

Robyn Lana

Storytelling through Choral Artistry
for Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services

Founder and Managing Artistic Director,
Cincinnati Youth Choir

Choral Faculty, Miami University

robynlana@me.com
www.robynlana.com





STORYTELLING THROUGH CHORAL ARTISTRY

CREATIVE PROGRAMMING

CREATIVE TEACHING

Robyn Lana



The Stories We Tell

- **Nature**
- **Family/personal experiences**
- **Society/Social Justice**
- **Exploring Emotions, connection, mental health**
- **History**
- **Fantasy**
- **Value (Advocacy)**

Elements of Storytelling

In the choral classroom and
performance, storytelling
occurs through text,
staging, visual impact,
theatrical interest.



Text Exploration

Read with Intention

Thoughtfully Consider

Interpret

Know





Connect

Message from Author

Fully know the text and, when possible,
what inspired the text before programming

Allow for the singers to interpret the poetry.
They may resent new insights that changes our
interpretation musically!

Message from Composer

Text Painting – How has the composer
interpreted the poetry and message? What
compositional elements are employed to express
that?

Melodic line, harmony, harmonic progression,
articulation, texture, instrumentation

Let Your Voice Be Heard

Matthew
Emery

Warmly ♩ = ca. 73

mf

Unison
Voices

Let your song — be del-i-cate. The — skies de-clare No

Piano

mf

8^{va}

4

war - the — eyes — of lov - ers Wake — ev - 'ry where.

MacBeth, William Shakespeare

SCENE I. A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron. (adapted)

Thunder. Enter the three Witches

First Witch

Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

Second Witch

Thrice and once the hedge-pig whined.

Third Witch

Harpier cries 'Tis time, 'tis time.

First Witch

Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

ALL

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

Second Witch

Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,

Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting
Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

ALL

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Third Witch

Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our cauldron.

ALL

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Second Witch

Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

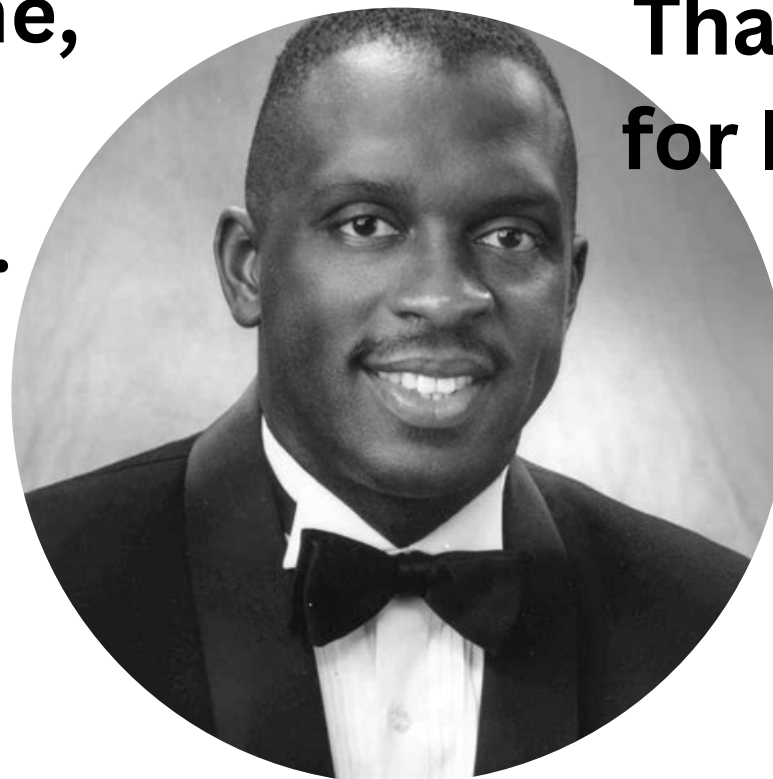
I Am His Child, Moses Hogan

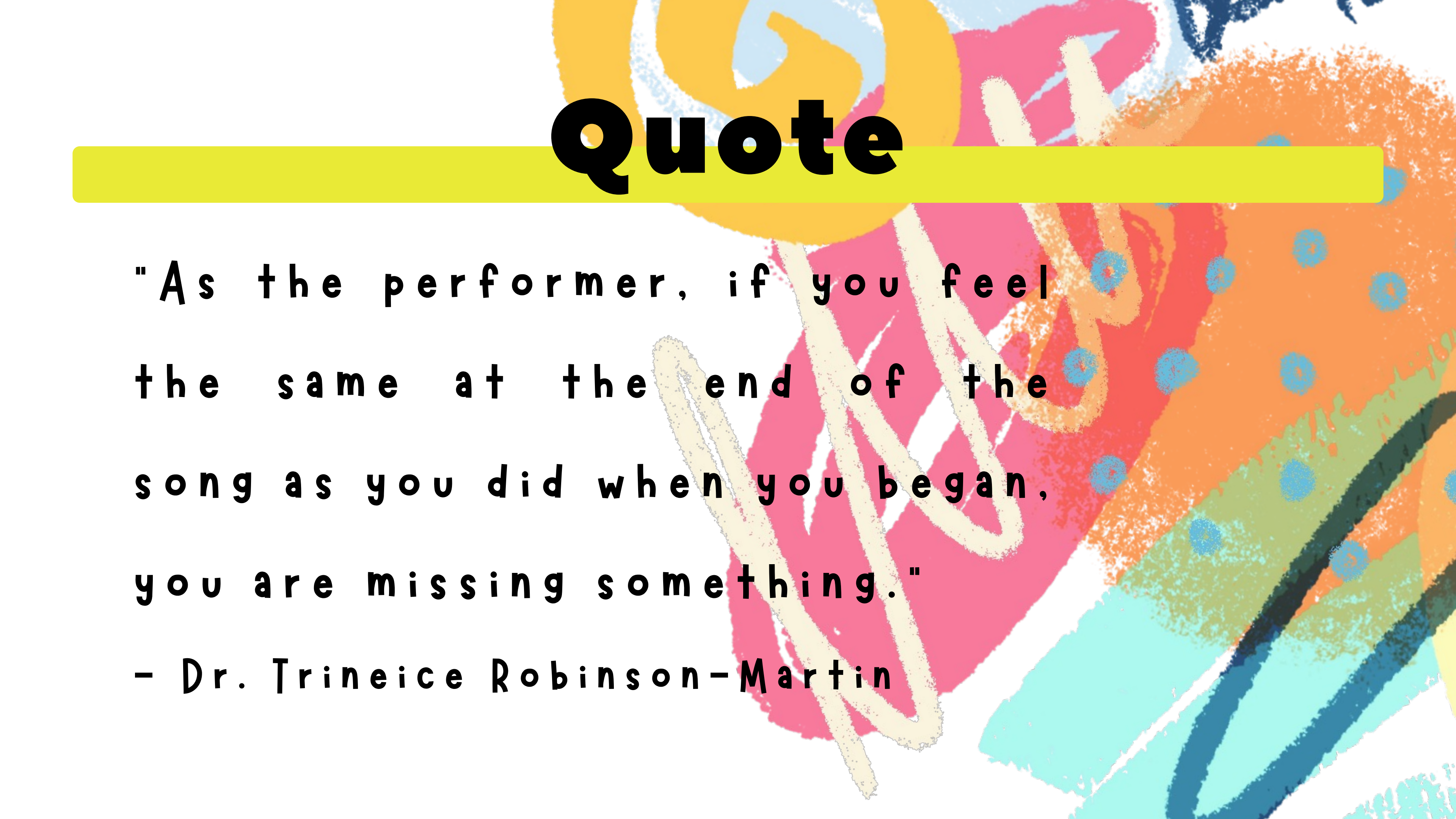
**I may not be all that you are,
I may not be a shining star
but what I am I thank the Lord
for making me His child.**

**Thank you Lord for hearing every
prayer.**

**Thank you Lord for just being there.
Thank you Lord, thank you Lord,
for I am not worthy of your Love.**

**So don't use me, or abuse me
for I am His child.
Don't tease me, or mistreat me,
for I'm still His child,
you can even talk about me.
But I'm still His child.**





Quote

**"As the performer, if you feel
the same at the end of the
song as you did when you began,
you are missing something."**

- Dr. Trineice Robinson-Martin



Creative Performances

Imagery

- Visualize the stories and emotions in the text
- Use imagination, both singers and teachers

Staging

Consider different formations:

- Mix voices
- Use full riser and performance space
- "Family" clusters
- New formations

Movement

- Visual appeal for the audience
- Movement s to tell a story.
- "Dance" /choralography
- Hand gestures
- New formation
- Props

Creative Performances

Imagery

Listen to
"I Am His Child"
—Moses Hogan



Staging

Watch "Hive of Frightened Bees"
—Andrea Ramsey



Movement

Watch "The Open Hand"
— Susan LaBarr
Cincinnati Youth Choir
performance incorporating sign
language



Programming

Telling a larger story

- Is the program a run of single octavos?
- Is it sharing a bigger picture/message?
- Is there a theme to the concert or a theme to a set?
- Is the message of the repertoire meaningful to the singers? If not, how can you make it so?
- Can you draw in a larger audience, expanding support network of administration and donors?