



# **I Dream a World: The Operas of William Grant Still**

*Beverly Soll*

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## **I Dream a World: The Operas of William Grant Still** Beverly Soll

William Grant Still (1895–1978) dreamed of a world in which his eight operas—for him the ultimate form of musical expression—would be heard in the major opera houses in the United States, devoting most of his career toward the pursuit of this goal.

The first part of *I Dream a World* creates a context for Still's operas and explores commonalities among them, including structural elements and musical characteristics. The second part traces the research, composition, and performances of the operas as a way of documenting the history of the composer and his contributions to American opera.

Although *I Dream a World* is not intentionally biographical, it is very personal. It is more than the story of William Grant Still's love of operatic music, of the libretti that reflect his own life and philosophy, and of the world he dreamed through his work. It opens a window on Still the man as well as on Still the composer that offers important insights into the social milieu of this pioneering figure.

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