

VOICINGS

for tape / soprano / piano

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FTS 37476

DORIS HAYS

Southern Voices / Blues Fragments / Celebration of NO / Exploitation



COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FTS 37476



Doris Hays

PHOTO: ANDREAS BUTTMAN



Daisy Newman

This disc represents my big interests in the late '70's: my childhood South and my political place in things. I left the South in 1963, wound up in New York in 1969 via Munich, Germany; Madison, Wisconsin and Mt. Vernon, Iowa. Viewed from Manhattan, the South was not the weeping, fading, bitter flower it was when I fled it at 21. Rather, bittersweet and seductive. My music between 1976 and 1981 reflects my recollections of childhood church-going, residue of affection for church minus belief; disenchantment with my woman/middle class/homemaker place in Chattanooga of the fifties; and my hatred for ranking people according to their income, race, sex, and religion. I wrote piano pieces called "Sunday Mornings" and "Sunday Nights" about church where oppression rides along lustily with gusty hymn singing. I wrote "Tunings" for string quartet from memories of radio fiddlers my brother Ray and I listened to nights, our bedtime music. I finally did the SOUTHERN VOICES project, a coming back again.

SIDE ONE

1. SOUTHERN VOICES FOR TAPE
Henmar Press Inc. (C. F. Peters Corporation),
ASCAP
Time: 15:56
2. BLUES FRAGMENTS from SOUTHERN VOICES
FOR ORCHESTRA
Henmar Press Inc. (C. F. Peters Corporation),
ASCAP
Time: 8:22
DAISY NEWMAN, Soprano
PHIL THOMAS, Pianist

SIDE TWO

1. CELEBRATION OF NO from BEYOND
VIOLENCE
Tallapoosa Music, ASCAP
Time: 16:42
2. EXPLOITATION
Tallapoosa Music, ASCAP
Time: 3:55
DORIS HAYS, chanter

Recording Engineers: David Barnes, EXPLOITATION
Jim Stabile, Pyramid Studio, Lookout Mountain, Ten-
nessee, BLUES FRAGMENTS.
Remix Engineer: David Barnes.
Produced by: Doris Hays.

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FTS 37476

RETURN TO ARCHIVE
CENTER FOR FOLKLORE PROGRAMS
AND CULTURAL STUDIES
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

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SOUTHERN VOICES

There are ways of saying things, and there are ways a sayin' things 'n stuff like that. Growing up in the South in the 1950's and early '60's, I was told to change the way I said things. Not 'futha' but 'farther' or 'further', said my piano teacher. Not 'git', but 'get', Mamma said. Yankees still smile when I say I'll wait on them, and estupidos make the crack about the waitress.

I have trouble with Ms., because my mother said that's what her mother said was poor people's way of saying Mrs. We said 'Mizziz'. People around Jesup, Georgia, say 'Mizriz'.

There are ways a sayin' things. 'N stuff like that, 'n chickens 'n things, 'n books 'n things - people in Arkansas, Georgia, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama and South Carolina add on that little tag. I found that out when I interviewed several hundred people for SOUTHERN VOICES. I started listening to speech for its musical shape while I was working on music for an Atlanta dance group. I made a tape dream sequence which used Georgians' voices. In the course of talking with grade schoolers in north Georgia at Chickamauga, I discovered how many speech customs children were picking up from television and radio. These remote customs - became family - modify what should have been the children's strong north Georgia accent, given the rural setting.

After the dance suite UNI was written, I planned SOUTHERN VOICES, a set of pieces to investigate ways Southern speakers distinguish themselves from region to region. The National Endowment for the Arts helped me begin, with a composer's grant, and I received a commission from the Chattanooga Symphony Orchestra to write music to celebrate their golden anniversary season in 1982.

I began interviewing actually before I knew what to do with the interviews. Phil Tabor, a Sacred Harp fan, took me to a Sacred Harp singing in August, 1979, up on a mountain at Section, Alabama. I knew about formal Sacred Harp singing. A Tennessee college group cultivated the form and gave a concert in 1959 for my high school in Chattanooga. It was stiff and austere. Sacred Harp is 'doing' it - in the midst of that sometimes

rough-hewn very high tenor and treble part, and getting up to conduct the usually duple meter with your one fist, and listening to the syllabing of the tune once before every hymn is sung. Sacred Harp singers read by the shape of the note heads, in a fa-sol-la system.

There at Section I was bit by the bug of things homey, folk and apparent. My SOUTHERN VOICES began with that Sacred Harp sing to encompass not only the speech of the South but the music, too. I interviewed a man that August Sunday, Buford McGraw, whose family, the McGraws, for generations have fostered Sacred Harp singing. Come down from New England in the late eighteenth century, and flourishing well into the twentieth (my parents learned at sangin conventions in Arkansas in the 1920's), this kind of hymn singing is carried on by small groups in a few parts of the rural South, and with help of Neely Bruce, lately brought to life again in New England. Briefly, Sacred Harp is modal, not chromatic, doesn't use the dominant seventh, reckons more on the fourth than the third in its harmony, is more an interweaving of four lines than a vertical setting, puts the treble, alto and tenor lines sometimes crossing each other, and many of the hymns have a semi-fugue imitative counterpoint in the choruses. Its avoidance of leading tones and frequent use of open fifths with the hefty accents on one of two give it a vigor like a stamping horse.

In October of 1979, my Aunt Vada and I took a three-week car trip to Arkansas, she to visit the family cemetery and talk to old friends and relatives, and I to interview as many people as I could in as many different work and social circumstances. We stopped at a bookstore in chicken-growing mountain country at Ola, north of Hot Springs. That's where I first noticed "n stuff like that". The bookstore was in a garage den, filled with romantic paperbacks, advertised by a sign at the highway pointing up a chirt driveway. The bookstore keeper was a pleasant woman. We talked books. I first heard from her about Louis Lamour, and she let me keep the tape recorder going. I loved her voice with its soft Arkansas accents which reminded me of my late Aunt Alberta's - a slight upswing on the ends of words such as 'ends'. The one syllable word becomes almost two syllables, (aye-unds) but not twangily, as in some Tennessee/North Carolina mountain accents.

The mountains of Arkansas have a lot in common with those eastern mountains. My ancestors, except for Cherokee Mary Lightfoot who was already there, along with many other Arkansas travelers came from the Kentucky and Carolina highlands, bringing their speech patterns with them. Ever heard of the chigger-hop? Chiggers are insidious and invidious red mites, picked up on legs, arms and, ugh, crotch, from grass, trees, and animal fur, and they cause big itchy welts. They do the chigger hop in Arkansas and North Carolina. Kinda like the do-se-do, only up and down.

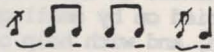
Before interviewing players in the Old Timey Fiddling Convention at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View, we talked with relatives in Havana and at the old family bottom land, near Magazine, where the red dust from each passing truck coated Aunt Vada's blue car and our tongues with dry clay particles. Then we headed east back across the Mississippi River.

In Memphis my old friend Jeanette Martin took me down to the Memphis Mall, a big broad example of the pedestrian swathes cut through many Southern towns. By this time I knew what my questions were, because I was not only getting speech patterns but attitudes about the South. I always asked, "How do you like where you live?" "How long have you lived here?" and "Is there anything you'd like to change about where you live?"

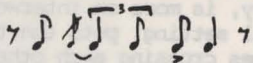
One strong-willed woman in the Memphis Mall who was sitting on a bench taking the sun gave me the rejoining question which was the main theme in parts of SOUTHERN VOICES FOR TAPE. I asked her how long she'd been here (in Memphis) and she spit right back, "How long YOU been here?"

My double second cousin once removed, Iva Lucas Turner, in Havana, Arkansas, asked me somewhat suspiciously, "Where'd you say you live?" And that became the theme of another section of the tape piece. Iva Lucas was happy to know she had kin in New York City. Leastways she rolled that information around on her tongue several times, with comments of "well, I never" and "you don't say".

The rhythm patterns of these two questions are typical of the speech of inquiry to a non-friend. "Where'd you say you live?"

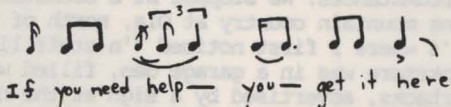


-angular, monosyllabic, straight out. Iva Lucas is a forward person. The "How long you been here?"



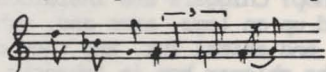
has the little lilt and faster run of single syllables which is typical of northern Mississippi where the speaker grew up.

My aunt and I drove down to the Delta, west from Greenwood to Greenville, where Vada's friend showed us the Mississippi dikes holding back the dirty green river, and she told me about the sense of community around there... "If you need help, you get it here."

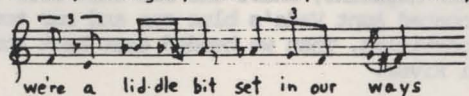


The rhythms are simpler to notate than the pitches. Othar Turner, at Gravel Springs near Senatobia, Mississippi, showed me how to make a cane fife, and he played blues on it. He's a colorful speaker, lots of drama and poetry in his talk, and after I begged him to stop digging fence posts in the hot sun, he gave me a little time (he complained cause Lomax had taken his work time earlier in the week to hear about Othar's fife and drum band), which expanded as he talked about making music there in northern Mississippi. He talked about efforts of the Center for Southern Culture and the Center for Southern Folklore in Oxford and Memphis to get his music out on disc.

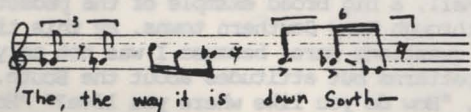
"That ain't no hill to climb" Othar said, meaning that's not a good option to take. My transcription is:



Like a lot of the speech I notated, it comes out with the blues third. Falling thirds are common in speech patterns all over the world. Blues is a kind of musical speaking. Listen to Legatha Walston, an artist I talked with at the New Salem, Georgia, Festival, in the fall, 1979.



And Drink Small from around Columbia, South Carolina:



In January, 1980, I toured South Carolina, trading concerts and workshops for interviews in schools and colleges, in Beaufort, way down on the coast near Savannah, in Charleston, Columbia, and up in the mountains at Spar-

tanburg. In Charleston old English speech is still. The famous round 'out' (ow/ooot) and 'about' of Virginia coastal regions is common among Charlestonians. This Charleston speech is one of the few which transcribed with more rising than falling thirds, and which often fell into a major mode tonal feeling. It sounded optimistic - and proper. The Charlestonians of the eighteenth century used to send back to England for speech masters who would update their conversations with new words and clean up the improper language which might creep into their isolated culture from non-English sources.

Along with the old British-based speech, this coastal area has Gullah, origins not fully known, but assumed a mixture of African, English, and still spoken on small islands off South Carolina and Georgia such as Daufuskie. A Gullah speaker in Charleston spoke English in soft accents which clang like Jamaican to me. She said, "I've been in Charleston ever since I know myself, you know."

Part of this project is knowing myself, you know. Yankees assume that ya'll is yall, not knowing it's 'you all', or 'all of you'. The South has always cultivated a sense of community. This reminds me of the Harvard study on selected students whom it followed through four years at Cambridge. One was a friend from Chattanooga. They assumed he had homosexual tendencies because he inclined to do things in mixed groups, go out with a gang of people rather than preferring the company of a single girl. That's the way it was growing up in the South. Bunches of people, community efforts, helping each other, all of you-all.

SOUTHERN VOICES doesn't talk much on the surface about the misunderstandings. Most people I interviewed were quietly proud of the kinship with fellow Havanaites, or Hot Springers, or Gravel Springers, or Tennesseans, or Georgians, or Charlestonians, or Albanians or Meridianites or Atlantans. This is a kind of regionalism which is glad about good things, and hopeful about change for better in economic terms. And also dreadfully suspicious and fearful of outsiders who will pull away the earth for pavements, subvert the waters for industry. The memory of Yankee disdain and Eastern arrogance, lack of manners, lack of sense of time for things, lack of sense of how to do, has left a pain and an ache that intones in the underspeech, the unsaid thought of the language I heard.

I ran the speech through my Buchla Electric Music Box and modulated the frequencies with internal signals of the Buchla oscillators. Now and again I used a background of Sacred Harp singing at half its original speed, which resulted in boomy cadential resonance as the hymn ground home to the tonic. I also put children's hand-clapping games in the background, and Mr. Lloyd Godbehere's furniture auctioneering, both recorded in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The piece became a documentary music. It reminds me of a cross section of earth you see in geography or geology books - the layers of sediment, clay and stone and water and oil from one culture time to another, sliced in sections, revealing similarities and disparities... the drawl of lowland plantation speech, very different in rhythm, tempo and idioms from hill and mountain speech patterns.

I've always liked the murmur and babble of voices gently against each other. Good conversations are like that, with overlaps and interweavings of the rhythms of varied thinking. SOUTHERN VOICES FOR TAPE turned out to be, after six weeks of work in early 1980 in my studio, a sixteen minute piece. I added color slides of the people and landscapes where I interviewed, and a soprano part with a narration. This version was performed at the Electronic Music Plus Festival in Morgantown, West Virginia, in October 1980. A 7' segment was featured in a public radio series called "Poetry Is...Music".

In SOUTHERN VOICES FOR ORCHESTRA many of the leading voices from the tape SOUTHERN VOICES are given to solo wind and brass instruments and occasionally to the strings. There is a piano solo which puts all the phrases together every couple of minutes and makes a dissonant blues fantasy from the babble of voices, and a blues soprano part which wails the main themes. These segments from the orchestra music are the "Blues Fragments" performed by Daisy Newman and Phil Thomas who premiered SOUTHERN VOICES FOR ORCHESTRA April 6, 1982, with the Chattanooga Symphony Orchestra, Richard Cormier conducting.

My thanks to the hundreds of people who took time to answer my questions in the SOUTHERN VOICES project; to the Ossabaw Island Project, for a sunny place to write the music; to Richard Cormier and the Lyndhurst Foundation for supporting the Chattanooga Symphony commission; and to the National Endowment for the Arts, which helped me get SOUTHERN VOICES going.

My ancestors were independent Southern mountain folk, not given to aggression. My father disliked war, and with three children and a job in foods he was able to remain away from the killing in WW II. My older brother was too late for the Korean War though he was a soldier, and my younger brother too early for Vietnam. My mother's idea of happiness is "all smooth surfaces, no rough corners". No wonder that I consider peace a right - not a happenstance. In the eighties it is a right we have to demand. Positive use of denial is a good way to reestablish that right.

CELEBRATION OF NO, 1982, from BEYOND VIOLENCE, a series of music and film pieces about the destructive power human beings wield over other living beings; women's voices web of NO surround the violent act, prevent its growth, prevent its being; warning cry of the red shouldered hawk, NO to the violator of my nest; massed voices of NO, affirmative negative; languages: Winnebago, Kiowah, Navajo, Cheyenne, Aleut, Sac and Fox, English, Dutch, Turkish, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, Sanskrit, Hebrew, Russian, French, Italian, Catalan, Spanish, Yiddish, German, Polish; Sanscrit NO - enough, have done with; Chinese - I don't want, no way!, you cannot, I won't allow it; Turkish - you cannot do it because I will not allow you to do it; Navajo - the act is imaged, then negated; CELEBRATION OF NO, our ability to deny others destructive power.

Thanks to the twenty-eight women who contributed their voices; to the American Indian Community House, Inc. and Native Americans in the Arts; to the Committee Against Military Junta in Turkey.

I was an officer of the International League of Women Composers for four years, distributed a radio series of music by women, organized an 11-concert series at the New School in 1976 with 18 women composers, wrote letters and made speeches as an advocate of parity for women in grants, awards and recognition in the music world. My anger and dismay were offset by amusement at the irony of such efforts when women take advantage of the talents of other women. I performed EXPLOITATION at the First National Congress on Women in Music at New York University and at KPFA in Berkeley during a fundraising drive where volunteerism is the middle leg keeping public radio alive.

EXPLOITATION, 1980, was my response to the exploitation of women's talents by women organizers, and also my general response to the revival of the volunteerism gambit in the current political climate. 'Volunteer' means economic dependence in a capitalistic system.

Ex, ex, exploitation
Domestic labor
Volunteer work
Exploits
Composers, musicians, mothers
Play for free
Come be our speaker
Help us out
You'll meet so and so
We're underfunded, we're understaffed
Volunteer, volunteer
You'll be reviewed, you'll be appreciated,
Do what a woman should!
Ex, ex, ex, exploited
Don't be afraid, we'll take care of you
Do what we want, it will be all right
Ex, ex, ex, exploitation.
Thank you so much, that was nice of you,
Goodbye, goodbye.
What's that? You don't have money?
You need to eat, your rent is due?
You pay the copy place, you pay for postage,
You pay for fliers,
You pay, you pay,
The dentist, the doctor.
Ex, ex, exploitation
Volunteer
To play for pay, to speak for pay, to do for pay
You do admire the prostitute
She plays for pay, she pays her rent
She buys her meals, she pays the taxi
What about you?
Why can't you be two hundred percent?
Do what we want?
Volunteer
And get along
We need your talent, we need your music
We need your brains
But we won't pay.
You haven't asked us
Besides we know you are afraid
To be left out
And so you will
Volunteer, volunteer
Exploited
Ex, ex, ex, ex, ex, ex.

c. 1980 Doris Hays

DORIS HAYS (born 1941, Memphis, Tennessee) is a composer/performer whose multi-discipline activities leap over categories. Her compositional work is wide-ranging, from string quartet and orchestral to multimedia with extensive tape music parts. She was three times recipient of composer grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, and her "Southern Voices" project was subject for a television documentary by George Stoney. In the late '70's Hays began to use voices in chant and music concrete, often resulting in choral-like aggregates, sometimes termed text-sound, a tape recorder variety of oral poetry. She has performed frequently in Europe since 1971 when she won first prize at the Competition for Interpreters of New Music at Rotterdam, appearing in many German, Dutch, Italian, and Yugoslavian radio concerts and music festivals. She is a frequent performer on American university campuses as multimedia artist and pianist. She often directs workshops for school teachers about classroom music, and was consultant and composer in the creation of a revolutionary music text series published in 1974 by Silver Burdett.

"... exquisitely textured tissues of sound."
Joseph McLellan, The Washington Post

"... a zany mix....an inspired joke."
Helen Smith, The Atlanta Constitution

"... a texture of ingeniously interwoven fourths and fifths...highly poetic evocation of Appalachia."
Milton Schafer, Music Journal

"... bouyant, spirited new work.... intriguing rhythms and textures...."
Nikki Hasden, The Chattanooga Times

"...exhibits a native musicality alongside a virtuosly mastered craft....an original accent.."
Gisela Glagla, Frankfurt Allgemeine Zeitung

"... picturesque and beguiling.."
Peter Frank, Fanfare

"... a wonderful musical recollection.."
Eric Salzman, Stereo Review

DAISY NEWMAN has appeared with major American orchestras including the Chicago, San Francisco, Atlanta and Cincinnati Symphonies. Known for her interpretations of contemporary music as well as opera and oratorio roles, she gave stunning first performances of new music at Marlboro and Tanglewood. Her appearance with the Chattanooga Symphony in the premiere of SOUTHERN VOICES FOR ORCHESTRA by Doris Hays is part of a television documentary called "Southern Voices". A native of Natchez, Mississippi, Daisy Newman graduated from Cleveland State University, and studied with Pauline Thesmacher and Phyllis Curtin.

"... her high notes vie with the sun and the stars."
Richard Dyer, Boston Evening Globe

"Newman has a ringing true soprano, and a way of melting the phrases.... with an authentic sweet warmth."
Robert Commanday, San Francisco Chronicle

"She managed all that crooning, whispering, high coloratura, sprechstimme, and yes, straight singing as if it were the most natural thing in the world for her."
Robert Finn, The Plain Dealer

PHIL THOMAS is a graduate of the Peabody Conservatory where he studied with George Walker. A native of Florida, he makes his home in Cleveland, Tennessee, where he is on the faculty of Lee College, and is pianist for the Chattanooga Symphony Orchestra.

Doris Hays

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