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## Give to You/Fill My Cup

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Give to You/Fill My Cup  
A Concert Series

Senior Project Submitted to  
The Division of the Arts  
of Bard College

by  
Madeline Damon Roisin Money Penny

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York  
May 2022



## Dedication

This project is dedicated to my parents who have supported me with music since I was Aviana.  
Thank you. I have always known I am loved.



## Acknowledgements

Huge gratitude to my friends at Bard for their genuine, unconditional support. You are my community and I am always holding you gently.

I would like to thank Pamela Pentony for her selfless commitment to bringing out the best in me and my voice, her remarkable ability to know when to challenge and when to uplift, and her belief that I have something worthwhile to say, an instrument to do it, and a gift to give away.

I would like to thank Tom Mark for serving as my mentor, for meeting my curiosity with his wisdom and experience, and for helping unlock my love of sound as seen through the eyes of an audio engineer.

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I would like to thank John Esposito for teaching me to take up space as a bandleader, assert my vision for a tune and not waste time trying to get there, and how to return to the basics when I get lost.

I would like to thank the Tamworth Scholarship Committee for their continued support and interest in my education, and for letting me feel my NH community in NY.

Thank you to all of the musicians I have been lucky enough to play with over my time here. I'm especially acknowledging my band, who has brought my music into the real world, through a pandemic, with wires hanging out the Jazz Room window, who listen to my voice and have a conversation with me, who share their time and their talent, who help me live presently and who make me feel at home.



At the core of my project is the assertion that the human voice functions as an instrument. During my time at Bard, my musical practice revolved around an exploration and desire to use singing as texture, as a solo instrument, and as storytelling. I wanted to challenge what it means to be a singer in a band setting, a setting that often illuminates gender in startling ways that limit the creativity and confidence of non-male players. Through this concert series, I wanted to show the singer as a player, an artist, and as integral to the work.

I composed 14 original songs, each with different channels for incorporating the voice. For example, "Like a Dream" was written after an intensive study of hard bebop jazz. I aimed to create nimble and complex melodies that rang like horn lines, rhythms that took advantage of the song's inherent spaciousness and ran over the bar line, and instrumentation whose main job was to support that vocal. "Another Day" does not follow a classic chord progression. Instead, the chords follow the vocal line, augmenting the harmony without necessarily adhering to a key signature. "Badlands" integrates my education in drums and electronic production with a vocal melody based on accents that elicit a popping and percussive effect. Behind each song is the hope to communicate something new with the voice, through range, dynamics, placement, and breath.

Running in confluence with my fundamental beliefs around the voice as an instrument is expression through lyrics. In my concentration in Gender and Sexuality Studies, I have studied how performing with words sets vocalists (who are often non-men) apart in their musical practice. The themes running throughout my two concerts play with the idea that the lyric can say as much as the music, that the choice of sounds, use of vowels as belts, and consonants as percussion all enhance musical meaning. Fascination with the tiny decisions around the

performance of the words, from where I choose to reverberate them in my placement, to their consonance or dissonance with the rest of the band, encapsulates a large piece of my project.

These are some of the foundational ideas and methods I employed to craft this concert series. However, beyond the intellectual and academic concepts, my music is hugely driven by feeling and a need to communicate and process through sound. Each concert presented a kaleidoscopic array of experiences stitched together by my guiding principles surrounding the female voice. *Give to You* traced cycles of growth, stagnation, self-reflection, and non-linear evolution of my confidence within interpersonal relationships. It dealt with questions of female resiliency in “Where Do I Put My Love?” which is a song about my capacity to share energy and the worry I have about putting it into the wrong place. The song’s elongated solo structure and rising dynamics depict the gradual and probing nature of those themes.

“Connective Tissue” was inspired by a positive change in my perspective in regards to my sensuality and body. It describes ease felt with my physicality, that I had for the first time felt recognized by someone else. Its repetitive introduction led by all-female singers felt apt, as I hoped other women might relate to my experience. “Time Capsule ” made use of scattered lyrics to fall through memory. It relied nearly exclusively on the voice to transport the listener through time and feeling, which I attempted to augment by the use of four octaves of range and inconsistent rhythms. “Mad”, “Secret” and finally “Like a Dream” detail first love, in its loving with abandon, giving all I have, seeing the world in color, heightened awareness. In its hope.

My second concert, *Fill My Cup*, treads with more caution and angst through a similar field of experience and experimentation. The songs are perhaps more self-assured in subject matter, dealing less with confusion and more with power. The themes underpinning this concert

are in some ways, the aftermath of completing three years of work and self-reflection in Give to You. The thought in my mind was that I would rather be full than empty. Fill My Cup ponders how one might choose to do that. My creative direction this semester was colored by the urge to fill different empty spaces. A concert of more extremes, it is broken into two parts.

The first half grapples with the erratic and tenuous experimentation I have sought out to fill loneliness or control change. Whether it is by “saying yes to things I don’t believe in” punctuated by united vocal harmonies in “Come Over Anyway” or by “looking for a place that speaks shelter” crooned on the full chords of “No Shame.” The second half seeks a more balanced future for myself, one where I can live presently and celebrate the filling of my days and heart with small things that add up to big feelings. Songs like “Think of You” and “Morning” engage with consistency and reciprocity. The metaphorical filling occurring is of coffee cups between lovers or with the intoxication of meeting someone new. The preciousness and fleetingness of these moments is something I have always wanted to capture musically. This concert series has led me to engage with these ideas of fullness and try to form a more comfortable relationship with emptiness. Harnessing these experiences and repurposing them in song and through the voice helps feels like a gift, feels like a dream.

**GIVE TO YOU**

Fall 2021

Bedlam

Wore out my welcome  
Woke up to a world in bedlam  
Promises I've made  
Hold my place in line, I've been doing fine  
Back in the nick of time to rewind my mistakes

I've been traveling  
Back again  
Patterns unraveling  
Moments on a string  
I've been falling  
Deeper still  
Cup is running over  
Empty, I spill

Into patterns  
Easier than falling asleep  
Weight on my shoulders  
Both the pain, the relief  
Intimate and known less casually  
Friends into lovers  
Repeat and repeat

How do you explain the rhythm between us?  
How do you explain the things that I'm feeling?  
That I'm feeling

Where Do I Put My Love?

Dive right in / to the ocean  
Sink or swim / no time for floating  
Where does it go / my devotion?  
Where do I put my love?  
Off the ledge  
Free falling  
Cut the ropes  
To my parachute this morning  
Never hit the ground  
But I'm always asking  
What if? Why not? If only...  
Every little question a grain of sand  
Slipping through my fingers  
I can't handle them all  
All that's left to do is to fall  
And keep on falling  
Big shoes to fill, I wake up knotted in their laces  
Missing things I shouldn't miss, I'm missing traces  
Too caught up in covering my bases and trying on new faces  
But where do I put my love?  
Where do I put my love?  
Where do I put my love?

Slow Burn

Slow burn  
Not complicated  
She pulls me in and keeps me captivated  
It's a slow burn  
Not complicated  
She pulls me in and keeps me captivated  
I could ride this feeling for miles  
Spark to match it's hard to contain the flame  
Tender with her glances and easy with her smiles  
We're burning  
It was unexpected  
Should I tell her what I'm thinking about?  
Caught me off guard and left me affected  
Slow burn turns me inside out  
Slow burn turns me inside out  
Slow burn  
Not complicated  
She pulls me in and keeps me captivated  
It's a slow burn  
Not complicated  
She pulls me in and keeps me captivated

Connective Tissue

Physical ease

I found a balance

Deep in my knees

Connective tissue (repeats)

This is the new language that we're speaking

Follow my body and play along

This is the new way that I'm communicating

In my arms, I can do no wrong

In my arms, I can do no wrong

I know things now I didn't before

Forest through the trees, sunlight after the downpour

New space to learn and explore

In my arms, I can do no wrong

In my arms, I can do no wrong

Mad

I'm so mad all the time  
Sick of being hooked, sinker and line  
What a funny way to remind me  
When it comes to him my hands are tied  
When it comes to him  
When it comes to him my hands are tied  
And I'm mad about it  
Mad all the time  
Mad about it  
Mad all the time  
Mad  
I'm mad all the time  
Mad I'm not mad all the time  
Got reason without any rhyme  
Mad that I'm waiting for him  
Look in the mirror and find  
Even with the passing of time  
It can still begin  
When it comes, when it comes, when it comes to him  
I sigh when I see him I fall apart  
Butterflies inside my stomach and butterflies inside my heart  
It's like he's got glue on his hands  
Call him the repairman  
Because  
When it comes, when it comes to him  
I'm mad all the time  
Mad about it  
Mad all the time  
Mad

Time Capsule

Time capsule lends itself to dreaming  
Year ago today I've been grieving  
Winding my life around  
Changing my life around  
Time capsule, we're in a garden  
Each moment felt like starting  
Goodbye to the lessons  
Chased out of heaven  
Disguised as a blessing  
Things change, feelings lessen  
Time capsule, I'm in a sundress  
Height of summer, he's saying yes  
yes

Still in his arms  
Sun-kissed, just kissed  
Heartbeats do  
what heartbeats do what hands do what sticks do what triplets do  
All over my skin  
Time capsule, still the rudiments  
Spent summer hoping I was over it, weaving stories in

Holding myself to sleep

Being hellbent on being carefree  
And winding my life around, losing track of the thread  
Sometimes I know I'm living  
Sometimes I'm separate

Time capsule, we fit together  
Think I might be craving it  
As I found...  
As I found...  
Time capsule has me forgetting that  
One look, I'm for-getting that  
I'm falling back  
Hurling through the looking glass

Time capsule lends itself to holding how I feel and how I felt  
A box with a broken latch  
Echoes of the past  
Patched in, steered by me, trying to do my best and get undressed and be undressed, be caressed,  
be lawless  
Stars through someone else's eyes  
Wanted for more than a night  
Holding a letter in a bottle  
A message out to  
Sea  
I'm screaming  
Can you hear me?  
Can you hear me?  
Me  
Time capsule is an open wound, legacy  
Sends me back, leaves its smell on everything  
Kaleidoscopic, my voice runs over skin like wild lightning  
Frostbite freezes limbs  
I freeze time, yeah it's frightening  
Seminal delight feeling good, delight me  
Time capsule, appetite insatiable  
Don't know, I'm looking 10 steps ahead and behind me  
Thought love was living in the moment, that's not really what you taught me  
Taught me to hold a spark in my hand  
for free  
Unbound wire keeps  
Tightening  
Be tender with me  
I don't know what I'm leaving behind

Secret

I'm gonna have to tell you a secret  
If you keep moving closer  
I know you wanna be intimate  
Get a girl and hold her  
Hold her

So get me, hold me, I'm okay  
I've wanted this since the beginning  
Get me, hold me, I'm okay  
But we've gotta stop pretending

Thought that I'd tell you a secret  
Lips to ear I know you wanna hear it  
Something told me it was time  
You've got yours and now you've got mine  
Now you've got mine

So get me, hold me, I'm okay  
I've wanted this since the beginning  
Get me, hold me, I'm okay  
But we've gotta stop pretending

Like a Dream

There's a light  
Beckoning me  
Pulling me closer, it feels like a dream  
There's a light  
Beckoning me  
Pulling me closer it feels like a dream  
Feels like midnight  
Feels like morning  
Smells like lavender and coffee  
Smells like being caught in the pouring rain  
Tell me again  
How each memory with you makes time stop and soften  
Can you hear me? It's music on an empty street  
Lights of the subway and tiles beneath our feet  
It gets a little hazy around two in the morning  
But I need it  
Oh I need it

Close enough to touch  
Close enough to listen  
Quiet we'll stay hushed  
As the dark begins to glisten  
Sunrise or moonlight calls me back  
To the daydream

It's you and me  
Time can only deepen what I feel  
God how you look  
You're pulling me in pieces by pieces  
We don't do it by the book  
Hooked  
Like a drug no rehabilitation  
Cigarettes and the look in your eyes  
You tantalize me  
Dreaming of you gets a little hazy  
It's just the pantomime we act out as if waiting to get back to our daydream  
And I need it

Close enough to touch  
Close enough to listen  
Quiet we'll stay hushed  
The dark begins to glisten  
Sunrise or moonlight  
Everything calls me back to the daydream

I found ecstasy in your arms  
Moving through the dreamscape you're all around me  
Can't get enough and I'd run over coals or flames  
Pulling me closer this delicate fantasy  
Palm trees or night skies or blowing winds or lullabies  
Is it sand beneath my feet  
Is it the sun that makes this heat  
Being near you transports me  
You and I tell a story  
And I need it  
Oh I need it

Beckoning me  
Pulling me closer it feels like a dream  
You  
You  
There's a light

**FILL MY CUP**  
Spring 2022

Badlands

*Verse 1*

I've entered the badlands, baby  
I know that I can't go back again  
I've entered the badlands, baby  
No exit, just misbehavin'

*Pre-Chorus*

It's a whole new world that's open  
It's a whole new world that's breaking free  
It's a whole new world, I'm devoted  
To learning

*Chorus*

Welcome to the badlands, baby 2x

*Verse 2*

Not so unusual to want things that are bad for you  
Not so unusual to want things that you can't have  
Not so unusual to want things that are bad for you  
Not so unusual to wander the badlands  
I've entered the badlands, baby  
I'm deep in, I'm looking for your face in everything  
Face in everything

*Pre-Chorus*

It's a whole new world that's open  
It's a whole new world that's breaking free  
It's a whole new world, I'm devoted  
To learning

*Chorus*

Welcome to the badlands, baby 2x

Come Over Anyway

For you...for you...

*Verse 1*

I've got a hunger  
For you  
I've got a hunger  
Nothing new  
I'm insatiable  
For something I can't name  
I've got a need and it's not being met  
I've been staying out late (too late)  
I've been feeling sickly sweet  
I've been saying yes to things (yes, yes, yes)  
I don't believe in  
I've been feeling paper thin  
I've been waiting by the phone  
Sitting home alone, got me thinking, got me thinking

*Chorus*

Fill my cup  
Watch it pour over  
Just my luck  
Won't kiss me when he's over  
Not enough  
Come over anyway

Ride or die, know what I'm choosing  
Ride that high  
Worried I'm losing you  
It's not a game  
Someday I'll stop saying  
Come over anyway

*Verse 2*

I've got a hunger  
For you  
I've got a hunger

Burning blue  
Got me spellbound by your ocean  
Got me locked in to your motion yeah  
When you say my name you say it open  
Funny thing hoping for the phone to ring

*Chorus*

Fill my cup  
Watch it pour over  
Just my luck  
Won't kiss me when he's over  
Not enough  
Come over anyway

Ride or die, know what I'm choosing  
Ride that high  
Worried I'm losing you  
It's not a game  
Someday I'll stop saying

Come over anyway (repeat and fade)

No Shame  
*Vocal intro*

*B section*

Inches away, losing the faith, looking for a place that speaks shelter  
I've played the game, waited in vain, now everything's helter-skelter  
What am I trading for peace of mind?  
Know it's temporary, but to time I can be blind  
Pulling on my heartstrings with no other strings in mind  
No strength to walk away, just shame I didn't try

*A section*

There's no shame in wanting what came before  
No shame but you I must implore  
Cut it from the sky  
Cut it from a memory  
Wrap me up tight  
Find me peace of mind tonight

*Feature over A section chords*

"Only ever partially apparent...Fake I'm insane, shame"

*A section to out*

There's no shame in wanting what came before  
No shame but you I must implore  
Cut it from the sky  
Cut it from a memory  
Wrap me up tight  
Find me peace of mind tonight

Think of You

*Refrain* (by Kota Lowe)

Baby know that I think of you  
Mean a lot if you think of me  
Cling to whatchu got, they told me  
Thing is, you won't cling to me  
Think of what you got, they told me  
Think of it when you think of me  
Be there when you're not, they hold me  
Be there till we lose energy (energy echoes and overlaps)

*Part One*

(Ah's) We speak with silence, we speak with symmetry  
We exchange guidance, we exchange energy  
Don't need to think, thoughtless in clarity  
Don't need to drink, you're the water that (ah's) cools me  
You're the planet that rules me, baby  
The thread that unspools me  
Be by your side, till we lose energy  
Dripping in the dream of you, can't wash it off of me  
Love is a calling I get from your body  
Thinking of you, I commit you to memory (memory)

*Part Two* (by Kota Lowe)

what? What was that? I'm sorry. I don't listen to the rhythm of attack. I'm gnarly, not  
into being bitten on back. I hardly make minutes for forgiveness of myself. I guard me. don't  
give up. people wanna discard me. don't get up. People wanna alarm me. just  
live up. people wanna be party. Ya'll sit up but only to down the bacardi. the

point of the party's to picture the part of soul that's alarming and pour it a cup.  
I don't want sorry. afford a ferrari with all the attention you pay to your love.  
love is a calling I got from your body. No caller I.D. but enough is enough.  
dial it up and then file it down. Pick up the phone like I pick up a crush.

*Part Three*

Know that I think of you more and more  
Thumbing through our memories like records in a record store

Nights that don't end, nights still in store

Leaves me wanting more (repeats, echoes, and overlaps of different voices)

*Refrain*

Baby know that I think of you

Mean a lot if you think of me

Cling to whatchu got, they told me

Thing is, you won't cling to me

Think of what you got, they told me

Think of it when you think of me

Be there when you're not, they hold me

Be there till we lose energy (energy echoes and overlaps)

Another Day

Will they, won't they  
Feel the things I'm feeling?  
Will they, won't they  
Need the things I'm needing?

Any other day, this would be the right time, the right place  
Any other day, they wouldn't be saying will they, won't they?

She comes home on a Sunday night  
He lies staring at the ceiling  
So close, they can taste it  
They were hitching their breathing

She reflects on an empty glass  
He just finished cleaning  
They're surprised that they fell so fast  
Down the path that they're heading

Hard to protect your heart  
Hard to slow down once you start  
Hard to ask for the things you need  
Hard to let go and harder to leave

Steadily treading they can't deny  
What seems so simple to the outsider's eye  
That if this were a different time and a different place  
If you asked the same question on another day  
They wouldn't be saying, will they, won't they

Morning

*Chorus*

Doesn't have to be this way

When did we decide that this is a mistake?

Doesn't have to be this way, let's just wait till the morning 2x

*Verse 1*

Morning comes and you're pouring coffee in my cup

And you're asking if I've had enough

Of the food you made before I got up

Read my mind and turned on that song I like

You're bathed so gentle in the morning light

There's no rush in the morning when we're like this

*Chorus*

Doesn't have to be this way

When did we decide that this is a mistake?

Doesn't have to be this way, let's just wait till the morning 2x

*Verse 2*

Favorite time of day, you drive my car through the gloaming, simple as picking up groceries

Silence so close, no different from holding

No rush in the evening

Looking at you, I see constellations

The stars above are just imitation

I'm seeing it all because love is attention

No rush in the evening

*Bridge*

Our words linger in the early hours

But I'm feeling so much

I don't care if you hurt me

Our words linger and I'm just giving into it

Feeling so much

I don't care if you hurt me

Our words

Early

Feeling so much

Don't care if you hurt me (repeat multiple times, adding layers)

*Chorus*

Doesn't have to be this way

When did we decide that this is a mistake?

Doesn't have to be this way, let's just wait till the morning 2x