

L.M. Montgomery: A Song Portrait (arr. Solo + SA choral sheet music)

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In 2017, the Lucy Maud Montgomery Society of Ontario commissioned me to write one of my song portraits for L.M. Montgomery for their “Spirit of Canada” Conference celebrating LMM and Canada 150 in Leaskdale. So, musically, I wrote it in the key of C major for “Canada 150.” Rhythmically, it is a country dance. As a young person, LMM attended social gatherings and enjoyed dancing. After she married a Presbyterian minister, dancing was frowned upon for her and became another chapter in her “dream life.” So, here Maud is, ever dancing in song.

In writing the lyrics, it was immediately evident to me that Maud wanted to speak for herself in this work. The result is a combination of third-person and first-person narratives. This speaks to the personal way each of us connects with LMM and her characters. As the song progresses, Maud’s first person takes over! But, in the end, the third person has the last word, regaling accolades and honour for our heroine.

Through my intensive research, it also became obvious to me that, though Maud was writing fiction, she was using facts from her own life experience, thus freeing her own voice through the many vivid character voices she created. Further, in the chorus, I used her novels’ title style to express some of her several selves in life, alternating with the chorus of her main characters’ names. Hopefully, this song portrait will encourage folks to read a broader swath of her catalogue.

My lyrics are full of LMM’s own descriptors, terms, and images and are laced with alliteration. The song has a tang of L.M. Montgomery flavour.

The remarkable structural aspect of this song portrait is the extremely long bridge. It is the longest musical bridge I have ever written in a song and is a shout-out to the longest bridge in Canada, the Confederation Bridge which links Prince Edward Island to the mainland. The bridge is also a first-person poem within this song poem in which Maud, in her own style, invites listeners to read her works. On a spiritual note, Maud dictated this bridge to me in a dream. I awoke wide awake, and immediately added it to the lyricsâ??unedited.

While creating this song portrait, I have always heard it arranged for choir with piano accompaniment. For LMM 150, I am delighted to present it arranged for a soloist with soprano/alto vocal harmonies and accompanied with perfect piano voicings created by Tom Leighton.

Bio: Rosalee Peppard Lockyer s a womenâ??s oral historian, writer, and musical artist. For twenty-five years she has created, published, and internationally toured her â??song portraitsâ?? and musical presentations of the Canadian women she interviews and researches. She has published three CDs and four books on her work. Rosalee is the Heritage Ambassador of the Helen Creighton Folklore Society, from whom she was awarded two juried folklore research grants. Her commissioned LMM work of the past seven years has been published as a song cycle for the L.M. Montgomery Society of Ontario, including â??Maudâ??s Willâ?? ; a spoken-word poem; a storybook, *My Maud by Katie Maurice*, which is also included in the Continuing Conversations 2022 edition of *Children and Childhoods in L.M. Montgomery*; and choral sheet music of her â??song portrait,â?? â??L.M. Montgomeryâ?? ; and a poem, â??A Sesquicentennial Year Recipeâ?? (LMMI) for LMM150. Visit her website at www.rosaleepeppardlockyer.Bandcamp.com.

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