

FEMALE VOICES FOR EQUALITY OVER THE CENTURIES:

THROUGH THE GUARDED GATE

20TH CENTURY VOICE:

MARGARET WIDDEMER

- ▶ born: 1884, died: 1978
- ▶ She received the Pulitzer Prize in 1919 for her poetry collection: *The Old Road to Paradise*
- ▶ Her memoir, *Golden Friends I Had*, recounts experiences in Greenwich Village with writers including Edna St. Vincent Millay, T. S. Eliot, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sara Teasdale, and others during "one of the most interesting crises of American literature: a warm, gay, angrily excited moment of change and discovery."
- ▶ According to Louis Untermeyer, "Widdemer's poetic work has two distinct phases. In the one mood, she is the protesting poet, the champion of the down-trodden, the lyricist on fire with angry passion. In the other, she is the writer of well-made, polite, and popular sentimental verse" (*Modern American Poetry*, 350). This cycle features poetry written by the protesting poet.



21ST CENTURY VOICE:

JULIANA HALL

- ▶ born: 1958
- ▶ She began her musical career as a pianist (perhaps the inspiration for the lengthy postludes included in every song in *Through the Guarded Gate*) at the University of Cincinnati–College Conservatory of Music before studying piano and composition at the Yale School of Music. She completed her composition study with Dominick Argento.
- ▶ Prolific living composer of American art song; more than 250 songs found within thirty-five cycles written for singers including Dawn Upshaw, Brian Asawa, Stephanie Blythe, and David Malis.
- ▶ According to Dr. Katherine Eberle, a noted interpreter of Hall's songs, her work "emerges out of her relationship with American poets, writers, and her own musical traditions" ("From Words to Music", *Journal of Singing*, May/June 2015, 574). Furthermore, "Hall's songs are especially compelling for their strong rhythmic impetus, graceful melodies, and fanciful text settings" (575).



THROUGH THE GUARDED GATE

THE TEXT INTERPRETED BY THE COMPOSER:

1. "The Net": Ill treatment of our children (most often girls) here within our own country used for whatever nefarious purposes adults may have for them . . .
2. "A Mother to the War-Makers": Ill treatment of our children (mostly boys) when they are sent abroad, as the leaders of our nation use them under the guise of national defense . . .
3. "The Old Suffragist": The "early" woman standing up for equal personhood, equal rights, but at the expense of a personal life rich with love and attachment . . .
4. "The Modern Woman to Her Lover": The "modern" woman taking on the responsibility of equal personhood, equal rights, without permission of the man but benefiting both genders . . .
5. "The Women's Litany": The community of women and like-minded men, demanding equal rights and responsibilities for both genders for the betterment of mankind . . .


