

A Stylistic and Performance Analysis of Selected Solo Piano Compositions by Helen Hopekirk

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ABSTRACT

This document explores Helen Hopekirk's compositions for solo piano, presenting a brief overview of Hopekirk's solo piano music and a detailed analysis of four selected works from her output. Helen Hopekirk (1856–1945) was a distinguished Scottish-American pianist, composer and pedagogue in the late-19th and early-20th centuries. Over the six decades of her professional career, Hopekirk concertized widely throughout Europe and the United States, worked with nearly 250 piano students and produced a substantial body of compositions in both large- and small-scale genres. Hopekirk is now counted among the first generation of professional American female composers.

Chapter 1 of this study outlines the purpose, need, procedures and limitations of the study and presents a review of related literature. Chapter 2 provides a biographical sketch and explores Hopekirk's significance as a composer in the context of her American contemporaries, particularly the Second New England School of composers. Chapter 3 investigates Hopekirk's contributions to the rise of the American female composer and offers a thorough review of her compositional output and style. It also surveys Hopekirk's complete body of solo piano music. Chapters 4 through 7 offer analyses of four selected piano works by Hopekirk: *Iona Memories*, *Suite for Piano*, *Five Scottish Folk-Songs* and *Two Tone Pictures*. For each work, these analyses provide historical background, explore salient compositional features and offer practical teaching and performance suggestions. Chapter 8 provides a brief

conclusion and recommendations for further research. By exploring Helen Hopekirk's piano music, this study recognizes the work of a noteworthy American female composer-pianist and serves as a resource for teachers and performers interested in Hopekirk's music.

Hannah Roberts, DMA, serves as instructor of piano at the University of Alabama, where she teaches applied piano and piano pedagogy. Her current research focuses on uncovering the work of forgotten American female composers.



Full dissertation:

<https://hdl.handle.net/11244/332310>