

*The University of Georgia Department of English
presents*



Amelia Johnson

Sophomore, Vocalist
English 1102
Portfolio

December 5th, 2017

5:00 PM

Park Hall

Program

Biography

Program Notes

Introductory Reflective Essay

Audience Reception

First Revised Essay

**Literature and Technology:
Creating Consciousness**

Intermission

Second Revised Essay

The Three Bears

Exhibit of Revision Process

Learning to Breathe

Exhibit of Peer Review Process

Classmate Critics

Wild Card

Somewhere Over My Ego



Program Notes:

It was the first Thursday of June this most recent summer. I had sacrificed sleeping in on an early morning to make my way over to the Hugh Hodgson School of Music at the University of Georgia. I had always heard of this fabled slice of campus, but I never actually made my way to it. I suppose I had no other reason than curiosity to venture out into this unknown, since I am not a music major. Regardless, I was totally out of my element. The brick buildings looked both strangely familiar and unfamiliar. Campus was essentially a deserted wasteland, save the few intimidating musicians with furrowed brows, carrying their heavy and equally imperious instruments. Needless to say, I was too afraid to ask for directions. I definitely did not fit in. I couldn't even read sheet music.

I hadn't had any practice singing in a while, other than my performances in the car, which hardly count. I took lessons early in high school, but lacked the resolve to continue with them. Shortly afterwards, I found myself lost between knowing I wanted to continue singing, but not having a clue how to start again. It was a dilemma I faced for three or four years, before I finally decided to email a renowned professor at UGA for lessons.

"Meet me in Room 535 Hugh Hudson School of Music" the text read. I compulsively checked this at least ten times, just to make sure I hadn't gone to the completely wrong building. As I entered the school of music, an eerie stillness awaited me. As I progressed deeper, faint whispers of a violin playing echoed around me, though I couldn't tell if I was imagining it or not. I meandered around until I found an elevator. After a long and exhausting journey, room 535 awaited me. "Knock at your lesson time" the sign taped to the door stated. I paused for a brief moment, gathering my courage to knock. My heart was racing. No answer.

I knocked again. No answer.

I waited five minutes. It was pure agony. Scenarios ran through my head of everything that could have gone wrong. *What if I'm in the wrong place? What if it's the wrong day? What if he forgot?* (I had secretly hoped he would) *Should I call him?* I heard footsteps echo down the empty corridor. "You must be Amelia" a warm, beckoning voice called out. It melted many of my anxieties away. He apologized for his tardiness, unlocked the door, and we introduced ourselves and shared pleasantries. Almost too soon, he sat down at the piano and played a scale. My anxiety riled up again, as he motioned for me to warm up.

The sound stumbled out of my mouth, and I shut my eyes to avoid his reaction. But he continued playing up the scale, without interruption. As he went, I noticed the tension in my shoulders disappear, and my fists weren't clenched. The voice that was once stilted seconds ago seemed to naturally flow. The notes got higher and higher, but that didn't really seem to matter. Everything culminated on a high E, and I finished. I then became very aware of the stillness in the room, and the blood rushing to my cheeks. He paused. "That was not the same sound I heard a few minutes ago," he quietly remarked, a jovial smile stretching across his face. "You have a gift. I'm glad you came to me to discover it."



This isn't a story of my first awe-inspiring performance, or how I realized I can't live without the art of singing. I realize this is quite anticlimactic. However, it is a tale of self-exploration and learning. It is about a time I committed to bettering my skills, though I easily could have stuck with singing in the shower. I'm proud of the progress I've made since this June, and I can't wait for the opportunities this will hold, whatever they may be. Singing has always been something I have been drawn to, but never actually pursued. Although it was out of my comfort zone, I pushed myself to discover and learn about a new side of myself, something I hope to continue doing throughout my time at UGA.

About the Performer:

Amelia Katharine Johnson is a sophomore at the University of Georgia. She participates in Women's Glee Club on campus. She studied abroad the first semester of her freshman year of college in London, England. She has lived in Athens, Georgia for seven years, but resided in a variety of cities around the country before that. She has a brother of sixteen and two parents at home, along with two dogs, seven ducks, and a rabbit. Her other passions include photography, Broadway shows, the environment, along with a multitude of other interests besides writing biographies. She warmly invites you to her portfolio!

