one safe

Charade to the next.

I yearn to be free,

To break free from the parts

I've played for you and just

Be myself.

I do not exist for you...

I exist for me!

And my tale has yet to be told...

7

My truth! At last I grasp

The strength to stand!

To rise, to raise my voice with pride!

No fear, no strain,

No yearning for a blessing apart from my own.

At last I'm free.

At last I'm me...

1

Music & Lyrics by
Jedd Greenhalgh

Pensively ♩ = 60

Bass-Baritone

Piano

8

14

18

p *heavy* *p*

f *mp*

p *pp* *ppp* *f* *p*

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2

22

Musical score for measures 22-24. The system consists of three staves: a bass staff, a grand staff (treble and bass), and a bass staff. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat). Measure 22 is in 3/8 time, measure 23 is in 3/4 time, and measure 24 is in 4/4 time. The grand staff has a whole rest in the treble clef. The bass staff has a whole rest in measure 22, followed by a series of eighth notes in measures 23 and 24. Dynamics include *f* (forte) in measure 23 and *pp* (pianissimo) in measure 24. There are fingerings 6 and 3 indicated in measure 23, and fingerings 6 and 3 in measure 24.

25

Musical score for measures 25-26. The system consists of three staves: a bass staff, a grand staff (treble and bass), and a bass staff. The key signature is two flats. Measure 25 is in 5/4 time, and measure 26 is in 4/4 time. The grand staff has a whole rest in the treble clef. The bass staff has a series of eighth notes with a sixteenth note in measure 25, and a series of eighth notes in measure 26. Fingerings 6 are indicated throughout.

27

Musical score for measures 27-28. The system consists of three staves: a vocal staff, a grand staff (treble and bass), and a bass staff. The key signature is two flats. Measure 27 is in 4/4 time, and measure 28 is in 5/4 time. The vocal staff has the lyrics "I am not here" with a long note in measure 27 and a whole note in measure 28. The grand staff has a whole rest in the treble clef. The bass staff has a series of eighth notes with a sixteenth note in measure 27, and a series of eighth notes in measure 28. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) in measure 27. Fingerings 6 are indicated throughout.

29

Musical score for measures 29-30. The system consists of three staves: a vocal staff, a grand staff (treble and bass), and a bass staff. The key signature is two flats. Measure 29 is in 4/4 time, and measure 30 is in 5/4 time. The vocal staff has the lyrics "I am not here" with a long note in measure 29 and a whole note in measure 30. The grand staff has a whole rest in the treble clef. The bass staff has a series of eighth notes with a sixteenth note in measure 29, and a series of eighth notes in measure 30. Fingerings 6 are indicated throughout.

31

I am an ac - tor

33

I am an aff - ec - ta - tion of your as -

35

sump - tion of me as an a - gent of your cul - ture. I have a

39

gift, of per - sua - sive - ly e - pi - to - mi - zing lies, in the

42

in - terest of pre - ser - ving the prom - ise of my place with

44

f you... *f* I am not here

46

I am a lie

48

should you in - spect me in

50

de - tail you will see the lie ___ 3 so

52

do not look too close I am not here ___ but I know all of you, and for the

56

sake of me, I dare not show Me

59

Me ___ Me ___ Me ___

Grimly ♩ = 90

Bass-Baritone

15

then I live I have no-one else. I can do this!

19

rit. **Slower** ♩ = 72 *p*

My soul aches,

24

freely

and my mind will break. I can't I can't do this.

29

rit.

I need me...

27 *f*

Oh oh, oh, oh oh oh, oh oh

28 *f*

Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh

29 *mp*

I am the spring, I am a queen it is beau - ti -

30 *mp*

ful. The depths of my soul, I've just come to know, it is beau - ti - ful.

39

Oh, how it gleams, in the day - light

42

44

Will you, won't you,

slower mp *p*

50

un - der - stand, me?

ppp *pppp*

Frantic ♩ = 120

Bass-Baritone

Piano

f

I am not, like you. I don't play the same games. No!

f

5

No... Can't you see I'm, I am a... I am a...

f

p

9

I can't find can't find the, I can't find the

p

ff

13

words, the words, the words. Oh! You

ff

17 *mf*

see... Your God _____ is my de-vil,

25

so I fly _____ with your de-vil.

29 *p*

I am, not like you.

33 *p*

Let me show you, let me show you, who I am...

attacca

Gruffly $\text{♩} = 60$

Bass-Baritone

Piano

3

6

8

12

Look, look, won't you

look! Look at me! Look at me I'm so proud of

15

what I've be - come!

16

Look I am

17

what you know, what you know, see, what you know, what you know, see— I am what you know

18

I am what you know! You see, you see,

29
look at me I have no fear, oh look_____ look_____ look at me I have no fear, oh

33
look at me I have no fear, oh!

37
No_____ fear!

40
See,

f
f *p*

Detailed description: This musical score consists of four systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system (measures 29-32) features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment with dynamic markings *f* and *p*. The second system (measures 33-36) continues the vocal line with a fermata and piano accompaniment. The third system (measures 37-39) shows the vocal line with lyrics and piano accompaniment. The fourth system (measures 40-42) includes a vocal line with the word 'See,' and piano accompaniment with dynamic markings *f* and *p*. The piano part includes various rhythmic patterns and chordal textures.

46

sec, can't you see? Can't you see? Can't you

47

see, are you proud of what I've be - come?!

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1366

1367

1368

1369

1370

1371

1372

1373

39

look, look, look at me I have no fear,

f p f p f p f p

61

lie die, die die die, lie die, die die die Lie die die die die, die,

f p f p f p

64

lie die, die die die, lie die, die die die lie die die die die, die,

f p f p f p

67

look, look, look!

sf f

Freely

Bass-Baritone *p*

I feel _____ ill... I feel _____ ill... this is not me... I've

gone from one safe cha - rade to the next... I yearn to be free to

break from the parts I've played for you and just be my-self. I do not ex-ist for you,

I do not fill your mold I ex-ist for me! I ex-ist for me! For me! _____ And

my tale, has yet to un - fold.

7

Whimsical ♩ = 60

mf

Bass-Baritone

mp

Piano

My ——— truth!

At

last I grasp ——— the strength to

stand! ——— to

9

rise, to raise my voice with

10

ff

pride! No fear, no strain, no year - ning for a bless - ing a - part from my

ff

17

own.

20

mp

At last I'm me, At

p

24

last I'm Me

pp

25

pp

Me

p

29

rit.

pp