

Emmeline White: Programme Notes

My repertoire consists of a group of songs that- whilst sounding very different on the surface- all obtain a similarity in the sense of the deep-rooted narrative found in all of them. They each present a different character who has a different story to tell. For some, the music correlates perfectly to the sense of self projected from the character, and for others it contrasts deeply- however, they all represent a complex and intriguing storyline that will each evoke a different emotion from those who listen.

Betty- Taylor Swift

Released in 2020 on Taylor Swift's album *Folklore*, "Betty" is the most contemporary of all my repertoire. This song obtains a layer of charm and humour on the surface, as well as a deeper layer of sadness and regret underneath. "Betty" is part of a trilogy from Swift's album that represents an affair from three different standpoints, with this song depicting that of the adulterer. The concept of storytelling is perfectly represented in this song, as each layer of lyrics reveals a new emotion, whether that be the strong sense of regret from a 17 year old who realises they have made a mistake, or the wishful reminiscing that caused the affair in the first place. "Betty" could be interpreted in a number of different ways; it is not certain what Swift intended us to feel from this song, but I believe that if you listen to the lyrics tentatively, you will come to your own conclusion.

She Used To Be Mine- Sara Bareilles

Bareilles released this song in 2015 as part of the musical *Waitress*, which began its run on Broadway in the same year. The musical portrays the story of a woman who is exceedingly unhappy with the way her life has turned out, and this song demonstrates a moment in the story where she reminisces about the person she used to be. The sense of desperation as well as regret over how things have turned out for her are very prominent in this song, and whilst the tone of the song is melancholy at the beginning, a strong sense of hope and determination begins to take over around half way through, leaving listeners to decide for themselves whether or not this character will experience a happy ending.

Popular- Kristen Chenoweth

Originally performed by Chenoweth in *Wicked's* first Broadway run in 2003, "Popular" reveals an extremely contrasting atmosphere in comparison to the previous two of my performances. The witty arrogance of the character Glinda is perfectly captured in the lyrics of the song, and the comedic feel provides a light-hearted moment from this musical. Whilst there are some underlying moments of sincerity, the general tone of this song projects optimism and humour, providing a fun juxtaposition to the rest of my repertoire.

La Vie En Rose- Édith Piaf

This song presents a further contrast to my repertoire in terms of genre, however, it maintains the story-telling theme I have so far carried through each performance, obtaining numerous layers to its intricate and complex narrative. Written in 1945 and translated roughly to 'Life in Pink', this song discusses a perfect love; a love who "speaks words of love every day" and provides the perfect relationship. However, I believe this song to have a darker underlayer to its meaning, with the title 'Life in Pink' suggesting that the singer is merely viewing this perfect romance through rose coloured spectacles, thus suggesting that it isn't the perfect man she believes him to be, and is rather only showing her what he wants her to see. Similarly to 'Betty', this song allows listeners to decide upon the ending themselves, and furthermore

whether the lyrics speak of a genuine perfect relationship, or if they instead provide implications of a naïve girl.

Glasgow (No Place Like Home)- Jessie Buckley

My final performance generates a sense of self-reflection and realisation within its story. This song is the finale of the 2019 movie *Wild Rose*, which portrays the life of a young single mother from Glasgow who dreams of moving to Nashville and becoming a famous country singer, but who ultimately realises the only place she truly desires to be is at home with her family. The song rightly evokes some emotion that we have all experienced over the last year- whilst the experiences of lockdowns have been at times unpleasant, they have ultimately allowed us to realise where it is we truly would want to be should we need to choose. For me, the story within this song demonstrates my own feelings towards where my home is; wherever I have chosen to move to over the years, there was only one place I wanted to be when it mattered, and only one group of people I truly wanted to be with for those months of uncertainty.