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So You Want to Sing Spirituals *A Guide for Performers*

Randye Jones

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About the Book

With their rich and complicated history, spirituals hold a special place in the American musical tradition. This soul-stirring musical form is irresistible to singers seeking to diversify their performance repertoire, but it is also riddled with controversy, especially for singers of non-African descent. Singer and historian Randye Jones welcomes singers of all backgrounds into the style while she explores its folk song roots and transformation into choral and solo vocal concert repertoire. Profiling key composers and pioneers of the genre, Jones also discusses the use of dialect and other controversial performance considerations. Contributed chapters address elements of collaborative piano, studio teaching, choral arrangement, voice science, and vocal health as they apply to the performance of spirituals.

The So You Want to Sing series is produced in partnership with the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Like all books in the series, *So You Want to Sing Spirituals* features online supplemental material on the NATS website.

About the Author

Randye Jones first learned about spirituals at her home church in North Carolina. She has been a presenter at the Research, Education, Activism, and Performance National Conference on Spirituals and conferences of the African American Art Song Alliance, the National Association of Negro Musicians, the Music Library Association, and the Phenomenon of Singing International Symposium.

Praise for the Book

“A wonderful resource for those interested in navigating the world of spirituals. Randye Jones melds methodical research with practical advice into a book that invites students and teachers of all ethnicities to explore and present spirituals with greater authenticity and confidence.”

— **Louise Toppin, University of Michigan, director, the George Shirley Vocal Competition for African American Spirituals, Art Song and Operatic Arias**

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